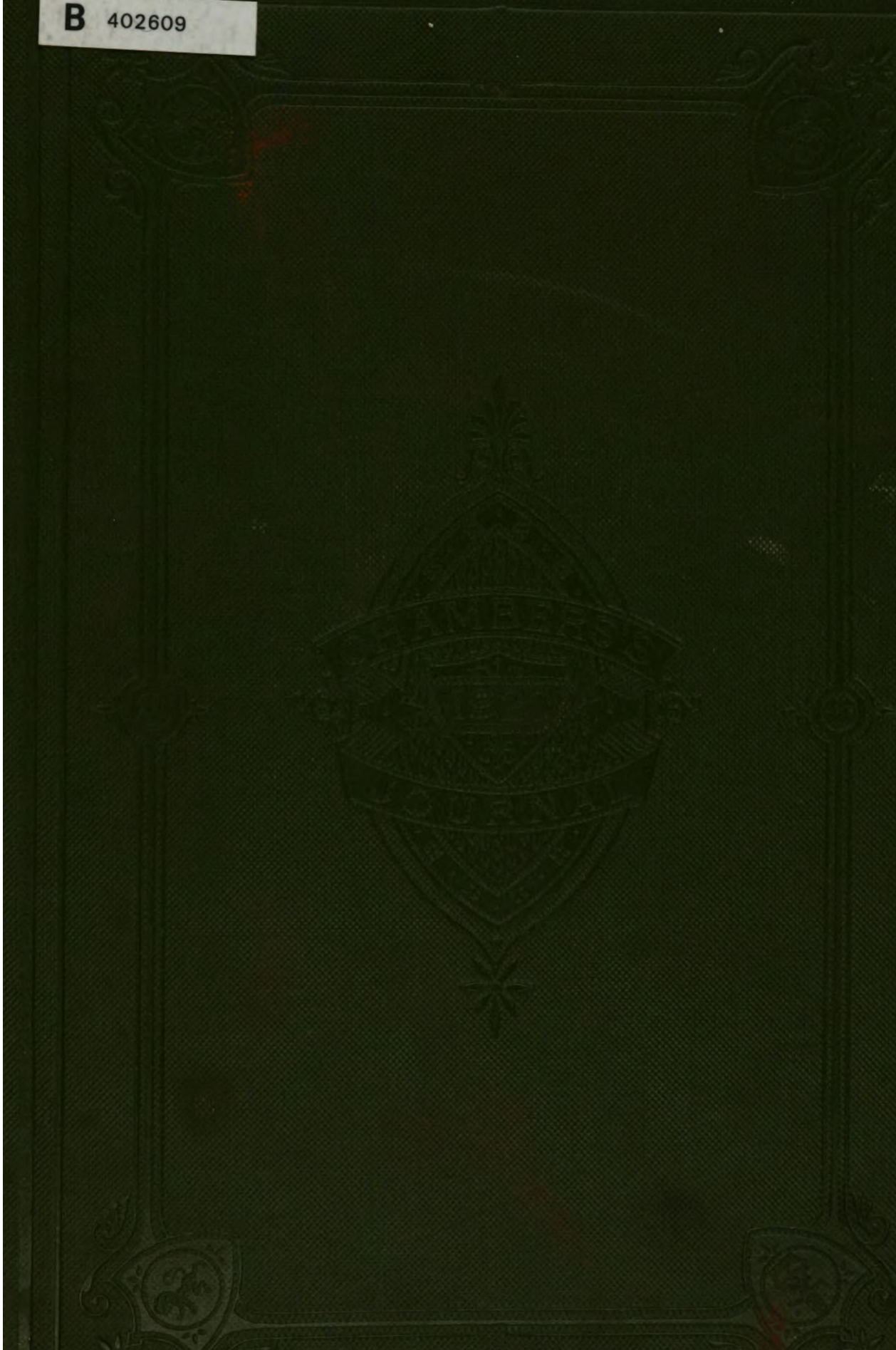
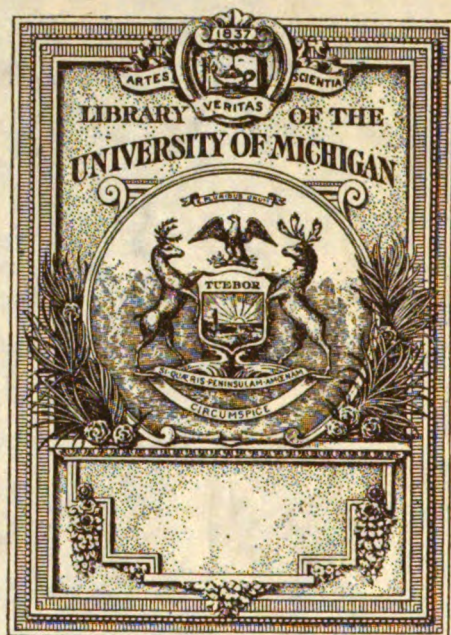
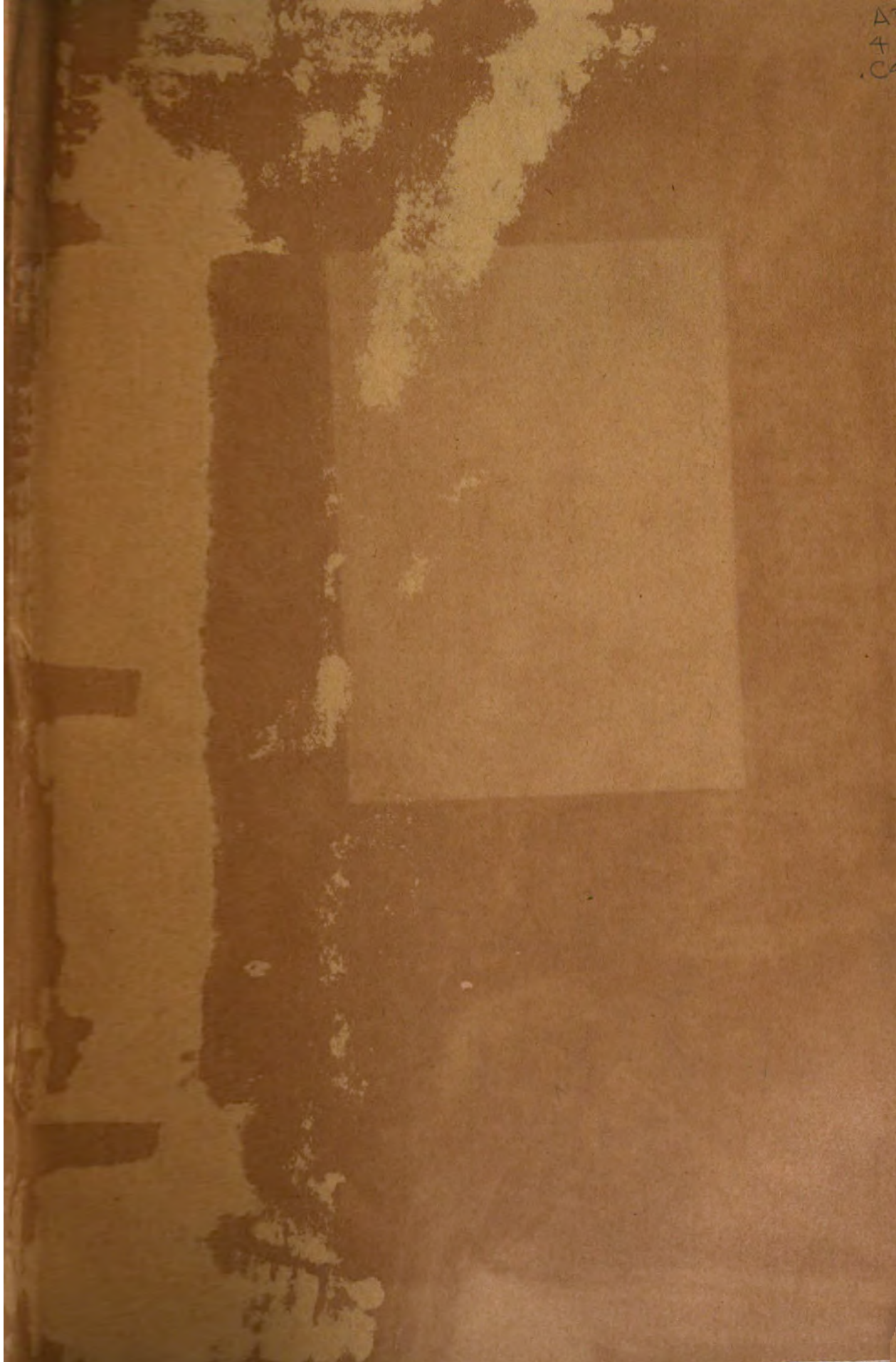


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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merric Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—LADY DURWENT DECIDES TO GIVE A DINNER.

I.

HIS Majesty's postmen were delivering mail. Through the gray grime of a November morning that left a taste of rust in the throat, the carriers of letters were bearing their cargo to all the corners of that world which is called London.

There were letters from hospitals asking for funds; there were appeals from sick people seeking admission to hospital. There were long, legal letters and little, scented letters lying wonderingly together in the postman's bag. There were notes from tailors to gentlemen begging to remind them; and there were answers from gentlemen to their tailors, in envelopes bearing the crests of Pall Mall clubs, hinting of temporary embarrassment, but mentioning certain prospects that would shortly enable them to . . .

Fat, bulging envelopes, returning manuscripts with editors' regrets, were on their way to poor devils of scribblers living in the altitude of unrecognised genius and a garret. There were cringing, fawning epistles, written with a smirk and sealed with a scowl; some there were couched in a refinement of cruelty that cut like a knife.

But, as unconcerned as tramps plying contraband between South America and Mexico, His Majesty's postmen were delivering His Majesty's mail, with never a thought of the play of human emotions lying behind the sealed lips of an envelope. If His Majesty's subjects insisted upon writing to one another, it was obvious that their letters, in some mysterious way become the property of His Majesty, had to be delivered.

Thus it happened, on a certain November morning in the year 1913, that six dinner invitations, enclosed in small, square envelopes with a noble crest on the back, and large, unwieldy writing on the front, were being carried through His Majesty's fog to six addresses in the West End of London.

Lady Durwent had decided to give a dinner.

An ordinary hostess merely writes a carelessly formal note stating that she hopes the recipient will be able to dine with her on a certain evening. The form of her invitations varies as little as the conversation at her table. But Lady Durwent

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was unusual. For years she had endeavoured to impress the fact on London, and by careful attention to detail had at last succeeded in gaining that reputation. She was that *rara avis* among the women of to-day—the hostess who knows her guests. She never asked any one to dine at her house without some definite purpose in mind—and, for that matter, her guests never dined with her except on the same terms.

Therefore it came about that Lady Durwent's dinners were among the pleasantest things in town, and, true to her character of the unusual, she always worded her invitations with a nice discrimination dictated by the exact motive that prompted the sending.

II.

H. Stackton Duncley looked up from his pillow as the manservant who valeted for the gentlemen of the Jermyn Street Chambers drew aside a gray curtain and displayed the gray blanket of the atmosphere outside.

'Good-morning, Watson,' said Mr Duncley in a voice which gave the impression that he had smoked too many cigars the previous evening—an impression considerably strengthened by the bilious appearance of his face.

'Good-morning, sir. Will you have the *Times* or the *Morning Post*? And here's a letter for you, sir.'

The recumbent gentleman took the letter and waved it philosophically at the valet. 'Leave me to my thoughts,' he said thickly, but with considerable dignity. 'I am not interested in the squeaky jarring of the world revolving on its rusty axis.'

Being an author, he almost invariably tried out his command of language in the morning, as a tenor essays two or three notes on rising, to make sure that his voice has not left him during his slumber.

Mr Watson bowed and withdrew. H. Stackton Duncley lit a cigarette, opened the letter, and read it.

'8 CHELMSFORD GARDENS.

'MY DEAR STACKY,—Next Friday I am giving a little dinner-party—just a few unusual

DECEMBER 6, 1919.

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people—to meet an American author who has recently come to England. Do come; but, you brilliant man, don't be too caustic, will you?

'Isn't it dreadful the way gossip is connecting our names! Supposing Lord Durwent should hear about it!—Until Friday,

'SYBIL DURWENT.

'P.S.—How is *the* play coming on? Dinner will be at 8.30.'

H. Stackton Duncley put the letter down and sighed. He was an author who had been writing other men's ideas all his life, but without sufficient distinction to achieve either a success or a failure. He had gained some notoriety by his wife suing him for divorce; but when the Court granted her separation on the ground of desertion, it cleared him of the charge of infidelity—and of the chance of advertisement at the same moment. Later, by being a constant attendant on Lady Durwent, he almost succeeded in creating a scandal; but, to the great disappointment of them both, London flatly refused to believe anything wrong. For one thing, she was the daughter of a commoner—and the morality of the middle classes is a conviction solidly rooted in English society. And then there were his writings. How could one doubt the character of a man so dull?

Undiscouraged, they still maintained their perfectly innocent friendship, and, like kittens playing with a spool, invested it with all the appearances of an intrigue.

Dismissing his depressing thoughts, H. Stackton Duncley noticed that his cigarette was out, and closing his eyes, fell asleep once more.

III.

Madame Carlotti, clothed in a kimono of emphatic shade, sat by the fire in her rooms in Knightsbridge and read her mail while sipping coffee. She was the wife of an Italian diplomat, a sort of wandering plenipotentiary who did business in every part of the world but London, and with every Government but that of Britain. It was the signora's somewhat incomprehensible complaint that her husband's duties forced her to live in that fog-bound metropolis, and having thus achieved the pedestal of a martyr, she poured abuse on everything English from climate to customs. Possessed of a certain social dexterity and the ability to make the most ordinary conversation seem to concern a forbidden topic, Madame Carlotti was in great demand as a guest, and abused more English habits and attended more dinner-parties than any other woman in London.

From beneath seven tradesmen's letters she extracted one from Lady Durwent.

'8 CHELMSFORD GARDENS.

'DEAREST LUCIA,—I am counting on you for next Friday. A young American author

studying England—I suppose like that Count Something-or-other in *Pickwick Papers*—is coming to dinner. I understand he drinks very little, so I am relying on you to thaw him.

'Stackton Duncley *insists* upon coming, though I tell him that it is dangerous; and of course people are saying dreadful things, I know. He is *so* persistent. There will be just half-a-dozen *unusual* people there, my dear, so don't fail me. Dinner will be at 8.30.—So sincerely,

'SYBIL DURWENT.

'P.S.—Don't you think you could make Stackton interested in you? Your husband is away so much.'

Madame Carlotti smiled with her teeth and drank some very strong coffee.

'It ees deefficult,' she said, with that seductive formation of the lips used by her countrywomen when speaking English, 'for a magnet to attract putty. Still—there is the American. At least I shall not be altogether bored.'

IV.

That noon, in a restaurant of Chelsea, the district of Pensioners and Bohemians, two young gentlemen, considerably in need of renovation by both tailor and barber, met at a table and nodded gloomily. One was Johnston Smyth, an artist, who, finding himself possessed neither of a technique nor of the industry to acquire one, had evolved a super-futurist style that had made him famous in a night. He was spoken of as 'a new force'; it was prophesied that English Art would date from him. Unfortunately his friends neglected to buy his paintings, and as his art was a vivid one, consisting of vast quantities of colour splashed indiscriminately on the canvas, it took more than his available funds to purchase the accessories of his calling. He was tall, with expressive arms that were too long for his sleeves, and a nose that would have done credit to a field-marshal.

The other was Norton Pyford, the modernist composer, who had developed the study of discord to such a point that his very features seemed to lack proportion, and when he smiled his face presented a lop-sided appearance. He had given a recital which set every one who is any one in London talking. There was but one drawback—they talked so much that he could persuade no one to listen, and he carried his discords about with him, like a bad half-crown, unable to rid himself of them. He was short, with a retreating forehead and an overhanging wealth of black, thread-like hair, gamely covering the retreat as best it could.

'Hello, Smyth!' drawled the composer, who affected a manner of speech usually confined to footmen in the best families. 'Hah d' do!'

'Topping, Pyford. How's things.'

'Rotten.'

'Same here.'

'I say, you couldn't'—

'Just what I was going to ask you.'

The composer sighed; the artist echoed the sigh.

'Have you seen Shaw's show?'

'Awful, isn't it?'

'Putrid—but the English don't'—

'Ah! What a race!'

'Just so. I say, are you going to Lady Durwent's on Friday?'

'Yes, rather.'

'Look here, old fellow—don't dress, eh?'

'Right. Let's be natural—what? Just Bohemians.'

'The very thing. By-the-by, you don't know a laundry that gives'—

'No, I can't say I do.'

'Well, so long.'

'Good-bye.'

'See you Friday.'

'Right.'

V.

Mrs Le Roy Jennings looked up from her task of drafting the new Resolution to be presented to Parliament by the League of Equal Sex Rights and Complete Emancipation for Women, as a diminutive, half-starved servant brought in a letter on a tray.

Mrs Jennings took the missive, and frowning threateningly at the girl, who withdrew to the dark recesses of the servants' quarters, opened it by slitting its throat with a terrific paper-knife.

'8 CHELMSFORD GARDENS.

'DEAR MRS LE ROY JENNINGS,—An American author is coming to dinner next Friday. There will just be a few *unusual* people, and I have asked them for 8.30. I want him to meet one of England's intellectual women, and I *know* he will be interested to hear of your ideas on the New Home.

'My daughter joins with me in wishing you every success.—Until Friday, dear,

'SYBIL DURWENT.'

Mrs Jennings, who had made a complete failure of her own home, and consequently felt qualified to interfere with all others, scribbled a hasty note of acceptance in a handwriting so

forceful that on some words the pen slid off the paper completely.

Then, with a look of profundity, she resumed the Resolution.

VI.

And so, by the medium of His Majesty's mail, a little group of actors were warned for a performance at Lady Durwent's house, No. 8 Chelmsford Gardens.

Through the November fog the endless traffic of the streets was cautiously feeling its way along the diverging channels of the Metropolis—a snorting, sliding, impatient fleet of vehicles perpetually on their way, yet never seeming to get there. Taxi-cabs hugged the pavements, trying to penetrate the gloom with their meagre lights; omnibuses fretted and bullied their way, avoiding collision by inches, but struggling on and on as though their very existence depended on their reaching some place immediately or being interned for failure. Hansom-cabs, with ancient, glistening horses driven by ancient, glistening cabbies, felt for elbow-space in the throng of motor-vehicles. And on all sides the badinage of the streets, the eternal wordy conflict of London's mariners of traffic, rose in cheerful, insulting abundance.

On the pavements pedestrians jostled each other—men with hands in their pockets and arms tight to their sides, women with piqued noses and hurrying steps; while sulky lamps offered half-hearted resistance to the conquering fog that settled over palaces, parks, and motley streets until it hugged the very Thames itself in unholy glee.

And through the impenetrable mist of circumstance, the millions of souls that make up the great city pursued their millions of destinies, undeterred by biting cold and grisly fog. For it was a day in the life of England's capital; and every day there is a great human drama that must be played—a drama mingling tragedy and humour with no regard to values or proportion; a drama that does not end with death, but renews its plot with the breaking of every dawn; a drama knowing neither intermezzo nor respite: and the name of it is—LONDON.

(Continued on page 19.)

A CORNER OF TROPICAL QUEENSLAND.

ABOUT fifty years ago a prospecting-party was fitted out at one of the Australian ports to prospect New Guinea for gold, and left in a small sailing-vessel named the *Maria*. When the vessel reached the northern part of Hinchinbrook Island it met a cyclonic storm which wrecked it; but the men were afterwards able to take to the boats, and landed at different parts of the Queensland coast, near what is now

Innisfail. Some of the men were fortunate enough to reach civilisation, after many narrow escapes from the cannibal aborigines; others, unhappily, being unarmed, were captured by the savages and tied up to trees in the scrub or jungle close by, with scrub vines or canes. Evidently the cannibals sent round word to their next-door tribes, and, as is usual on such occasions, held a big 'corroborea.' These un-

fortunate white men were slaughtered and eaten, one at a time, as required, the best-conditioned going first, until they were all devoured. This was at a spot where the Main Dividing Range runs into the Pacific Ocean. Its precipitous slopes are clothed with thick tropical scrub, at the foot of Queensland's two highest mountains, named Bellenden Ker and Bartle Frere, which rear their heads into the clouds over 5000 feet above sea-level.

What does the traveller see round Innisfail today? Banana, pine-apple, and sugar plantations galore, with sugar-mills containing the most up-to-date machinery, and a white population of over 3000, producing thousands of tons of sugar yearly. Miles of scrub had to be felled and burnt off to effect this transformation. Many miles of railway of the regulation three feet six inches gauge have been constructed to carry sugar, fruit, and valuable timber to Innisfail and the pretty little circular ready-made port, Mourilyan Harbour. When vessels enter and leave this tropical haven, the passengers feel that they could almost touch either side of the rugged gateway with their walking-sticks. As they proceed north, hugging the mountain giants already mentioned where the deep blue sea-waves lap their feet, the scene is entrancing. The tropical vegetation is so dense that it is only here and there, where the water from the mountain-sides tumbles down into the sea, that bare rocks are to be seen. Ever-changing glimpses of green and golden foliage, as the sun's rays fall at different angles on this panorama, provide tropical pictures which must be seen to be properly appreciated.

As the steamer rounds a headland, one of the passengers asks the captain what is that group of buildings nestling at the water's edge to the left, and he is informed that it is the Marabah Mission Station, where the Church of England is trying to induce the aborigines and their families to become civilised members of the community, at the same time teaching them farming and certain trades. So far, the success has been remarkable with the young people, but not so with the old cannibals. Shortly afterwards the rising seaport of Cairns comes into sight, and very soon opens out along the sea-frontage into quite a large modern town of over 4000 people. Cairns possesses many fine buildings, such as hotels, banks, and commercial houses, with a large railway terminus which has its feelers running out in several directions, the longest one extending 260 miles towards the south-west. Cairns is built four feet above sea-level, on a flat pocket of land, the result of ages of drift swept down by the Mulgrave and Barron Rivers. On three sides it is enclosed by a high mountain-range; on the other side it faces the sea. Fifty years ago the site was tropical scrub, as at Innisfail.

The rise of Cairns can be partly attributed to a Scotsman, Mr William Jack, who had the hall-

mark of determination on his features as his capital, and who somehow worked his way into the hinterland with a mate, and discovered tin ore at a place now called Herberton. Scotsmen seem to have done most of the pioneering-work of this state. To make sure of the nature of the black substance he had discovered, Jack set fire to a large, dead, hardwood log lying on the ground near his tent, and placed lumps of the mineral in the fire. By persistent stoking he was rewarded, seeing it melt into tin. Now he was sure of his find, because only a few months earlier he had seen smelted tin at Stanthorpe, a tinfield on the southern border of Queensland. From now onward a rush of miners set in to the new find, the most convenient jumping-off spot for them being the place now called Cairns. Thus we see how this rich and prosperous part of the Empire got its first start.

Herberton, which is 2890 feet above sea-level, is connected by a railway with Cairns, eighty-two miles away. This railway has a history. It had to climb 1000 feet in nineteen miles in order to get on top of the first mountain-ledge, round the Barron Falls (700 feet high), as a gateway to the back-country. Railwaymen will understand what the surveying of this route meant along the precipitous mountain sides and gorges, where the engineer had often to be suspended by ropes to get his levels. This done, a pathway wide enough for men and mules to walk single file had to be made, and from this the width required for the permanent way had to be cut and blasted out of the rock for the iron horse. For five miles the line runs along the western bank of the Barron River, rising from 660 to 1065 feet. As one looks down to the river-bed from the snug railway-carriage, the scene is indescribable. One could almost toss an apple out of the window into the water nearly 1000 feet below. This undertaking holds the unenviable record for loss of life amongst the navvies who constructed it, so far as Australian railways are concerned. After pay-day, men disappeared of a night over this precipice, and became food for the eagle-hawks or the alligators. On one occasion a team of working oxen went bodily over and were smashed to bits; also mules more than once.

At the top of the Barron Falls is the pretty tourists' rest, named Kuranda, where there are several commodious and comfortable hotels. Many pathways radiate from this centre into the mountains and the scrub, where visitors may study nature in all its glory. When tired of this, they can move on by train fifty-one miles to Yungaburra, from where they may reach a magnified edition of the Kuranda scrub, with the addition of the two pretty lakes, Eacham and Boreen, as a reward for a few hours' walk or ride. Still farther on by train the extensive farm settlements around the progressive town of Atherton are to be seen; they well repay

a day's ramble, because each farm has been carved out of the scrub. Another twenty miles by train, still climbing up the Main Dividing Range, and Herberton is reached, and the traveller is in the tin country. It is wonderful how pure the air is up here, and how ready one is for meals. Although in the tropics, one needs plenty of bed-clothes at night-time.

The Cairns hinterland produces gold, silver,

tin, copper, molybdenite, wolfram, zinc, and lead. There are mountains of limestone, one of which contains the renowned Chillagoe Caves, which are not even yet fully explored. Although the writer spent hours in them, he did not see half of the rooms, but those viewed by the light of two acetylene-lamps were exquisite with their wonderful lace curtains. The colourings in shades of pale green, pale pink, and straw were a vision never to be forgotten.

THE MAN WHO CAPTURED THE KAISER.

By COULSON KERNAHAN.

PART I.

I.

SOMETHING was 'up' at Dover. I was on night-duty as a special constable, patrolling a country road near Roysbury, and, many miles away as Dover was, I could see lights shooting up, Roman-candle-wise. Some seemed for a moment suspended in the sky like the evening or the morning star; others floated lightly on the wind, as if child-angels had been at play, casting adrift in space lovely bubbles blown from diamonds, star-dust, and golden fire.

'Something up at Dover!' I said to myself; for, though I had many times since the outbreak of war seen searchlights and brilliant flarelights (the latter, perhaps, to signal the approach of hostile aircraft) shown from Dover, this was the first time to my knowledge that star-shells, or Very lights, or whatever they were, had been used. 'Perhaps this too,' I commented, 'is a signal of approaching aircraft; or its purpose may be to illumine the waters of the harbour, to assist those on the look-out for the periscope of a submarine. Confound that hedge there! It interferes badly with my view. I wonder whether I could see better if I got up on that gate; or, better still, if I shinned up that bit of an oak-tree beside the gate.'

Scarcely had I settled myself before I heard, first, steps approaching from the direction of the town, and then the swift whir and hum of a powerful motor-car, also coming from the direction of the town.

Soon the pedestrian, whoever he might be, was level with my gate, a little to the right of which was the tree in which I was perched. He was muffled in a short foreign-looking cloak, reaching only a little lower than the waist, and was wearing what looked like a Homburg hat; but though I could not see his face, something there was in his way of holding himself, or of wearing the cloak, that seemed strangely familiar. Either I had seen the man himself, cloaked as he then was, or else his portrait, in the shop windows or in the illustrated papers—and not

once, but many times. In no other way could I account for the strange familiarity of his appearance; but as, in my efforts to place him, I was perplexedly sorting in my mind the many portraits of celebrities with which one is familiar (very much as a card-player, having sorted out one court-card, shuffles through the pack in search of its companion court-card), the oncoming motor-car had drawn level with, and then stopped beside, the man in the cloak and the Homburg hat.

I say 'stopped,' but the suddenness of the stopping—highly dangerous, I should think—caused the car to lift itself upon the back-wheels, pawing the air, as it were, very much as a high-spirited horse rears upon his hindlegs at a sudden jab of the bit.

There is a doctor in Roysbury who, probably to impress upon the public—possible patients all—the enormous pressure upon, and the value of, his time, has acquired the art of executing a vault from his car so that he is out, and at the patient's door, if not actually inside the patient's house, before his chauffeur has brought the car up beside the kerb. I was reminded of this doctor by the acrobatic way in which the two occupants of the car leapt to earth the moment they were alongside the man in the cloak.

Almost before I knew what was happening, the first man to alight had thrown a heavy rug over the cloaked man's head and body; the second had stooped to pass a strap round the rug and the body of the prisoner, to pull tight the strap, and to secure it; while his companion knelt to whisk and make fast another strap round the prisoner's legs. Then, again almost before I knew what was happening, the stooping man seized the strapped legs of the prisoner, and hoisted them from the ground, while his accomplice threw both his arms round the captive's body, and with one 'heave-ho!' they swung their haul, helpless as the carcass of a dead bullock, into the car. Next, the first abductor sprang to the car's head to turn the

crank that sets the machinery going; while the second leapt back into the driver's seat, which, so quickly had their work been done, might well have been still warm from contact with his body. His companion was beside him at a bound, and the car, with captive and captors aboard, was off and away before I could even be sure about its build or 'make;' before I could be sure of anything concerning it, except that (whether purposely or accidentally turned off I did not know) there was no light showing at the car's back to illuminate the registered number plate.

II.

I came out of my tree and back to mother-earth by way of the gate—though I admit to dismounting, if only for my limbs' sake, more gingerly than the motorists—and climbed down, instead of emulating the busy doctor's vault. First I flashed my pocket electric torch backward and forward upon the road they had come, and the road by which they had gone, to see whether anything had been dropped in getting in or getting out. Nothing! Next I knelt to examine the spot where the car had for a few moments stood.

'Aha! the tires are apparently new,' I said, 'and criss-crossed at the edge, like the little leaded diamond-shaped panes one sees in old houses. I am not learned in cars, but I suppose that's to prevent skidding. There's no more by way of clue here. Now, I'll follow them as fast as I can, in case I chance to meet any one who may have noticed something about the car, and which way it went.'

The few persons I met, agricultural labourers or their wives from the villages round, had seen a car go by, but, as is common with folk of their class, had taken no particular notice of it, except that it was going very fast, and so they could tell me nothing. Then I came to a dead-stop. The next person I met, a curate on a bicycle, assured me that no car of any sort had passed him. As no car had gone by me meanwhile, it looked as if I had overshot the mark, and the car of which I was in search had turned up one of the two or three lanes which I had noticed on my way. Retracing my steps, I came to a lane, a mere muddy side-track, leading out of the high-road to the right. With the aid of my electric torch I satisfied myself that no car had passed that way. Otherwise some imprint of the tires would have been traceable on the mud. Then I came to a side-road leading to the left, and here I struck the trail, for where the car had perhaps lurched a bit in turning the corner sharply and hurriedly, the imprint of the diamond-shaped criss-crossing on the tire's edge was plainly to be seen.

I followed this lane some way, not stopping where the road was hilly and gravelly, but halting in the hollows when I came to a patch

of soft mud where the car's wheels might leave a mark, to make sure that I was not again out of my course, until I came to a carriage gate. The short drive beyond the gate was of hard, loose, not rolled, gravel, and so told no tales; but on the soft loam, just outside the gate, the print of a motor-car's wheels was visible. Clearly the vehicle of which I was in search had turned in here, for beyond this gate I could discover only such wheel-marks as would be made by a horse-drawn cart. Those left by a motor are broader, smoother, and, unless the ground be very soft, or the car extraordinarily heavy, much less deep. More important still, though the gate (which one of the two men had probably alighted to open, and had swung-to after him) was closed, the front-door, which faced the gate, was partly open. Possibly, in lifting out and carrying in their prisoner, the man who came last—his hands not being free—had been able to do no more than kick sideways at the door to close it, and either had forgotten to come back to see that it was shut or had been too busy securing the prisoner to do so.

But what best suited my purpose, and afforded me an ostensible excuse for calling at the house, was that from an upper window a brilliant and uncovered light was showing. Swinging open the gate, I walked boldly in, making no attempt to soften the scrunching of my feet upon the gravel, and loudly plied both bell and knocker. In reply a man came to the door, and pushing it more closely to, peeped through the remaining chink to inquire gruffly, 'Yes, who is it, and what do you want?'

'Good-evening,' I replied suavely. 'I'm a special constable, with instructions to report all offences against the Lighting Order. There is an uncovered light in the room upstairs. I must trouble you, please, to give me the name of this house and your own name, as it will be my duty to report you for a summons.'

'Easy does it, my friend,' he replied, opening the door wider, and now without any gruffness in his voice. 'I'm sure you splendid fellows—and you are doing your difficult duty capitally—are much too considerate to wish to summons a patriotic citizen for a trivial first offence. It has never happened before, and I don't know how the beastly thing has happened this time, except that I've been out. I did leave a light burning upstairs, I remember, but it wasn't dark then, and I did not expect to be out so long. I had forgotten all about the light since I came back. Let's take it that you've given me a warning, and that I promise it sha'n't occur again, and leave it at that. May I send you out a drink and a smoke?'

For answer I suddenly pushed past him and inside the house.

'I'm sorry,' I said; 'but you don't do your case any good by trying to bribe or buy one off by the offer of a smoke and a drink.'

Then—the light had been behind him thus far—I recognised him, and he me. As a matter of fact I had all along been tolerably sure of his identity, on account of his voice, but I thought it as well to make perfectly sure.

III.

One day, not long before the war, I had stopped to listen to a man who was preaching on Roysbury beach. Who or what he was—he may have been a spy, among other things, though that did not occur to me at the time—I did not know, but he was undoubtedly of Teutonic origin. The curious and unnatural grafting of an unctuous whine upon a typically German and guttural voice struck me disagreeably, and for some unexplained reason I took an instant and intense dislike to him. When, therefore, soon after my arrival, he was so foolish as to let temper and Teutonic insolence betray him into the natural man which underlay his assumed piety, I was more than a little amused and pleased.

He had been using the freedom and protection which England has too long afforded to undesirable aliens to denounce apparently every form of religion in this country except his own. What his own particular brand was he did not say; but, according to him, the Church of England was given over to Popery, and Roman Catholicism to idolatry. What was wrong with Nonconformity he did not make so clear, but one gathered that it was in an equally bad way; and we, as a people, were profligate, pleasure-seeking, irreligious, and peculiarly sinful.

'Mein vrienden,' he said, 'I want you to turn aside from your zinfül vays. I want you to turn ze back upon ze Devil. I want you to'—Then, turning savagely upon a man who happened at the moment to be poisoning a pocket-camera in his hand, as if for a snapshot, the preacher shouted, 'Vill you take your dam camera away! Ve don't want it here!'

'If you flatter yourself that I'm taking your portrait, Herr Preacher, you are very much mistaken,' replied he of the camera contemptuously. 'As a matter of fact, I'm taking a snapshot of the pier behind you, and what at this moment is troubling me is how to keep your—shall we say?—Bismarck type of beauty out of it. I don't want to spoil my picture.'

Some of those present were amused, some perhaps a little shocked—for your Englishman has a greater reverence for things sacred than he cares to parade—by the preacher's lapse from problematical piety to indubitable profanity. But the result of the retort, pit and pat and pertinent as it was, was to put a stop to the preaching, on that occasion at least, and the German had to come down from his pulpit—a fisherman's box—grinning with rage, and inwardly, if not outwardly, gnashing his teeth.

Seeing a smile on my face, the man with the

camera addressed a few words to me on the subject of aliens, and the freedom they are allowed in this country, with which I fully agreed, and so we came to know each other slightly, and to pass the time of day when we met.

This was the man who had opened the door to me at the house to which I had traced the abducting car. His name was Parkerly, and rumour had it that he was mad—so mad that his being at large without a keeper was a public scandal. Insanity so seldom, if ever, goes with a sense of humour—which Parkerly undoubtedly had—that I was minded to give the whispering and garrulous jade, Rumour, the cut direct, for the wanton and slanderer that she is. But though, except for a certain irrelevancy and absence of co-ordination in thought, and so in conversation, I found Parkerly a well-educated, widely travelled, and interesting man, and an unmistakable gentleman to boot, I came to the conclusion that on certain subjects he was not only a little, but stark mad. Of homicidal or dangerous mania, however, I saw no trace, and as I liked the man, he and I often chatted for a while when we met, though, until he opened the door for me on the occasion of which I am writing, I did not know where he lived.

IV.

'Why, it's Kenneth Dee, the book-writer, turned Bobby!' exclaimed Parkerly. 'How are you, Mr Dee!—be d—d to you for giving me a fright! Glad to see you, if only you had called at a less inconvenient time. I'm particularly engaged just now, talking over an important matter with a friend. Sorry if I offended you by proposing a drink and a smoke. I meant it merely as hospitality to a fellow-countryman who is a better and more duty-doing citizen than I. It wasn't for a moment meant as a bribe. About that light—you really mean that you are going to summons me, do you? Of course, if you insist, I must give you my name. You know that my surname is Parkerly, and the name of this house. But won't a warning do? I should hate the publicity of a police-court and the whole thing in the local papers.'

Inside the house as I now was, I did not intend to leave without doing my best to get to the bottom of what I was confident was an abduction; and I decided that, sane or insane, whichever Parkerly might be, my best plan would be suddenly to spring my charge against him, in the hope that, taken unawares and off his guard, he might say or do something to betray the motive for the abduction, as well as disclose the prisoner's identity.

'Very well, Mr Parkerly,' I said, 'we will take it that I have warned you about the exposed light, and that you undertake it shall not occur again.'

'Gladly,' he said with evident relief; 'and much obliged to you I am, as well as ashamed to have put you to this trouble.'

Then I looked him in the face and fired my broadside. 'But what about the abduction, by you and an accomplice, of a man in a Homburg hat and a cloak, and your bringing him here in your car?'

He was for the moment badly taken aback, that I could see, but recovered himself quickly. Then he dived his hand into his breast-pocket, took out his cigar-case, and without speaking, though I could see he was thinking intently, made as if to offer it to me.

I shook my head.

Selecting a cigar, he lit it leisurely, with a hand as steady as my own. 'Ho! ho!' he said. 'Hoo! hoo! So you know about that, do you? This complicates matters. I didn't want it to be known, for reasons with which you will be the first to agree when you hear them. Come into the smoking-room. I sha'n't keep you ten minutes. The matter is not serious, though it may look so, and as a "special" you are only doing your duty by inquiring into it.'

v.

When we were seated, he asked, 'Do you know my friend Warlingham?'

'No.'

'Ah, that's a pity. It's a sad story. He is eccentric, I admit, but sane, sir, as you or I. His people have got it into their heads that he is mad—dangerously mad—and ought to be put away. If there is any madness in the family, it is they, surely, not he, who are mad, or they wouldn't propose anything so monstrous. Anyhow, they have now talked round the family doctor and another medico to sign the necessary certificate, or the "petition," as it is called, of a "relative." Also, they have got a "beak," who is a family friend, to sign the judicial order. To-morrow they are going to clap the poor chap into an asylum. If they wanted to drive him mad, they couldn't take a more effective way. Why, I'm told that even doctors and attendants who have to do only with mad folk come to look strange and different from the rest of us, come to look mad, and come at last, some of them, to go mad. Insanity is not infectious, as, say, smallpox is, but it is what I call "affectious." I mean that constant association with the insane often affects the mind, just as constant association with leprosy—which I believe is not actually infectious in the accepted sense—ends in those so associated (Father Damien, for instance) becoming themselves afflicted with leprosy. It is a pity you don't know Warlingham. If you did, a novelist as you are, and with some knowledge of

human nature, you would agree that to clap such a man—highly nervous, abnormally imaginative, and introspective—into an asylum, under care of a keeper, and with madmen for his fellow-inmates and only associates, would so prey on his mind that he'd be out of it—which he isn't now—before three months are past.

'It mustn't be, sir. It is too horrible and inhuman to be thought of; and, as Warlingham's best friend, it was up to me to act. My plan was for him to clear out, to go where his people couldn't find him; but (I think his mind *is* getting a bit affected at last—affected, that is to say, to the extent of rendering him incapable of making up his mind) I could not get him to act. One minute he agreed with me, was ready to go anywhere, ready even to make a bolt for it, then and there, while he was safe. The next minute some objection presented itself, and he was as set on staying where he was, be the result what it might.

'Well, to-morrow, if they find him, they're taking him to an asylum, and as there was no more time to lose, something had to be done, and instantly. So I decided to kidnap him, *volens volens*, and keep him here, where he will be safe and out of the way. I have an old and trusted manservant, and to-night he and I tackled the job. Warlingham is fond of late country walks, so we followed him, pounced on him, hustled him into the car before he knew where he was, and brought him here, scarcely less than half-an-hour ago.

'Now that the thing is decided for him, now that he, poor chap, hasn't got to make up his own mind to take action, he sees that I have done the only wise and friendly thing by him. He is not only content and glad to stop here in safety, but is more than grateful to me for thus kidnapping him.

'I am sure that, as a humane man, Mr Dee, you will agree with what I have done, solely in a friend's interests, and that you will keep the rather painful secret, and leave things as they are—especially as I am more than willing that you should see Warlingham, and satisfy yourself that it is really his wish that the affair be kept quiet, and that he remain in safety here. Come, Mr Dee, could anything be fairer than that? What? Give me five minutes to explain the situation to Warlingham. It wouldn't be wise, upset as he is by the day's happenings, to spring an entire stranger upon him before he knows why.'

Parkerly's eyes were glittering unnaturally, but otherwise he was quite his natural self, and he did not omit, before leaving the room, to place biscuits, the spirit-decanter, and a cigar-box on the table for my benefit.

(Continued on page 25.)

RIGID AIRSHIPS.

I.

GERMANY can rightly claim to have long been the centre of ingenuity for producing mechanical weapons of war. That she failed to be the victor in the late international struggle was due to the misapplication, or the faulty handling, of these weapons by the human brains and hands which controlled them. In many cases a weapon possessed exclusively by Germany, which the Allies did not imitate or copy, and consequently use, in counter-warfare, has never been shown in its proper sphere of activity, and therefore has not proved its true value. The Zeppelin is a very good case in point, and in view of the feats lately accomplished by R 34—feats which foreshadow a great commercial future for the rigid airship—it should be of interest to look over the recent history of Zeppelins so as to verify the above statement, and to search for any evidence of their successful employment in warfare. Important deductions may then be drawn as to (1) whether Zeppelins would have been of any use to the Allies during the war, and (2) their future military value to the British Empire.

II.

At the commencement of the war Germany possessed a small number of airships of the rigid type, most of which were under the control of the military authorities. The German Navy had not interested itself in airships until some little while after their adoption by the army, and on 4th August 1914 there were only two complete naval airship crews. It is almost certain that at the beginning of the war Zeppelins were intended for scouting purposes only. They were armed with machine-guns to ward off attacks by hostile aeroplanes, but, as the latter were only in their early stages of development, there was not much danger to be feared from them. A number of bombs were carried, to be used if a suitable target presented itself, as would very probably be the case in military operations. The ships were either of Zeppelin (metal construction) or Schütte-Lanz (wooden) type, until at a later date the characteristics of each class were pooled and an improved type of ship, the L 30 class, was designed and built by the Zeppelin Company, subsequent ships embodying improvements on this design.

The first German activities took place over Belgium, notably Antwerp, and from this date the effectiveness of aerial bombardment was realised by the German command. It must be remembered that in the early days of the war there were not sufficient aeroplanes to spare for bombing purposes, and the present type of bombing-machine, specially built to carry big loads over long dis-

tances, was not in being, so that the Zeppelin was the only type of aircraft capable of this work.

Immediately following the rapid military advance through Belgium into northern France, Germany commenced active naval operations against British soil. These consisted of raids on the east coast, which, however, were rather hazardous, owing to the great superiority of the Allied navies, and, in addition, little was gained by them. The bombardment of Scarborough may have satisfied the minds of the German public; but the higher command wished to get a stranglehold on the centre of British war activities, to inflict serious damage on the rail and munition centres around London and other important districts. The work done in Belgium showed the possibility of using Zeppelins for such a purpose, and the scheme was taken up with the usual German thoroughness. It took a little time to make the necessary preparations. Sheds had to be erected as near England as possible, preferably in conquered Belgium; the meteorological service had to be reorganised, since the weather reports from the west were no longer obtainable; more airships had to be built and additional crews trained. The thoroughness with which the Germans took up their Zeppelin policy may be judged from the fact that sheds were built in the Balkans and in Russia. It was from the former that the famous effort to relieve the East African forces by delivering stores by air was organised.

An abortive raid, or, rather, a 'feeler,' was carried out late in 1914, and the raiding of England, and incidentally of central France, commenced in earnest on 19th January 1915.

There is no doubt that in their raiding policy the Germans really intended to damage railroad centres, war-factories, and other depots of importance; but the German command did not take into account the personal element—the effect that retaliation in the form of anti-aircraft fire would have on the Zeppelin commanders. The most daring pilot, a man who was eventually killed, caused more damage in one raid than the other five commanders that participated, by setting out to hit his target regardless of danger; but he was the exception to prove that, as a rule, airship captains on coming under fire simply threw out their bombs on the nearest habitation, and retired to a safer zone as quickly as possible.

The spring and early summer of 1916 witnessed a distinct pause in the raids. This was mainly due to the employment of the Zeppelins in their more legitimate work of naval scouting. Considerable attention was also being paid to the manufacture of a new type of ship, with which it was hoped to obtain better results.

III.

The absence of Zeppelins at the commencement of the Dogger Bank (24th January 1915) and Jutland (30th May 1916) actions may have been due to unfavourable weather conditions. This is improbable, as they put in an appearance towards the end of each battle, and it points rather to lack of co-operation between the marine and the air squadrons. It was known that naval airships had been used to a limited extent in co-operation with the navy afloat since the early days of the war, but the call for raids must have cramped development in that particular line. The L30 class, already referred to as a combination of the best points of all previous types of rigid airships, commenced to take the air in May, and they were allotted mainly for naval use. The Battle of Jutland showed the German naval staff that their warships were unable to stand up to the British Fleet in open action. Their only hope, therefore, of gaining naval supremacy was to employ an arm of naval warfare which the British forces lacked or could not compete with. The weapon was at hand in the form of aerial scouts. Germany possessed quite a large fleet of Zeppelins, whereas the British had only a handful of aeroplanes, not capable of extended flights. It was thus possible for the Germans to keep the British Fleet under complete observation, whilst they had a comparatively open field of undetected movement. This enabled a very clever trap to be set, and on 19th August 1916 perhaps the most interesting naval operations of the war commenced.

The German Fleet put to sea, acting as a bait to bring the British forces out. Zeppelins were detailed to watch the east coast, especially the large naval centres, and to report all inward and outward movements of warships. Other Zeppelins shadowed the British Battle Fleet in its movements in the North Sea. The trap consisted of a large number of submarines which were acquainted with the position of the British Fleet by wireless from the Zeppelins. It was intended to draw our fleet into a suitable position for submarine attack, which would sink or severely damage several capital ships, and throw the fleet into disorder. The German forces would then stand a very good chance of gaining a naval victory. The aircraft carried out their duties perfectly, but the scheme failed at the development of the submarine attack. These craft, attacking the advanced forces of the British Fleet, only sank two light cruisers and gave the main fleet warning of the trap, so that the German Fleet returned to port without moving into action.

This was the last operation carried out by the German Fleet on a large scale, and the naval airships were once more confined to anti-submarine patrols in Heligoland Bight and longer-distance

flights to report on the approach of enemy surface craft. The majority of the Zeppelins were, therefore, released to continue raiding England. However, during the summer the anti-aircraft defences of this country had been strengthened by the adoption of night-flying aeroplanes as a means of counter-offensive, so that shortly after the raids recommenced several Zeppelins were shot down over English soil.

IV.

From this date Zeppelin raids began to diminish in importance and interest. The British had, so to speak, got their measure. This particular form of warfare had inevitably to take the same course as any other—for instance, the submarine war. It lapsed into a struggle between technical departments, one side improving its methods of defence, the other side replying by improving the design of the attacking machines. Any advantage gained by the new design would shortly be nullified by fresh counter-resources. For example, the early raids were conducted from 6000 feet or less. Increase of anti-aircraft gun defence necessitated the building of the L30 class, which carried their bomb-load to 10,000 feet. Raiding-ships in 1918 flew at nearly 20,000 feet when over England, to avoid night-flying aeroplanes. The German command, nevertheless, had no intention of giving up their raiding policy. The loss of airships was inevitable, but it was considered that the damage they were reported to effect was more than sufficient compensation. Throughout the first half of 1917 the raids were half-hearted, owing to the losses in the latter part of 1916. Later in the year, however, a new type of airship was constructed, and extensive raids were recommenced, as many as eight or eleven ships participating in them.

In September the raiding of the south-east part of England was definitely taken over by heavier-than-air machines.

Airship raids, now confined to the Midland areas of England, continued at odd intervals. The Germans had several set-backs, and in October 1917 experienced a real disaster, when five ships out of a raiding squadron of ten were lost. Occasionally, as in April 1918, when Birmingham and several Lancashire towns were bombed, it would appear that the airship commanders had regained their old spirit. However, a further loss in August 1918, combined with the general effect that the war was having on Germany, brought an end to the raids two or three months before the Armistice was signed. The Allied Armistice Commission, who visited German airship-stations, reported that a large airship fleet was still in being, and that no expense could have been spared in providing airships, air-stations, and their equipment during the war, which is further evidence of the faith that Germany placed in her airship policy.

V.

As we glance over this short history, it is possible to follow the train of thought of those responsible for the German airship policy. At the outbreak of hostilities the majority of airships were under military control, and intended for scouting purposes. It was quickly realised by those in command that such an important and vulnerable object would not be allowed to fly unmolested over enemy military territory for any length of time. The night bombing policy resulted. In the abstract it showed great promise. A Zeppelin of the class existing in 1915 could carry over a ton of bombs from its base in Belgium or north Germany to London, and return. Accurate bomb-dropping was possible from airships, and in Britain means of defence were almost entirely lacking. It is difficult to place the blame for the failure of these raids. Primarily, the command should have realised that the enemy would quickly find sufficient means of defence, and that raiding in the first military sense—that is, to inflict damage of military importance—could be carried out only for a certain period. The motto during 1915 and early 1916 should have been, 'Strike while the iron is hot, and strike hard.' There were certainly a large number of raids; but the individual airship commanders failed to reach their objectives through lack of determination, or, rather, lack of attention to the prime objects of the raids.

Once the stage had been reached when effective bombing could obviously no longer be carried on, owing to the strength of the anti-aircraft defences, it was a matter of determining how the occasional losses, inevitable in harassing raids, would compare with the importance of the military hindrance to the enemy entailed in keeping adequate defence arrangements ready for instant use. It would appear that this was never recognised in Germany. Raids in full force were attempted throughout the war at an obvious loss to Germany, the results showing definitely that the Zeppelin, as a permanent weapon of war for air-raiding purposes over civilised country, is a failure.

The third use to which Zeppelins were put—naval scouting—needs most careful consideration. There is ample proof of their capabilities in this phase of warfare, a striking example being found in the naval operations of 19th August 1916. The weather conditions were very favourable for aircraft, and there is no doubt that the Zeppelins carried out their part of the programme perfectly. They were in no way to blame for the failure of the plan of action. This case being taken as an example, if only Germany had realised early in the war the great possibilities of using Zeppelins in the North Sea, the actions of the Dogger Bank and Jutland, with the consequent loss of ships to the German Fleet, could have been

avoided. Further, the liberties that the Allied fleets took in moving close in to the Heligoland Bight would have been vastly curtailed, as sufficient warning of the approach of surface craft could have been given to enable a superior force, or submarine or destroyer squadrons, to attack the enemy.

The two outstanding disadvantages of large airships are (1) difficulty in handling in and out of their sheds in high winds (that is, they are easily weather-bound), and (2) vulnerability.

Night bombing-raids could be carried out only in fine, clear weather, when the targets would be visible; so in connection with their main policy the German command had no need of devising methods to make their airships less dependent on weather conditions. The use of Zeppelins in connection with naval forces was not realised until too late, when the marine forces knew themselves to be outclassed, and thus no further efforts were made to bring the Zeppelins' performance in the face of weather more into line with that of surface warcraft.

As regards vulnerability in connection with sea-scouting, approximately four German airships were destroyed by naval forces, and five by heavier-than-air craft attached to naval forces. Numerous cases occurred of Zeppelins being sighted by our aircraft and escaping without damage. The only type of heavier-than-air craft that can destroy a Zeppelin under all circumstances is the fast fighting-plane. Larger machines, such as the Handley-Page and big flying-boats, can be avoided by the Zeppelin, unless caught at a distinct disadvantage. Whilst the large heavier-than-air craft have a considerable radius of action, the smaller types can operate from a parent ship, which gives them a greater sphere of activity. Naval supremacy, however passive, immediately curtails the scope of enemy heavier-than-air craft, and reduces the danger-zone for airships to a 150-mile limit extending from the enemy coastal defences.

Thus in the late war Allied rigid airships could have patrolled in the North Sea in almost complete security to the northward of a line joining Spurn Head and Jutland.

To revert to disadvantage (1), it was realised in this country that rigid airships, to be used with any degree of success, must be made as independent of the weather as possible. Once in the air, they are the safest type of aircraft existent, the difficulty, as already stated, being in handling them on the ground. In spite of the fact that we started some twelve years after Germany, we are already well ahead of her in this matter. It is only necessary to recall how R 34 was moored out for several days and refuelled in America, to see that great progress has already been made.

In view of these facts, it can confidently be stated that if a big rigid airship policy had been embarked upon in this country before the war,

the German Fleet would have been beaten at the very outset. Allied marine craft would have been relieved of a great deal of arduous and risky patrol-work in the North Sea, and Germany could never have attempted to raid the English coast or have put her fleet to sea as on 19th August 1916.

VI.

The gradual spread of what is commonly known as civilisation has always carried with it a fearful companion. As the world becomes more civilised, international understandings become more binding and greater alliances are made, with the obvious effect that wars are steadily increasing in magnitude. The sphere of full-scale active operations during the late war was confined to a single continent. It is highly probable that future warfare will be inter-continental, and that the necessary naval

operations will take place in an ocean, and not in a comparatively confined space like the North Sea. The importance of aerial warfare will have increased enormously, and it will be essential to hold supremacy in the air over any area, whether land or sea, before surface supremacy can be claimed. Distances over sea will be too great for the smaller fighting heavier-than-air craft, and any advance across an ocean by either combatant will have to be preceded by a superior force of lighter-than-air craft. Just as in the late war, when aircraft ranges were shorter, the Germans could claim, at such times as their Zeppelins were operating, to hold the North Sea, strategically, in the palm of their hands, so in future warfare the nation wishing to commence active sea offensive will have to gain the aerial supremacy, the weapon used being in the form of scouting-airships.

UNLUCKY.

By RICHARD THIRSK.

I.

'FRIDAY, the 13th of the month and the Old Man's birthday: it's unlucky.'

The mate of the barque *Remonstranter* was one of those sailor-men to whom the superstitions of the sea are immutable—as infallible guides to safety in his calling as is the compass to steer the ship from port to port. He accepted them without question as the unwritten decrees of the powers ruling the destiny of those who sail the seas, and in the course of long experience had so often proved their unflinching veracity that his belief had become a fetish. Hence, when 'the Old Man' called him into the cabin to inform him that the tug would be alongside to tow the *Remonstranter* from her anchorage on the morning of his birthday, a Friday, and, moreover, the 13th of the month, he forgot his usual 'Ay, ay, sir,' and went straightway below to consider.

Such a combination of evil omens was too much tempting of Providence, and his first impulse was to leave the ship. To sail in her meant disaster. Of that he was more certain than of to-morrow's dawn. Evil must of a surety befall those who seek it by disregarding all the rules of the sea: it was unlucky.

Yet to remain at Streaky Bay, a forlorn spot on the lonely Australian shore where vessels seldom cast anchor, might also be unlucky. At the best it meant exile for an unreckonable period, and the mate was a family man. But for this circumstance he would not have hesitated a moment in throwing down the gauntlet to 'the Old Man.' For the sake of his family he searched in his mind to find excuses which might enable him to salve his conscience, and take his chance of one day reaching home on board the *Remon-*

stranter. From contemplating all the horrors that might befall the ship and her crew, he arrived at the stage when, like the Chinaman, he began to think backwards, and to credit those powers which deal out retribution to men who condemn the traditions of the sea with something approaching human equity. After all, he was not to blame, and why should he be punished because the drunken captain took it into his head to sail on an unlucky day? If there was justice, then the curse must fall upon 'the Old Man's' head, and not upon the unoffending. Viewed in this light the load gradually lifted from his mind, though vestiges of fear remained, and it was with the tingling sensations of a man bracing himself to brave resolutions that the mate promised himself, or, rather, his family, to chance his luck and stick to the ship.

In case, however, the worst did happen, he could never forgive himself leaving this world without taking a last farewell of those waiting ones who might see him no more. Usually he pretended that wife and children were merely so many sources of trouble, and little else. Yet the prospect of never seeing them again revealed to him the depth of his affection for them. Therefore he took the precaution to go ashore next day with a letter addressed to his wife, which he instructed the agents to send by the first safe opportunity after the *Remonstranter* had sailed. All that he wrote to her was: 'Friday, the 13th of the month and the Old Man's birthday: it's unlucky.'

II.

In her youth the *Remonstranter* had been one of the smartest vessels running out to Australia. She fell upon evil days when steam began to

gain the mastery over sail, and was sold to Scandinavia, the emporium of old vessels. There she lost her smartness and her name, her whimsical new owner preferring the high-sounding *Remonstranter* to the plain English *Swift*. Now in her old age, in the pursuit of her career as a sailing tramp, she was back again under the Southern Cross, loading wheat for the northern hemisphere.

Streaky Bay had few attractions to compensate for its disadvantages. Owing to the nature of the shelving sandy shore, through which there was no fixed channel, the *Remonstranter* had perforce to lie at anchor about six miles out from the port. Consequently the cargo had to be brought off in shallow draught lighters, towed by a wheezy steam-tug which had its good days when it was very fussy, and its bad days when it refused to work. Loading was, therefore, a slow job, and long before it was finished the crew began to get out of hand. They justly complained that life was merely a monotonous round of work, food, sleep, and sun. To go ashore meant a twelve-mile pull there and back in a heavy dinghy, and there was nothing to do or to see when one got there. Besides, the master, who was drunk most of the time, fussed about giving the hands shore leave in case they might take it into their heads not to return.

The crew was composed of the usual cosmopolitan crowd of scalliwags found aboard decaying sailing-vessels. The only things they had in common were the sea and their work. Therefore there was no possibility of their finding amusements among themselves. On the contrary, when the sun got on their nerves they began to hate the sight of each other, and then there were elements of danger.

Now and then, when 'the Old Man' had been driving them too hard, they came together in self-defence and held a council of war for'ard. Ohlssen, the wildly romantic Swedish Bolshevik, a man born of tired parents, constituted himself spokesman on these occasions, and enlarged upon a scheme he had in his head for 'putting an end to this dog's life by deserting the ship.' He claimed to know every inch of the surrounding country, and assured his audience that at the back of the town was a land flowing with milk and honey, where a man could pick up lumps of gold. Exactly how far it was from Streaky Bay he did not say; but once there, he was going to live happy for evermore, safe from the sea and its monotony.

In his guileless days Ohlssen had trained for a sky-pilot, and he understood how to embellish his yarn about 'the promised land.' It amused the hands, and helped to pass away the idle evening hours before turning in. Home comforts, fresh milk, and gold galore conjured pleasant thoughts on which to sleep. Yet all the eloquence left them cold when the Bolshevik came to the practical point and invited them to join him

in his wild-geese chase. Only one convert fell into his net, a weedy fellow-countryman who owed 'the Old Man' a grudge.

Master and pupil became chummy and secretive, spending their spare time in low-toned confab. As this was in their native language, the hands were not supposed to understand, though they were sufficiently interested to conclude that behind the cloak of secrecy was a plan for getting to 'the promised land.' Yet neither the Bolshevik nor his recruit was taken seriously until one morning their bunks were found empty, and the bosun discovered that the big ship's boat in which the master went ashore daily was missing. At the same time the steward reported that his stores had been broached. A hasty search established the fact that the twin plotters had deserted.

Anxious eyes turned shoreward, and speculation was rife as to whether or not they might get clean away. The affair was discussed with as much zest as if such an incident as a desertion had hitherto been unknown. Over the pros and cons the ship's lawyers talked themselves into good humour, with the sole exception of the master. Unfortunately the crew did not have the satisfaction of hearing him express himself, yet his vicious look when he came on deck, and the fact that he went ashore before breakfast, warned them that he would not take the affair lying down.

For one good reason, he could not. The *Remonstranter* was already short-handed, and the prospect of finding substitutes for the deserters at Streaky Bay was so remote as to be out of the question. Yet find the deserters or substitutes he must, else the vessel could not sail. Consequently the first thing he did ashore was to seek the assistance of the local authorities in recovering the runaways.

As it happened, the authorities were too busy to trouble about truant sailor-men who, they predicted, must sooner or later return from the wilderness of their own accord. To the captain's astonishment, nobody seemed to care much what happened to them, and though the boat in which they had absconded was discovered without much trouble, two days elapsed before a search-party, fitted out with all the necessary equipment for a sojourn in the desert, could be organised.

Starting from the point at which the deserters had landed, the party had little difficulty in following their traces in the sand. Articles of clothing and odd tins of preserved food, dropped by the fugitives to expedite their flight, formed useful landmarks at places where the footprints had disappeared in sand-drifts.

As the searchers correctly surmised, the tins of food were systematically placed at intervals where they might easily be found again should circumstances compel the runaways to double back on their tracks. Therefore they were not surprised when, early on the second day out,

they found Ohlssen's companion exhausted on a sand-dune. His eyes stared out of his head with no gleam of intelligence in them, and his throat was so parched that he could no longer articulate words, merely uttering hoarse sounds.

It appeared that after plodding along for some time together, making slow progress in the loose sand, Ohlssen, fearing that the water-supply might give out, had relieved his companion of the commodity while he slept, and proceeded alone, leaving him to his fate. By this time Ohlssen had begun to doubt the existence of his 'promised land.'

Towards evening of the same day the searchers met him retracing his steps, looking little the worse for his outing. As he informed his rescuers, the farther he went the more his water-supply decreased, until it became so perilously low that all hope of reaching his goal fled from him, and he was wending his painful way back to civilisation on the dregs still remaining in his water-bottle.

III.

Early on the morning of Friday, the 13th of the month and 'the Old Man's' birthday, the unlucky day on which the *Remonstranter* was to sail, the foot-slogger, as the hands dubbed Ohlssen, was brought out on the tug under police escort. The authorities were determined to have no more trouble with him, and deemed it advisable to keep him safe under lock and key until the ship was on the point of leaving. This the Bolshevik resented, and he had caused trouble, in which he apparently got the worst of it, for he rejoined the ship sullen and morose, threatening to drown himself or to shoot some one before the end of the voyage. Nobody suspected for an instant—not until the vessel came into port and he proved it—that he had the courage to do either. Instead of taking him seriously, the hands chaffed him unmercifully about his 'promised land' escapade and for deserting his dupe, who was still suffering so much from the effects that the ship had to sail without him.

Aboard the tug which brought off the sand-slogger were several of the master's shore acquaintances, who had come to bid him good-bye, and incidentally to celebrate his birthday. Judging by the numerous empty bottles shot over the side, he did them so well that departure was delayed by several hours. When they staggered out of the cabin they were all exceedingly friendly and unsteady, and the skipper of the tug was so drunk that he had to be lowered over the side aboard his own craft.

All the while the wind was rising, blowing inshore, so that unless the *Remonstranter* were very carefully handled after her anchor was up, there was some danger of her being blown down among the shallows, in which case she would

remain for ever at Streaky Bay, as the tug was too light to take her off. On the advice of the mate, who for obvious reasons was obliged to take command, it was arranged that the tug would keep a strain on the hawser while the crew weighed anchor, then tow her out some distance until sufficient sail had been shaken out.

Everything went like clockwork until the *Remonstranter* began to gather way, and the mate, assured that he could clear himself, shouted to the skipper of the tug to let go the towing-rope. In order to do so the drunken skipper had to leave the wheel. This caused him to lose his balance, and he measured his length on the deck. Almost simultaneously the tug breasted a high wave, which slewed her round broadside on in the track of the *Remonstranter*.

'Hard over!' the mate yelled to the man at the wheel. Though the order was obeyed instantly, nothing could prevent the inevitable impact. Before she had time to answer her helm, the *Remonstranter* crashed into the tug amidships. The tug shivered from stem to stern, as though unable to decide whether to float or go down. Steam hissed out of her hatches and her engines stopped short.

The *Remonstranter* heeled over slightly as she slid her bow along the slippery side of the tug. Thanks to her heavy cargo, she soon righted herself and headed out to sea, towing the tug alongside stern first at the end of the towing-rope, which the skipper had been unable to let go. For the space of a minute or two the situation looked serious, and anything might have happened had not the mate rushed forward and cut the tow-line, permitting the *Remonstranter* to swing clear into her course. As though by a miracle, she escaped without serious damage.

Exactly how the tug fared no one on board the *Remonstranter* ever knew, for she was too anxiously examining her own damage to wait and make inquiries. When last seen the tug was drifting inshore, her convivial party swarming the deck, and her skipper shaking his fist in impotent rage at the receding *Remonstranter*. Doubtless he was hurling unheard invectives up the wind at his departing crony whom he had pledged in more glasses than were good for him.

'This comes of sailing on a Friday, the 13th of the month and the Old Man's birthday,' the mate said, as he paused to look around him and wipe the perspiration from his brow.

IV.

The mate certainly had good cause for his ingrained belief in the superstitions of the sea, and for the constant repetition of his unlucky refrain. The *Remonstranter* took the dirty weather with her, and was so badly buffeted

about in the Indian Ocean that her main fresh-water tank sprang a leak, which was not discovered until practically all the contents had been absorbed by the wheat cargo, which was in bulk. In consequence the crew had to be rationed half-a-pint daily. Had the misfortune been discovered earlier, they could easily have collected sufficient rain to tide them over. But evidently fate had decreed that luck should be against the ship, for the rain-squalls which had added to their miseries lifted before a gale, blowing the vessel out of the track of passing steamers.

Cape Town was the nearest port of call, and an attempt was made to reach it, to replenish supplies. After battling valiantly against headwinds, the master resolved to give it up as futile, and laid a course for St Helena, trusting to luck to take him thither before the water-supply gave out.

Meantime Andersen, the steward, fell ill, so that the hands were obliged to make shift for themselves in the galley. Nearly all of them suffered from the effects of the reduced water-supply, and had no energy left in them. For the most part they elected to exist on cold tuck, on the plea that they did not want to waste water.

In this they showed some wisdom, for the spare tanks were perilously low when the man at the wheel made a landfall—St Helena. This happened on a Sunday evening, and the local authorities sent out a message forbidding the *Remonstranter* to enter the harbour before the pilot came off to fetch her next morning. At sea necessity supersedes all law and all instructions. And surely a thirsty ship constituted a necessity. At any rate, this was the view 'the Old Man' took, for, without waiting to argue the point, he proceeded as though he had not heard the instruction.

Somebody or other came out and made a bit of a fuss when the *Remonstranter* dropped anchor in the harbour. But no one paid any heed, and that night the hands had all the fresh water they could drink. Some of the more cleanly disposed were not satisfied until they had bathed in it, feeling that the mere act of drinking was not sufficient to satisfy their long-standing thirst. Andersen, the steward, was one of the bathers, and he declared that he felt better almost at once.

St Helena has not many attractions for sailormen, yet the *Remonstranter* managed to spend a very happy week there while repairs were being done and stores taken on board. Contrary to his customary practice, 'the Old Man' insisted on all the hands spending as much time as possible ashore, and, in order that they might enjoy themselves, he was extraordinarily prodigal in the matter of cash advances. This unwonted spasm of generosity made such an impression on the hands that they soon began to fear the

reaction, and expressed genuine regret on leaving the island.

However, all went well until they got on to the Line, where the heat was unusually intense. This caused the damp wheat in the hold to germinate, and the stench became daily more pungent, until it seemed to go through and through one's system. What was, if anything, even worse, myriads of weevils thrived on the putrefying mass—little black fellows about the size of peas, and as hard as the dried variety served in ship's soup. They swarmed up through the hatches until the burning deck was literally one black mass; they got into the stores so that the food was crawling with them, and at every mouthful one had perforce to swallow what became known as weevil fare; they infested the bunks, making it impossible to escape them, asleep or awake; and they stuck fast in clothing and hair, making life a burden and a misery. The only good thing that could be said for them was that they did not bite, otherwise nothing else could have existed aboard the ship. But their crawl itched and irritated the skin, which was almost as distracting as a bite, driving one to the verge of distraction.

In some respects 'the Old Man' fared worse than any one, because of his proudly trimmed, thick, bushy beard. The weevils made this their happy hunting-ground, so that he had to spend much of his time in the vain attempt to pick them out. In the process he lost his temper, and in a moment of desperation resolved to shed his glory. Thus it happened that one Saturday evening, when the slop-chest was opened—a weekly event on board—and the hands collected to draw their requirements, they failed to recognise their chief. At first glance it seemed as though some mysterious stranger had taken his place, and the illusion was not dispelled until he spoke. Even then some of the younger hands found it difficult to believe that the president at the slop-chest was their own 'Old Man' rejuvenated. The transformation made him look for all the world like a music-hall comedian, which appealed to the risible faculties of the men. At this stage 'the Old Man' became painfully self-conscious. He closed the chest with a loud bang which left no doubt as to his identity, and cleared them out of the cabin for a lot of fools who did not deserve either shirts or tobacco.

These unwelcome passengers continued to irritate and annoy all the way up to Falmouth, where the *Remonstranter* had to call for orders. An agent was waiting there with a telegram instructing her to proceed to her home port. As this meant a passage of anything from ten to thirty days, according to the wind—a serious matter considering the state of the cargo—'the Old Man' asked his owners by wire to arrange for immediate discharge in the United Kingdom. Word came back that he was to proceed as

ordered, and not waste time in telegraphing. So away he sailed, weevils and all, making the passage in fourteen days.

v.

Almost before the *Remonstranter* had time to drop anchor in the roadstead numerous small craft put off to welcome her. Among these were the usual 'pimps' who infest ports, lying in wait for sailor-men to relieve them of their hard-earned money before they have had time to feel its value. Among these was a laundry-wench, whose errand was ostensibly to solicit washing, but who added to her income by touting for a water-side public-house of questionable repute. In order to prove the excellent quality of the fare kept there, she had cunningly secreted several bottles of fiery spirit about her person. These she cautiously distributed among the hands the moment the mate turned his back.

No sooner were the sails unbent than the fore-castle settled down to a hilarious home-coming. Quantities of liquor were forthcoming—sailors have a way of always getting what they want in that line—and the orgy was kept up all through the night. Some of them had indulged so generously that by the time the *Remonstranter* was berthed next morning the hour of repentance had struck. They were bleary-eyed, big-headed, and quarrelsome. Singing had given way to doleful complaints, and rejoicing to fighting. That buxom laundry tout caused more trouble on board than had all the storm-buffeting, the ravings of thirst, or the weevils. Men who had stuck together through foul weather and fair, had braved the dangers of the deep, bringing their ship safe to port, rounded upon one another, usually without any apparent cause.

Ohlssen, the sand-slogger, was at that stage when he would willingly have fought with his shadow. Failing that, he singled out Andersen, the steward, an inoffensive little fellow, who often spoke of a wife and children anxiously waiting for him. Andersen had been more moderate than most in his rejoicings, which Ohlssen declared was 'swank.' As a preliminary to taking the pride out of him, he called the steward by some of those choice epithets of which nautical phraseology is prodigal; then, to show his contempt for him as a cook, he threw a mug of boiling coffee, which caught Andersen fair on the forehead.

Scalded and dazed, Andersen locked himself in his cabin, and refused to come out, or to cook any more food. Nothing further was thought of the incident until dinner-time approached. As no preparations for the meal were evident, an attempt was made to force Andersen out of his cabin. But he had evidently anticipated a raid, and barricaded the door so well that it resisted all attempts to open it. This made Ohlssen furious, and he swore he would kill the steward as soon as he set eyes on him,

punctuating each word of the threat by hammering with his fist on the cabin door.

It must be admitted in Ohlssen's defence that he was hopelessly drunk. At the best he was a low-type bully. Like all bullies, he carefully selected his victims from among those whom he felt to be physically weaker than himself, and once he had established an ascendancy over them, he did his best to make their life a misery. This was not the first time he had fallen foul of Andersen during the voyage, though he had not hitherto been openly set at defiance before his mates. For the sake of his reputation, he had to make the steward pay for it, as he said. 'Wait, boys,' he shouted, pushing them aside as he rushed below, to return a few minutes later flourishing a revolver, and exclaiming, 'I'll do him in. You watch if I don't do the blighter in.'

On the way to Andersen's cabin he picked up a marlinespike, with which he had little difficulty in prising open the door. Andersen sat huddled in a corner, staring silently at the intruder with the revolver in his hand.

'So you won't cook the dinner for us, won't you?' Ohlssen hissed rather than spoke. Before Andersen had time to answer, he continued, in the same tone of voice, 'Well, then, I've brought some dinner for you. There, take it!'

He fired at point-blank range, and his victim slowly collapsed, as though life ebbed out of him by degrees. By the time the harbour police arrived, in response to the master's summons, the steward had passed beyond the tormentor's troubling, out on the last voyage where there is no more sorrow.

A week later, when the preliminary police investigation had been completed and the murderer sat in jail awaiting trial, Andersen was quietly laid to rest in the little churchyard overlooking the bay. The mate, who had acted as chief mourner, lingered beside the fresh grave after the others had gone. To him the tragedy that closed the eventful voyage was merely a further confirmation of his unshaking belief in the superstitions of the sea. As he turned away he rubbed the corner of his eye with the second joint of his little finger, muttering half-aloud, 'Poor fellow, he's paid the penalty. This comes of sailing on a Friday, the 13th of the month and the Old Man's birthday: it was unlucky!'

LOVE'S PAGEANT.

I CANNOT pluck the wonder of the West
From out the burning skies of Eve, nor steal
From Dawn the rose-track of her joyous feet;
But all the glory of a love confessed
Shines on me from your tender eyes,
And in my hold is treasure, all complete—
'Gainst mine the beatings of your heart reveal
The joy and wonder of a world—my own!

I need no pageant skies
When all Love's splendour thus is round me thrown!
MAUD STOWARD.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

IN CHILDHOOD'S DAYS.

By LADY SKERRINGTON.

IT is to be feared that few children at the present day could say, as George Washington is reported to have said, 'Father, I cannot tell a lie.' Most children lie glibly. And yet I wish most emphatically to affirm that, as a general rule, they lie without any consciousness of guilt. Until a child is old enough to understand *why* one thing is right and another thing is wrong, its only guide in life is fear—fear of punishment, or fear of grieving some one it loves, if certain arbitrary rules are disobeyed. If it can evade discovery, all will be well; if not, a quick-witted child will instinctively think of the most suitable excuse wherewith to avert disaster. Sometimes the excuses are both clever and amusing. Here are two.

Two little boys, whose mother held very strict Sabbatarian views, were cheerfully engaged one Sunday morning playing at horses round the nursery, when the door opened, and they saw their mother looking in upon them with a very disapproving expression. Before she had time to say one word, however, the elder boy, who was aged about seven, called out, 'Oh, it's all right, mother; we are just driving to church.'

On another occasion, a small boy, whose Sunday amusements were severely restricted, was found by his father making a paper boat on a Sunday. Without a moment's hesitation, the child looked round and explained, 'You need not mind, father, for prayers are going on in the cabin.'

Of course, in both these cases, although at the time the statements were looked upon as very clever and ready falsehoods, there is the possibility that the children had *really* been pretending they were doing what they described. The greater part of a child's life is spent in pretending. Children are giants, they are fairies, they are wild beasts, just as their fancy leads them; and they pretend with such zeal that it is often difficult for them to be certain where the real ends and the imaginary begins. Thus, they are often scolded for telling falsehoods when they describe the wonderful adventures they have had, and the strange things they have seen, though in all probability their lively imaginations have presented the scenes to them so vividly

that they *seem* real. Moreover, children are, apparently, more sensitive to psychic influences than older people. In the East this is so well understood that natives will, if they can, get hold of a small child, and persuade it to look in a saucer of ink—their substitute for a crystal—and then tell it to say what it sees there. It is quite possible that, while they are young, children may possess that gift which is called 'second sight,' though it may be crowded out by other things as they grow older. Here is an instance of what I mean.

A little girl of five had been made a great pet of by a friend of her mother's, and used from time to time to be asked to go with her nurse and pay visits at this lady's house. One morning, when the child had been having a sleep, and her nurse went to her, she called out at once, 'Mrs D—— has been to see me. She stood by my cot, and then she stooped down and kissed me.'

The nurse, who was a very grim person, severely reproved the child for saying what was not true. She explained that it was impossible for Mrs D—— to have been there, as she was living a long way off. The child, however, persisted in her story, and consequently was in dire disgrace. A few days afterwards news came that Mrs D—— had died suddenly, and almost exactly at the moment when the little girl said she had seen her; so that, if the child was romancing, the coincidence was remarkable.

This is merely one instance, but such cases are not uncommon. Children ought not to be too severely dealt with when they make statements of this kind, however improbable the statements may seem.

We do not often have to complain of too much logic in older people, but it is curious to notice that young children will frequently show a keen power of deduction, which is sometimes a little embarrassing to their parents and instructors. Here is an example.

A little girl had been hearing from her mother certain stories from the Old Testament, amongst others, about Abraham and Lot: how, when Abraham gave Lot the choice which part of the

land he would inhabit, Lot chose to go to the rich and wicked cities of the plain. It was pointed out to the child that he ought not to have made this choice. The little girl remained thoughtful for a few moments; then she inquired, 'But what would Abraham have done if Lot had chosen to go the other way?'

That was a problem which her mother had not considered, and she never explained how she escaped from the dilemma.

When a child is told to do something, or to leave something undone, it is just as well to be quite clear about the reason for the order, or troublesome conundrums may be presented unexpectedly for solution, as a friend of mine found to his cost. His small son had had a fine toy menagerie given him just as he was going to bed on a Saturday night. Naturally the child's first thought when he was dressed in the morning was to ask for his new toy; but he was promptly told that a menagerie was not a *Sunday* toy. After a few minutes' cogitation, the child looked up and asked, 'But I may play with my Noah's Ark on Sunday, so why is it wrong to play with a menagerie?' A rather difficult question to answer on the spur of the moment!

The following is another curious case of deductive reasoning. A little girl, who was only four years old, used to watch with great interest the goings out and comings in of the baby who lived next door. When, one day, the little girl's mother heard that the baby had died very suddenly the night before, she was greatly concerned on her own child's account, as she feared the news would be a severe shock. Accordingly she called the child to her, and explained as gently as possible that the baby had fallen very ill in the night, and that she would never see it being carried in and out of the house any more, as God had taken it away to be in heaven. She expected a flood of tears, but instead the child looked at her quite cheerfully, and remarked, 'That's a good job.'

The mother thought she could not have made her meaning clear. 'You don't understand, darling,' she said. 'The little boy has gone quite away to heaven.'

'Yes, I know,' the child replied. 'But you always tell me that it is much happier in heaven than it is here; and so I say it is a good job that the little boy has gone there.'

Undoubtedly the child was looking at the matter from the right point of view, yet the mother still felt her attitude to be rather heartless.

'Yes, dear,' she said; 'but it is not a good job for the little boy's mother. Think how sad I should be if you were taken away to heaven!'

'Oh, yes, you would cry one day, two days, and then you would be better; and by-and-by you would die and come to heaven too, and then we should both be there, which would be much better.'

The problems which vex a child's mind are by no means the same as those which disturb grown-up people, but they are none the less real; and though they are often very amusing, they ought to be listened to with due gravity. There are few things a child dreads more than ridicule, and it will certainly become reserved and shy if it notices that its inquiries are treated with levity. Probably many grown-up people, when ill, have been troubled by fear of death, or some other fear, but it is not likely that any of them have been perturbed in exactly the same way as a small boy I knew. He had been suffering from scarlet-fever, and he knew that nobody except his mother and the nurse was allowed to come near him for fear of infection. One morning, when his mother went in to see him, he looked up at her rather anxiously, and asked, 'Mother, if I die, will they let me into heaven, or will the angels be afraid of the infection?'

'Grown-ups' do not always realise how extraordinarily impressionable a young child's mind is, or how easily children become obsessed by the stories they hear. Many people have had their nerves damaged for life by being told tales of ghosts and other horrors when they were young and imaginative. Such stories should never be told to children; though, when once children have heard any of them, they find a horrible fascination in them, and will beg for more.

It is probable that many boys receive their first impulse to choose a sailor's life from reading wonderful tales of adventures at sea, such as Captain Marryat, Kingston, and others used to write. Even history plays its part. I knew three little Scottish boys who, after a course of Aytoun's *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, supplemented by readings from *Tales of a Grandfather*, were asked what they intended to be when they grew up. The eldest boy immediately replied, 'Well, if there is likely to be a war with England soon, we are all going to be soldiers.'

At one period of their lives, however, they were not at all clear that it would not be best to be pirates, as pirates seemed to acquire everything they wanted without much trouble. So much for the morals of story-books!

A witty friend of mine, when she was consoled with for being obliged to witness the suffering of a friend she was helping to nurse, replied, 'Oh, I assure you it is an easy matter to bear another person's pain;' and grown-up people are apt to regard the joys and the sorrows of children in much the same spirit. With an easy philosophy,

they will remark, 'No doubt children feel pretty acutely at first; but then they forget so quickly.'

There they make a mistake. A child *never* forgets anything that has really made an impression upon it. Grief, disappointment, humiliation—all these score their marks deeply on a child's mind; while an act of injustice has been known to alter a child's character completely, for children have a keen appreciation of justice. Few people, if they cast their thoughts back into the past, will fail to recognise this. No doubt the griefs of childhood, though they leave an indelible mark, seem trivial enough to the older mind, but the pain they cause is none the less poignant on that account. A child's outlook on life is necessarily narrow. The departure of a much-loved nurse will cause such grief to a child that, a whole lifetime afterwards, it will be able to recall the scene, and to feel again the aching sense of loneliness and desolation that

then overwhelmed it. Let us, therefore, be unstinting in our loving sympathy when the children seek it.

We cannot turn and sail back up the stream of life. The current is always carrying us farther and farther from those sunny shallows where the water was clear and sparkling, and the ripples shone in the sunlight. We have, instead, to gaze down often into turbid waters, and to pass over troubled rapids, as the river bears us away towards the margin of that silent sea that awaits each one of us. But almost the only thing that can never be taken from us is our memory of the past; and if we treasure up the recollection of those good days, those glad days, when we were young and foolish, we shall be able to give the children the ready sympathy they need. And while playing with them, and pretending with the best of them, we may chance to forget for a time that the past is past, and never can return.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER II.—CONCERNING LADY DURWENT'S FAMILY.

I.

LADY DURWENT was rather a large woman, of middle age, with a high forehead unruffled by thought, and a clear skin unmarred by wrinkles. She had a cheerfulness that obtruded itself, like a creditor, at unpropitious moments; and her voice, though not displeasing, gave the impression that it might become volcanic at any moment. She also possessed a considerable theatrical instinct, with which she would frequently manœuvre to the centre of the stage, to find, as often as not, that she had neglected the trifling matter of learning any lines.

She was the daughter of an ironmonger in the north of England, whose father had been one of the last and most famous of a long line of smugglers. It was perhaps the inherited love of adventure that prompted the ironmonger, against his wife's violent protest, to invest the savings of a lifetime in an obscure Canadian silver-mine. To the surprise of every one (including its promoters), the mine produced high-grade ore in such abundance that the ironmonger became a man of means. Thereupon, at the instigation of his wife, they moved from their little town into the city of York, where he purchased a large, stuffily furnished house, sat on Boards, became a councillor, wore evening-dress for dinner, and died a death of absolute respectability.

Before the final event he had the satisfaction of seeing his only child Sybil married to Arthur, Lord Durwent. (The evening-clothes for dinner were a direct result.) Lord Durwent was a well-behaved young man of unimpeachable

character and family, and he was sincerely attracted by the agreeable expanse of lively femininity found in the fair Sybil. After a wedding that left her mother a triumphant wreck and appreciably hastened her father's demise, she was duly installed as the mistress of Roselawn, the Durwent family seat, and its tributary farms. The tenants gave her an address of welcome; her husband's mother gracefully retired to a villa in Sussex; the rector called and expressed gratification; the county families left their cards and inquired after her father, the ironmonger.

Unfortunately the new Lady Durwent had the temperament neither of a poet nor of a lady of the aristocracy. She failed to hear the tongues in trees, and her dramatic sense was not satisfied with the little stage of curtsying tenantry and of gentlefolk who abhorred the very thought of anything theatrical in life.

On the other hand, her husband was a man who was unhappy except on his estate. He thought along orthodox lines, and read with caution. He loved his lawns, his gardens, his horses, and his habits. He was a pillar of the church, and always read a portion of Scripture from the reading-desk on Sunday mornings. His wife he treated with simple courtesy as the woman who would give him an heir. If his mind had been a little more sensitive Lord Durwent would have realised that he was asking a hurricane to be satisfied with the task of a zephyr.

They had a son.

The tenants presented him with a silver bowl;

Lord Durwent presented them with a garden fête; and the parents presented the boy with the name of Malcolm.

Two years later there came a daughter.

The tenants gave her a silver plate; Lord Durwent gave them a garden fête; and he and his wife gave the girl the name of Elise.

Three years later a second son appeared.

There was a presentation, followed by a garden fête and a christening. The name was Richard.

In course of time the elder son grew to that mental stature when the English parent feels the time is ripe to send him away to school. The ironmonger's daughter had the idea that Malcolm, being *her* son, was hers to mould.

'My dear,' said Lord Durwent, exerting his authority almost for the first time, 'the boy is eight years of age, and no time must be lost in preparing him for Eton and inculcating into him those qualities which mark an English gentleman.'

'But,' cried his wife with theatrical unrestraint, 'isn't he a gentleman, anyway? Why send him to Eton? Why not wait until you see what he wants to be in the world?'

Lord Durwent's face bore a look of unperturbed calm. 'When he is old enough, he must go to Eton, my dear, and acquire the qualities which will enable him to take over Roselawn at my death'—

At this point Lady Durwent interrupted him with a tirade which, in common with a good many domestic unpleasanties, was born of much that was irrelevant, springing from sources not readily apparent. She abused the public-school system of England, and sneered at the county families which blessed the neighbourhood with their presence. She reviled Lord Durwent's habits, principally because they *were* habits, and thought it was high time some Durwent grew up who wasn't just a 'sticky, stuffy, starched, and bored porpoise—yes, PORPOISE!' (shaking her head as if to establish the metaphor against the whole of the English aristocracy). In short, it was the spirit of the Ironmonger castigating the Peerage, and at its conclusion Lady Durwent felt much abused, and quite pleased with her own rhetoric.

Lord Durwent glanced for courage at an ancestor who looked magnificently down at him over a ruff. He adjusted his own cravat and spoke in nicely modulated accents: 'Sybil, nothing can change me on this point. The making of an English gentleman cannot be left to chance. In spite of what you say, it is my intention to keep to the tradition of the Durwents, and that is that the occupant of Roselawn'—

'What! am not I his mother?' cried the good woman, her hysteria having much the same effect on Lord Durwent's smoothly developing mono-

logue as a heavy pail dropped by a stage-hand during Hamlet's soliloquy.

'Sybil,' said Lord Durwent sternly, 'it was arranged at Malcolm's birth that he should go to Eton. I shall take him next Tuesday to a preparatory school, and you must excuse me if I refuse to discuss the matter further.'

Lady Durwent rushed from the room and clasped her eldest child in her arms. That young gentleman, not knowing what had caused his mother's grief, sympathetically opened his throat and bellowed lustily, thereby shedding tears for positively the last time in his life.

When he returned for the holidays a few months later, he was an excellent example of that precocity, the English schoolboy, who cloaks a juvenile mind with the pose of sophistication, and by twelve years of age achieves a code of thought and conduct that usually lasts him for the rest of his life. In vain the mother strove for her place in the sun; the rule of the masculine at Roselawn became adamant.

Life in the Durwent *ménage* developed into a thing of laws and customs dictated by the youthful despot, aided and abetted by his father. The sacred rites of 'what isn't done' were established, and the mother gradually found herself in the position of an outsider—a privileged outsider, it is true, yet little more than the breeder of a thoroughbred, admitted to the paddock to watch his horse run by its new owner.

She vented her feelings in two or three tearful scenes, but she felt that they lacked spontaneity, and didn't really put her heart into them.

During these struggles for her place in a Society that was probably more completely masculine in domination than any in the world (with the possible exception of that of the Turk), Lady Durwent was only dimly aware that her daughter was developing a personality which presented a much greater problem than that of the easily grooved Malcolm.

The girl's hair was like burnished copper, and her cheeks were lit by two bits of scarlet that could be seen at a distance before her features were discernible. Her eyes were of a gray-blue that changed in shade with her swiftly varying moods. Her lower lip was full and red, the upper one firm and repressed with the dull crimson of a fading rose-petal. Her shapely arms and legs were restless, seemingly impatient to break into some quickly moving dance. She was extraordinarily alive. Vitality flashed from her with every gesture, and her mind, a thing of caprice and whim, knew no boundaries but those of imagination itself.

Puzzled and entirely unable to understand anything so instinctive, Lady Durwent engaged a governess who was personally recommended by Lady Chisworth, whose friend the Countess of Oxeter had told her that the three daughters of

the Duchess of Dulworth had all been entrusted to her care.

In spite of this almost unexampled set of references, the governess was completely unable to cope with Elise Durwent. She taught her (among other things) decorum and French. Her pupil was openly irreverent about the first; and when the governess, after the time-honoured method, produced an endless vista of exceptions to the rule in French grammar, the girl balked. She was willing to compromise on *À voir*, but mutinied outright at the ramifications of *Être*.

Seeing that the child was making poor progress, and as it was out of the question to dismiss a governess who had been entrusted with the three daughters of the Duchess of Dulworth, Lady Durwent sent for reinforcement in the person of the organist of their church, and bade him teach Elise the art of the piano. With the dull lack of vision belonging to men of his type, he failed to recognise the spirit of music lying in her breast, merely waiting the call to spring into life. He knew that her home was one where music was unheard, and his method of unfolding to the girl the most spiritual and fundamental of all the arts was to give her *SOLES*. He was a kindly, well-intentioned fellow, and would not willingly have hurt a sparrow; but he took a nature doomed to suffer for lack of self-expression, and succeeded in walling up the great river of music which might have given her what she lacked. He hid the edifice and offered her scaffolding—then wondered.

II.

Elise was consistent in few things, but her love for Richard, the youngest of the family, was of a depth and a mature tenderness that never varied. Doomed to an insufficient will-power and an easy, plastic nature that lent itself readily to the abbreviation 'Dick,' he quickly succumbed to his fiery-tinted sister, and became a willing dupe in all her escapades.

At her order he turned the hose on the head-gardener; when told to put mucilage on the rector's chair at dinner, he merely asked for the pot. On six different occasions she offered him soap, telling him it was toffy, and each time he bit of it generously and without suspicion. Every one else in the house represented law and order to him—Elise was the spirit of outlawry, and he her slave. She taught him a dance of her own invention entitled 'The Devil and the Maiden' (with a certain inconsistency casting him as the maiden and herself as the Devil), and frequently, when ordered to go to bed, they would descend to the servants' quarters and perform it to the great delight of the family retainers.

A favourite haunt of theirs was the stables, where they would persuade the grooms to place them on their father's chargers; and they were

frequent visitors at feeding-time, taking a never-ending delight in the gourmandism of the whinnying beasts, and finding particular joy in acquiring the language and the mannerisms of the stablemen, which they would reserve for, and solemnly use at, the next gathering of the neighbouring gentry.

When Elise was ten and Dick seven, she read him highwaymen's tales until his large blue eyes almost escaped from their sockets. It was at the finish of one of these narratives of derring-do that she whispered temptation into his ear, with the result that they bided their opportunity, and, when the one groom on duty was asleep, repaired to the stables armed with a loaded shot-gun. After herculean efforts they succeeded in harnessing Lord Durwent's famous hunter with the saddle back to front, the curb-bit choking the horse's throat, the brow-band tightly strapped around the poor beast's nostrils, the surcingle trailing in the dust.

With improvised masks over their faces, they mounted the steed and set out for adventure, the horse seeming to comprehend its strange burden and stepping as lightly as its tortures would permit, while the saddle slid cheerfully about its back, threatening any moment to roll the desperados on to the road.

They had just emerged from the estate into the public highway, when a passing butcher's cart stopped their progress. The younger Durwent, who had been mastering the art of retaining his seat while his steed was in motion, was unprepared for its cessation, and promptly overbalanced over the horse's shoulder, reaching the road head first, and discharging a couple of pellets from the shot-gun into a fleshy part of the butcher-boy's anatomy.

The groom was dismissed; the butcher-boy received ten pounds; Richard (when it was certain that concussion of the brain was not going to materialise) was soundly whipped; and Elise was banished for forty-eight hours to her room, issuing with a carefully concocted plan to waylay the rector coming from church, steal the collection, and purchase with the ill-gotten gains the sole proprietary interests in the village sweet-shop.

There is little doubt but that the *coup* would have been attempted had not Lord Durwent decided that the influence of his sister was not good for Dick, and sent him to a preparatory school at Bexhill-on-Sea, there to imbibe sea-air and some little learning, and await his entrance into Eton.

Robbed of her brother's stimulating loyalty, Elise relapsed into a sulky obedience to her governess and her mother. To their puny vision it seemed that her attitude towards them was one of haughty aloofness, and everything possible was done to subdue her spirit. Being unable to see that the child was lonely, and too proud to

admit her craving for sympathetic companionship, they tried to tame the thoroughbred as they would a mule.

Only when Dick returned for holidays would her petulant moods vanish, and in his company her old vitality sparkled like the noonday sun upon the ocean's surface. And if her affection for him knew no variation, his was no less true. The friendships and the adventures of school were forgotten in the comradeship of his sister as, over the fields of Roselawn or on the tennis-court, they would renew their childhood's hours. He taught her to throw a fly for trout, and she initiated him into the mysteries of answering the calls of birds in the woods. Mounted on a couple of ponies, they became familiar figures at the tenants' cottages, and though the spirit of outlawry mellowed with advancing years, Lady Durwent never saw them start away from the house without the uneasy feeling that there was more than a chance they would get into some mischief before they returned.

In the meantime the elder son was bringing credit to his ancestors and himself. His accent became a thing of perfection, nicely nuanced, and entirely free of any emphasis or intensity that might rob it of its placid suggestion of good-breeding. His attitude towards the servants was one of pleasant dignity, and the tenantry all spoke of Master Malcolm as a fine young gentleman who would make a worthy ruler of Roselawn.

Between him and Richard there was little love lost. The elder boy disapproved of his hoydenish sister, and sought at all times to

shame her tempestuous nature by insistence on decorum in their relations. Richard, who invariably brought home adverse reports from school, could find no fault in his colourful sister, and blindly espoused her cause at all times.

On one occasion, when Malcolm had been more than usually censorious, Dick challenged him to a fight. They adjourned to the seclusion of a small plot of grass by a great oak, where the Etonian knocked Dick down five times in succession, afterwards escorting him to the cook, who placed raw beefsteak on his eyes.

It was characteristic of the worthy Richard that he bore his brother no malice whatever for the punishment. He had proposed the fight, conscious of the fact that he would be soundly beaten, but he was a bit of a Quixote—and a lady's name was involved.

And no nurse ever tended a wounded hero more tenderly than the little copper-haired creature of impulse who bathed the battered face of poor Dick. Wilful and rebellious as she was, there was in Elise a deep well of love for her brother that no other being could fathom. And it was not his loyalty alone that had inspired it. Her solitary life had quickened her perceptive powers, and intuitively she knew that, in the years before him, her weak-willed, buoyant-natured brother would be unable to meet the cross-currents of his destiny and maintain a steady course.

But he thought it was because of his swollen eyes that she cried.

(Continued on page 32.)

SABA—WHERE THE DUTCH RULE THE AMERICANS.

By the Rev. MONTAGUE L. FOYLE.

I.

THE beautiful little island of Saba is probably one of the least known of the West Indian group, and is to be found marked only on maps drawn to a large scale. Situated in latitude 17° north and longitude 63° west, it lies about twenty miles to the north-west of the town of Basseterre, St Kitts, from which port there is a regular weekly mail service by sailing-vessel. Passengers from New York to the Leeward Islands are familiar with the rock, for it is a recognised landmark for southward-bound ships, and is generally sighted a few hours after leaving St Thomas, the newly acquired colony of the United States. Grim and forbidding, Saba rises sheer out of the sea, inevitably prompting the question, 'Does anybody live on such a place as that?' Yet the little island, which is twelve miles in circumference, supports a population of about two thousand people, and is very interest-

ing as one of the few islands possessed by Holland in the West Indies.

It is impossible to discover much about the early history of Saba. The original Carib inhabitants were left in undisturbed possession till the first half of the seventeenth century, when the Dutch, having gained a footing on the neighbouring islands of St Eustatius and St Martin, descended on Saba and hoisted their flag. As in all the West Indian islands, the coming of the white man meant the extinction of the Carib. In those days of war and commotion it was only natural that the island should frequently change hands, and in 1781 it was captured by the British, who, however, restored it to the Dutch at the Peace of Versailles in 1783. War breaking out again, Saba was recaptured by the British in 1801, only to be restored to its original owners at the Peace of Amiens in the following year. Yet once more the island was destined to undergo precisely the same change, for in 1810 the British

descended from St Kitts and hoisted the Union-Jack, to lower it again in favour of the Dutch colours by the decision of the general Peace of Paris in 1814. Since then Saba has been uninterruptedly in Dutch possession, and at the present day it is included in the colony of Curaçao, being the smallest of the six islands comprised therein.

II.

A visit to Saba is attended by even more difficulties than are usually to be encountered in voyaging to such isolated spots, and the trip can be recommended to none save those who are good sailors and active of limb. In addition to the usual discomfort connected with sloop travelling, there are peculiar natural features that make the journey an adventurous one. The island is really the summit of an extinct volcano, and the land consequently descends precipitously into the sea, with five fathoms of water close in to the shore, and deep water at less than one hundred yards from it. The erection of a pier is thus impossible, and as there is neither creek, inlet, nor bay of any kind, anchorage is a matter of extreme difficulty. Navigators always try to avoid arriving during the night; whilst, if their stay is not for long, they generally refrain from coming to anchor, and beat up and down along the coast pending the coming off of the shore boat. Agonising in the extreme to those who suffer from seasickness is the frequently prolonged wait till the rowboat is pushed off; and when she does come alongside the larger vessel, the problem of transshipment is difficult, as the two vessels pitch and toss side by side in the normally rough sea. It says much for the skill of the sea-loving inhabitants of the island that large cargoes are frequently thus landed, and that seldom is any damage reported.

The traveller, on reaching either of the two landing-places, called respectively the Fort and the Ladder, looks round in bewilderment for a town, for at neither place, save for a small military guardhouse, is there any sign of life. In front of him there stretches at both landings a long series of steep steps, and these must be climbed if the town is to be reached. One modern convenience is ready to hand, however. The Dutch Government found it absolutely needful to provide some means of communication between the landing-places and the interior, so each guardhouse is equipped with a telephone. The service extends all over the island, and it is interesting to note that, though the system was installed by the Dutch Government, the contract was given to British electricians from St Kitts.

The climb before the traveller is really up the mountain-side and over the lip of the volcano, and the visitor is amazed to see how readily the Sabeen porters will lift up a barrel of cement, a

bag of flour, or even a case containing a piano, and commence the arduous ascent. It should be stated, however, that the cost of landing and portage is in proportion to the difficulty, and that anybody moving into the island with heavy furniture must be prepared to pay. The writer was recently charged six shillings for his landing and the carrying up of a small handbag. But with all the difficulties, the climb up the mountain-side is magnificent, and the first ascent is never to be forgotten. 'Switzerland in the Tropics,' exclaimed one new arrival, and the description is not far wrong. Up and up the steps lead, huge towering rocks project on each side, and there is an appreciable fall in the temperature. Still higher and higher the steps lead, till at last the lip of the crater is reached, and there before the visitor, lying snugly tucked away in the crater's bowl, is a small and beautifully kept town known as the Bottom, with a population of about 800. Nowhere, perhaps, in all the West Indies can so trim a little town be seen—three parallel streets, carefully sanded; a population almost entirely white, each family owning its own house, and vitally interested in the upkeep of its property; excellent public buildings in the shape of Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, the school, Government House, and the guardhouse. And the interiors of the dwellings are as spick-and-span as the outsides. The well-painted walls are spotlessly clean, whilst the carefully polished floors give the impression that the owners have nothing else to do but to maintain them in the highest state of slippery glaze. Residents in the West Indies are all too familiar with the squalor that is found in town life as soon as the investigator has pierced the thin veneer of respectability seen on first acquaintance. The people have not yet been able to emancipate themselves from all the legacy of suffering resulting from the curse of slavery; but in Saba slavery never had any extensive hold, for the formation of the land rendered large estates impossible, and the white people simply kept one or two well-reared and carefully trained blacks as personal servants. The results are seen to-day in the orderly and tidy appearance of the community, and the overwhelming preponderance of the white population—the latter a unique feature for a West Indian island.

III.

But the Bottom does not by any means exhaust the population of the island. Leaving the bowl of the crater with its strange sense of shut-in-ness, the traveller climbs by an even steeper and more arduous flight of steps than that which gave him entry, over the opposite lip of the crater, and makes his way along a narrow track with sheer precipice on the right hand and towering rock on the left, till a second collection of houses, known as the Windward, is reached. Here,

again, are to be found the same tidiness, pride of home, and general neatness that seem characteristic of the people of the island. Here, also, are Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, a fairly well-stocked store, and a school. The view on the journey from the Bottom to the Windward is magnificent. There is the backward view of the town in the bowl; there is the sheer precipice at one's feet right down to the sea; there is the seaward view as the islands of St Kitts, St Eustatius, St Barth's, and St Martin successively unroll. The volcanic formation of the island is evident in the sulphur on the rocks and the frequent small fissures in the earth, some emitting slight jets of sulphurous vapour. From the Windward the traveller can continue by an even more difficult path along Jacob's Ladder (a very descriptive name) till he reaches Hell's Gate (an equally graphic title). From there it is possible to continue to the disused sulphur-mine, where Dutchmen a few years ago sank and lost much capital; and thence a very difficult track continues right round the island to the Bottom, passing the isolated village of Mary Point on the way. Here intermarriage and inaccessibility have done their work, and the place is known locally as the 'Idiot Village.' The few horses in the island are trained to ascend and descend the steps. Visitors are generally glad to ride up, but it is wonderful how quickly any but very experienced horsemen dismount as soon as the horse begins to descend. Those who do ride the downward journey show a wonderful tendency to do so with their arms round the horse's neck.

The original settlers must have comprised only a few families. Five surnames predominate. Everybody is either a Johnson, an Every, a Peterson, a Hassell, or a Simmons. Of public water-supply there is none, every house being guttered into a cistern where the rain-water is caught and stored. The Windward side is bathed in a perpetual cloud, and the temperature there is delightful, averaging fifty-five degrees. Blankets are needful at night-time, and if only Saba were more accessible, it would serve for the jaded Englishman in the West Indies as the bill-stations do for his fellow-countrymen in India. The high land in Saba is probably the only place in these islands where the common potato can be successfully grown, and the extensive bright-green fields so planted in this Dutch West Indian isle are very home-like to English eyes. The potato seldom, however, grows much larger than the Jersey new potato is when first put on the London market in spring, whilst the price is invariably sixpence a pound.

The method of burial is something out of the ordinary; there are no cemeteries, and interments take place in the gardens of the houses. A story is told of a certain funeral which

consisted simply in passing the coffin out of the bedroom window into the prepared grave beneath, after the parson had read the service.

IV.

A Hollander coming to the island might find it difficult to realise that he was arriving at one of the possessions of his country. He would be able to salute his flag, and in the persons of a small detachment of soldiers and the Roman Catholic priest, would be able to greet his fellow-countrymen; but there the Dutch aspect of Saba ceases. Years ago the custom grew up (in all probability in consequence of the colour question views of America) of U.S. schooners short of crews in the West Indies coming for recruits to the only island where the captains could be certain of obtaining white sailors. The result has been the gradual Americanisation of Saba. Man has followed man till the bulk of the remaining population consists of females, whilst family after family have husband, father, and brothers sailing out of New York. All over the world these Saba men go, as the mail-bag reveals, till it is the proud boast of the island that its sailors can be found in every port. Naturalisation naturally follows this exodus; and then, as soon as possible, the men send for their womenfolk, and a home is made under the Stars and Stripes. The clannishness of the people is wonderful, and the excellent condition of the houses is almost entirely due to money sent from the States. It is the photographs of Taft, Roosevelt, and Wilson that adorn their walls; New York is the place towards which the thoughts of the people turn; and the American mail is *the* mail, in strong contrast to the small bag containing perhaps half-a-dozen letters from Holland. English is the language used for all save official purposes. American paper money pours into the island by every mail, and Dutch coin is hard to obtain. Frequent applications are made to the sister-islands for Dutch money at a premium, and when visiting Saba recently, the writer was begged to bring all the Dutch coin he could in exchange for American bills.

It should, however, be said that the people are in no sense disloyal to their mother-country, or ungrateful to her for what she has done. It is simply that Holland is so far away, and her immediate influence on the inhabitants' lives so small, that the vastly greater and more accessible republic to which their bread-winners have gone has claimed and held their interest. Saba, indeed, raises the whole question of the influence of the United States in the West Indies, and serves to remind us that, even in these days, peaceful penetration still remains a strong factor in international life. Since the war with Spain, Porto Rico has been a definitely American colony; the Danish islands of St Thomas, St Jan, and St Croix were recently acquired by the United

States; American influence is paramount in Cuba, whilst order has been restored through her intervention in San Domingo and Hayti, an island of infinite promise. One sometimes wonders

whether the hoisting of the Stars and Stripes in other islands besides the ex-Danish Virgins would produce any very violent change in the national outlook of the population.

THE MAN WHO CAPTURED THE KAISER.

PART II.

VI.

PARKERLY was gone not five but ten minutes, and then returned, accompanied by Warlingham, whom I now remembered to have met once before, though only for a few minutes. A friend had stopped to speak to me in Roysbury High Street. He was accompanied by a man unknown to me, whom he casually introduced, as I now recalled, by the name of Warlingham.

'How do you do, Mr Warlingham?' I said when he came in with Parkerly. 'We have met before. Didn't Captain Harley introduce us to each other about a year ago?'

Warlingham remembered the incident, and said as much, listlessly.

He was a strangely melancholy man, haggard, sunken-eyed, hollow-cheeked, and with a dull, apathetic note in his voice. Under the excitement of mania he could, as I learned later that evening, fire up into another being. Now he sat cowering over, and staring fixedly into, the fire, his back to Parkerly and me, unaware, one might have thought, even of our presence, except for an occasional murmur of assent to Parkerly's questions.

It is unnecessary here to detail the questions, and Warlingham's replies. They confirmed in every respect what Parkerly had told me of the night's happenings; but it was only when asked whether, now that the abduction was an accomplished fact, he did not think that Parkerly had acted in his friend's best interests in carrying him off, even forcibly, to prevent the proposed removal to an asylum, that Warlingham showed the least interest in the matter.

'I do,' he snarled, turning almost tigerish eyes on me. 'I am here by my own wish and my own consent, and here I intend to remain. It will go ill with any one who interferes in a private matter like this, which in no way concerns him.'

Being only a special constable with limited powers, and not a commissioner in lunacy, or even a friend of Warlingham, the facts as stated by Parkerly, and confirmed by Warlingham, left me no option but to leave things as they were, for that night at least, and to retire.

But I was far from being satisfied that what I had been told was true. Once before I had had to do with a madman, and had heard from his lips a story more cunningly and craftily framed to hoodwink than any merely sane man

would have been likely to conceive. On that occasion the madman, if I may avail myself of metaphor, had been so anxious lest a neighbour should identify as his (the neighbour's) property a stolen chicken that he plucked off and burned each separate feather, but overlooked the fact that the bird's body was lying, to be seen of all, on his (the madman's) floor. There was no oversight of that sort in this case, and—remembering that both madmen and criminals, while cunningly obliterating all tell-tale footmarks, are apt to leave the much more easily identified evidence of finger-prints uneffaced; or, while hiding away ninety-nine clues, often leave the hundredth clue exposed—I could not but admire the ingenuity of the story told by Parkerly and confirmed, as I say, by Warlingham.

VII.

One factor, however, remained to be considered. My impression was that the man who had been abducted was of medium height, whereas Warlingham stood at least five feet eleven inches. Instead of showing my hand (one must go warily with madmen) by speaking what was in my mind, I made another excuse for inquiring further into the matter.

'Look here, Parkerly,' I said. 'You want me to hold my tongue about what's happened. You have given me a very satisfactory explanation, which your friend, Mr Warlingham here, confirms. But an abduction is an abduction, and if any one gets gossiping and the facts come out, it will be extremely awkward for me. One can trust gentlemen not to talk. But there's some one of another class, your manservant, mixed up in all this. He *may* talk, especially when he is having a glass or two with friends; rumours may get about, inquiries be made, and everything come out. That might put me in a very deuce of a hole for dereliction of duty, or perhaps for compounding a felony. Send your man here. A few words with him will satisfy me whether he is or is not to be trusted, and then I shall feel less uneasy.'

I have noticed on one or two occasions that a madman, when trying to deceive you, soon tires. He is not good—in deception at least—at a waiting game. His mania is different. In that he whole-heartedly believes, while it lasts, and can sustain his interest. But of playing you some mad trick, some crafty deception, he soon wearies. It was so now with Parkerly.

He was screwed up by the excitement of the abduction when I arrived, and though badly taken aback, as I have said, when I sprang my first surprise upon him, he recovered himself quickly, and in replying to my challenge he handled his rapier with skill and cunning. Now he had tired of the game, and tiring of it, he had lost interest, and played it but ill.

To my request that his manservant be summoned he did not at first know what to say. His confusion was evident. Then he tried lamely—his confidence in his ability further to deceive me evidently gone—to fob me off by mumbling something to the effect that his man lived out of the house—lived, in fact, two miles away—and was now comfortably in bed. A curious change had for some time been evident in the two men. Almost in the very proportion in which Parkerly tired, Warlingham rallied. It was Parkerly who now sat sunken in thought, staring moodily at the fire; while Warlingham either sat erect in his chair to face me, as Parkerly had hitherto done, or else paced the room restlessly. It was as if, as in the incident recorded in the Bible, the spirit which was driven out of the one man, whether an evil spirit or a spirit of dementia, had entered into the other.

'We have had enough of this fooling, Parkerly,' Warlingham said. 'Can't you see for yourself that Mr Dee doesn't believe us; that he is bluffing us, in the hope of finding out the something more which he believes lies behind what he has been told?'

It was now my turn to stand on the defensive; but I did no more than make a perhaps feeble gesture of polite remonstrance.

'Bluffing, Mr Dee,' Warlingham went on, turning to me, 'succeeds once in a while, in warfare and diplomacy, but the risk of a failure is so great—for to fail in your bluffing means that you have exposed your own weakness to the enemy—that when a wise man bluffs, it generally means that he is desperate, that he is playing his last card, and that it's a case of "win all" or "done in." The only safe bluffing is when you play a high court-card, knowing that your opponent has no trumps, and that, if he plays a card higher than yours, you have a higher one still—the ace—to throw down. Tell us frankly whether you have another high card up your sleeve, Mr Dee. It will save your time and ours.'

'Yes, I have,' I said.

'You mean that you know it was *not* Parkerly and his man who carried out the abduction?'

'Exactly.'

'And what do you propose to do?'

'I propose to report the entire matter to the chief-constable,' was my answer.

'The chief-constable!' he repeated contemptuously. 'The chief-constable—of a little, pettifogging place like Roysbury! And this is

an affair of State, and of the highest moment! Now, Mr Dee, I am going to be frank with you. It is the only course left, since you have, inadvertently, I admit, tumbled upon a State secret of vast consequence.'

VIII.

'People here,' resumed Warlingham, after a solemn pause, 'think that Mr Parkerly and I are mad. They are welcome so to think. In fact, we *wish* them so to think; it suits our purpose. I am going to tell you, sir, what no other person in Roysbury—no other person in England, or the Empire, except His Majesty the King (whom God preserve), the War Council, and Sir Douglas Haig—is aware of. First, I may tell you that Mr Parkerly and I have been for the last twelve months His Majesty's chief advisers and confidants. Each day we send, in duplicate, our directions for the strategy and conduct of the war—one to go direct to Haig, the other for His Majesty's confirmation and approval. These affairs of State often keep Parkerly and myself at work far into the night. Now His Majesty has commanded us to add to our other onerous war duties those of Heads of the Secret Service. We lied to you to-night before we knew what facts had come into your possession. In the Secret Service one must lie, if necessary, for we in the Secret Service owe no responsibility to any one except the Sovereign. In our capacity as Heads of the Secret Service we have made a stupendous discovery. When you hear what it is you will realise how terrible for you would have been the consequences if you had brought down upon yourself His Majesty's august displeasure, and the very heaviest punishment which the Defence of the Realm Act has in its power to inflict for any interference on the part of unauthorised persons, even if mistakenly, in a matter so momentous, affecting the safety of the throne, the nation, and the Empire.

'We have discovered that the Kaiser is in England. He has succeeded in getting into England secretly, but upon what infamous and monstrous errand is as yet known only to himself. The issues which could induce him to take so perilous a course must be tremendous.'

'The Kaiser in England!' I said.

'Yes, in England. In this very town of Roysbury. It was he whom Parkerly and I tracked down this very night, and have made our prisoner. Think of it! The Kaiser in England! In Roysbury! And disguised as a Spanish musician!'

'A Spanish musician!' I almost shouted, light breaking in upon me with a rush, for now I knew why the cloaked figure of the man in the Homburg hat had seemed so strangely familiar. It was seeing him by night and on a country road that had played a trick with the connecting telephone centre of my memory, and

switched it off upon a wrong 'line'—that of celebrities as they appear in public, or as portraits in the illustrated journals and the shop windows. Had I seen that cloaked and Homburg-hatted figure strutting, as I had seen it strut any time for the last ten years, along the Roysbury Marine Parade, I should have recognised it half a mile away for whom and what it was, as one of the most amiable, harmless, and innocent of men, who, except for a fiercely upturned moustache, was as much like the Kaiser as the Kaiser is like Mr George Cadbury.

'A Spanish musician!' I repeated—'the Spanish musician whom one meets on the front in the morning, and sees comfortably listening to the band each evening and afternoon!'

'The very man!' replied Warlingham gravely. 'Wonderful disguise as it was, Parkerly and I penetrated it. The heavens above us only know what colossal and awful national tragedy and ruin has been spared the nation and the Empire by the discovery. Come this way, Mr Dee.—Will you bring the light, Parkerly?—You shall see the arch-monster for yourself, and knowing what you now know, you will instantly recognise him, in spite of his disguise, as the Kaiser.'

IX.

With my head in a whirl, and wondering whether that poor little mild-as-a-mouse-mannered Spanish musician were still alive—for I knew him to be nervous enough to have died from the fright of being thus forcibly abducted—I followed Warlingham and Parkerly down some stairs to where was a cellar door, on which half-

a-dozen brand-new bolts and locks had been laboriously placed.

'We take no risks, you observe, Mr Dee,' said Warlingham significantly.

Five minutes at least went by in unlocking and unbolting these multitudinous fastenings. Then Warlingham flung the door open and said grandiosely, 'Majesty, I have the honour to present to you Mr Kenneth Dee.'

The cellar was empty.

Opening out of it was a door which led into a second cellar, apparently for the storage of coals, for at the farther end was a coal-shoot, closed by a hinged and downward-falling shutter.

When the prisoner was thrust into the inner cellar, the shutter closing the coal-shoot in the outer one had possibly been closed and secured by the two heavy iron bolts which I now saw in position there. But with the curious non-coordination of ideas not uncommon in the insane, neither Parkerly nor Warlingham had noticed that, though they had put half-a-dozen new bolts on the first cellar's outer door, the flap-door closing the coal-shoot of the inner cellar was bolted from the inside.

Hence there was nothing to prevent any one locked in the cellar from unbolting these, wriggling through the opening, and so climbing upward and out.

Which appears to have been the eminently sane and sensible course followed by His Majesty the Kaiser, *alias* Señor Montana, a retired Spanish musician now resident at Roysbury.

THE END.

THE TASTY ALBACORE.

By P. R. GORDON.

CALIFORNIA has more natural attractions and strange industries per square mile to offer the tourist and the intending settler than is the case, probably, with any other of the states forming the Union, and fishing for and canning the albacore are not the least of these.

The albacore, a deep-sea fish of the same species as the tuna, or tunny, is at present known to be found only along the southern California coast, ranging from Santa Barbara to San Diego. In the stretch of water between these two coastal towns it is to be seen in large numbers during its season—that is, from early June until late January—and it is easily caught with line and hook. The American Government has, the writer understands, undertaken the study of the habitat of this fish, with a view to determining, if possible, whether or not it exists off other coasts of the great continent.

The albacore is considerably smaller in weight than its more favoured rival, the giant tuna, rarely exceeding sixty pounds, whereas the giant

tuna has been known to weigh more than ten times as much.

During the season of the tuna and the albacore, enthusiastic anglers from all over the globe are to be found at that Mecca of all true followers of Izaak Walton, beautiful Avalon, on Santa Catalina Island, southern California, enjoying to the utmost the excitement and the pleasure attached to the sport of fishing for these gamy denizens of the sea.

Although the tuna is to be found in such widely separated localities as the Mediterranean, the stormy waters of the Newfoundland coast, and off Tasmania, the true albacore, as has been said, appears to confine itself to the waters of the Californian coast.

Some dozen years ago a small experimental cannery was started in California solely for the purpose of canning the albacore. It was a success practically from the commencement. The industry has now progressed far beyond the experimental stage, and has established itself

firmly among the many important industries of California.

The albacore is considered, as a delicacy, to be the equal of, if not superior to, the salmon, and it has always had a good market and been favourably commented upon wherever it has been introduced. Though it is canned under the name of tuna and albacore-tuna, it would be more correct if its proper name of albacore were used by the packers on their labels.

At the beginning of the season the fish is somewhat scarce as a rule, and immature for canning purposes, ranging in weight from fifteen to twenty pounds; but later on, as the season advances, and especially towards the close of the season in January, the average size runs from thirty to forty pounds.

The fishing for albacore is, to a great extent, in the hands of the Japanese, who are extraordinarily successful in catching this fish. The method adopted by them is to use outriggers, composed of heavy cane-poles, projecting from both sides of the boat, thus enabling each fisherman to make use of four lines or so. Another method, one used by the writer, is to trawl for the fish with heavy lines fastened at the ends with a heavy bone jig hook. When the boat is moving at a fair speed the hook is constantly skimming along the surface of the water, and acts as a bait to the voracious albacore, which snaps at it, thinking it to be a live sardine.

The fish is erratic in its movements, suddenly appearing in the coast waters, remaining for a short time, and then disappearing, to return again after an interval of a week, sometimes longer, only to repeat the performance. Some seasons, again, the fish is much more plentiful than other seasons.

At San Pedro, southern California, the home of the albacore-canning industry, there is a large fleet of swift, up-to-date fishing-boats, mostly gasolene launches, built specially for deep-sea fishing, and engaged almost exclusively in albacore-fishing for the packing-houses there.

Each morning at daybreak it is customary to find the boats on their way to sea in search of a 'school,' for albacore, like mackerel, always run in large shoals. On board each boat will be a barrel of live sardines, and when a 'school' is sighted the launches are steered towards the centre of it, where one can see a wild conflict being waged by the albacore upon a shoal of frightened sardines. To attract the attention of the fish to the boats, the fishermen, usually numbering four to each launch, proceed at once to throw overboard handfuls of sardines from the barrels. A tremendous scramble then takes place, the greedy and excited albacore snapping up these sardines almost as soon as they touch the water. This is the fishermen's opportunity. They immediately lower their strong, short lines, baited with sardines, into the mass of fish darting to and fro in the water,

and for some time the excitement on board is intense and infective.

That superstitious element (believed in so thoroughly by those who fish for their living) called 'fishermen's luck' enters largely into this business. A large 'school' will sometimes be sighted very early in the morning, but it more frequently happens that the boats travel many miles, and are out until nightfall, before they meet with success. Quite often too, day after day, they may have no luck at all. Supposing a 'school' is sighted early in the morning, it is quite possible for the fishermen to be back again and tied up at the wharf by noon. Occasionally a very fortunate crew may return with a load of as much as four tons of fish. This, however, is exceptional, as the average catch does not exceed 800 pounds.

Immediately the fish are caught they are cleaned, and the blood is allowed to drain, thus ensuring a perfectly white meat. If this is not done, the blood, which is very thick and rich, gives a very strong flavour to the flesh, making it most unpalatable.

While most of the fishermen engaged in this business are under contract to deliver to the packers all fish caught, there are others who work independently, and sell where they can obtain the best price.

On the boats reaching port, the fish are immediately transferred to the packers, who weigh them, and they are then removed to what is known as the draining-room, where they are hung by the tails until completely drained of blood. They are now taken down and laid on wire trays holding about five fish each. These trays are piled into rolling racks and run into sealed steam-tight cookers. After being thoroughly cooked, the fish are allowed to become quite cold, when they are taken in charge by a large staff of women, who remove all skin and bones, and cut the flesh into slices just large enough to fill a can, selecting only the whitest part of the meat, which is also the sweetest. Other parts, which are of a dirty clay colour, are not suitable for eating, being very strong-flavoured and rank to the taste. The pieces are packed into the cans with pure salad-oil.

The next step in the canning process is to carry the cans, by means of travelling chains running the whole length of the tables, from the packing-tables to the automatic sealers. The sealed cans are then placed in steam-tight drums, and are there left in live steam for such time as will allow the salad-oil to become properly cooked into the meat. After 'venting,' the cans are thoroughly cleaned and labelled, and packed into cases ready for shipment to all parts of the country and abroad. The finished product is a solid piece of white meat, delicious to the taste, and, unlike tinned salmon, entirely free of skin and bones.

THE CHILDREN OF THE CLOUDS.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

SO low in the heavens hung the pale March sun that its rays barely kissed the topmost ridges. The valleys and the glens lay black as ebony, and the only effect the sunshine had was to show how dark the sheltered hollows were, how gloomy and fissured and seamed was the whole vast mountain-range. So wide and desolate the country stretched that features which, in an ordinary view, would have served as landmarks were here mere pin-points on the infinite. An entire village lay within a single smudge of shadow; the majestic castle above the loch was dwarfed by the immensity of the loch itself, which, in turn, seemed insignificantly small in the overhanging presence of Bairnsface, a single boulder from the pinnacle of which might, had it rolled, have crushed village and castle into sand.

It may appear absurd, yet it is true that from the clouds high above the greatness of this scene five pairs of eyes watched for—*mice*! Here, where a church was as a grain of sand and man himself the merest atom; here, at an altitude from which ten thousand miles of land lay displayed below, those watching eyes sought for the quivering of a single blade of grass or the stirring of a mossy frond.

The birds looked large against the silver sky, though an uninterested observer would probably have passed them by as 'big crows.' But there was a majesty in their flight unknown to any crow, for, though it was blowing half a hurricane, they hung in mid-air with never a tremor or motion of the wings. For the most part they soared and glided in gigantic circles, but now and then one of them would remain stationary in space, head up-wind, for perhaps twenty seconds. Then, by a slight adjustment of the angle of its planes, it would rise giddily skywards, higher, higher, still with no motion of the wings, then turn in a sweeping glide that encompassed the whole vast mountain-side. So great was their wing-spread, so great the height, that they seemed to be moving slowly, and it was only when at length one of them came hurtling earthwards with wings almost vertical, swooping to the level of the topmost pines, that one realised the prodigious speed of that turning glide.

No, they were not crows, for there was a flash of silver as the bird rose in the face of the sun. Moreover, it might have been observed that at that moment there was a shudder of alarm all along the margin at that end of the loch. A group of tufted duck made for the driftwood; the gray hens feeding in the birch-trees stretched their necks and prepared for flight; even the

coots ceased to squabble and sped towards the rushes. Only the wise old heron—that gray post among the weeds at the corner of the lagoon—'never turned a hair.'

There were five buzzards soaring together, though what drew them together I cannot say. Probably it was purely a social attraction, for only two of the five belonged to this region. The other three had appeared from nowhere in particular, and with a joyous hail of 'Kew-kew-kew!' the five had temporarily united, to work the sunny side of Bairnsface from end to end with systematic care.

Bairnsface—a misnamed mountain, for never was a face so worn and seamed and furrowed by time—had long been a stronghold of the buzzards, and of the two that now lived there, whom we will call Buteo and Bute, one at least, probably Bute, the hen-bird, had first seen daylight from a shelf of the crowning crag. The previous spring the two had reared their young undisturbed, which was owing to the fact that the man with the gun was shooting elsewhere, so that it is more than possible that the three visitors hunting with them that day were their own children.

II.

The buzzard that had swooped was back in the clouds again. Why did they come to earth so seldom? Scarcely was the question asked when one of the five, she whom we have named Bute, began swiftly to descend. She did not dive or swoop, but merely erected her wings above her back till they were almost vertical and parallel, and so came steadily downwards till barely thirty feet above the heather, where she hung motionless in the wind.

Something directly beneath her held her eye. She was just behind the pine ridge where the bracken-beds ceased and the ling began, and here was a tiny pool of stagnant water, clear as the purest crystal. The pool was no larger than a man's jacket, and in the centre of it was a rather artificial-looking island of silver sand and green moss. Just beyond the island a split twig stood upright in the water, and held in the split in a most unnatural way was the head of a house rat. It was this minute morsel that had brought Bute, the hen-buzzard, falling through space from the gossamer clouds above.

She wondered a little, as well she might, but her eyes and her keen nostrils told her that the bit of rat was good buzzard food, and so she did the only thing there was to be done—she alighted on the island of moss and silver sand.

Click! Something sprang up to meet her as her feet struck the ground, something with

jaws of iron and the teeth of a vampire! It struck upwards like the strike of a rattlesnake, and in so doing flung one of her claws aside, while it caught the other in its shattering grip. Bute fell, her wonderful wings outspread across the pool; then, looking upwards at her friends, still free in the heavens, she uttered a plaintive 'Kew-kew-kew!'

Faint and melancholy, a mere atom of sound in the sky, the answer came. Her mate had heard her, and was now wheeling in her direction with one of those marvellous turning glides. He saw her with wings outspread upon the earth, and came swooping downwards through space—one mile, two, till he hung directly above.

'Kew-kew-ke-ke-kew!' cried Bute, and clutching the steel jaws of the trap with her free talons, she forced herself upright, tearing at the trap with her claws, lashing the water with her mighty wings, even raising the trap from its bedding. But to it was attached an iron chain with a drag at the end, and Bute could do no more than raise the hateful thing out of the pool and land it in the heather.

The three visiting buzzards heard and saw and understood, and they too came sweeping earthwards with cries of horror and dismay. Buteo glided nearer, his golden eyes aflame, his great wings skimming the heather above his fallen mate. The other buzzards wheeled not ninety feet above, screaming, calling, bidding her do her very best; and the keeper crossing the moor at that moment heard the bedlam, and knew what was afoot.

The three buzzards aloft uttered a frenzied warning as they saw the man turn their way. Buteo saw too, and with a desperate cry alighted by his mate. He clutched the trap in his talons, spread his mighty wings and fanned, and so, flying together, beating each other as they flew, they raised the trap a foot or so. But the chain dragged them down.

On came the man with the gun, slowly now and keeping to the hollows, for it had occurred to him that with luck he might 'bag the brace of 'em.' But Buteo took the warning from his friends above, and, calling to his wife to follow, skimmed away, to watch from a dead pine-limb on the ridge.

When Bute saw the man she made a desperate effort to escape, then sat back, looking at him with her wonderful golden eyes. She might have been asking the question, 'What have I done to you that you should treat me thus?' for there was no fear in those eyes, only pain and reproach. And the man who worshipped at the shrine of the game-birds gloated over her a moment or so, then laid down his gun and took a heavy stick from the ground.

A brace of grouse rose from the heather at his feet, and at that very instant one of the peregrines that shared the buzzards' cage on

Bairnsface came hurtling down-wind in one tremendous planing glide. He saw the grouse, and his wings zipped through the air within four yards of the keeper's head as he turned to follow them. Up he went in a dazzling swirl, then down—thud!—and a grouse came to earth through a cloud of feathers almost at the keeper's feet.

The man turned with an oath and snatched up his gun, but his movements were ponderous and elephantine compared with those of the aerial acrobat above his head. He fired as the falcon rose to stoop a second time, and missed by feet rather than inches. With a scream of mockery and triumph the peregrine struck down the second grouse before his very eyes, then dashed off behind the pine ridge, leaving the sacred game-birds where they had fallen.

The keeper stood and swore in Gaelic, so overwhelmed by such unspeakable audacity that he did not notice that his shots had frightened the imprisoned buzzard into another desperate effort to escape. The wafting of wings aroused him, and looking round, he saw two buzzards flying low, side by side, not eighty yards away. He gave them the choke-bore for luck, then turned to his trap with black and speechless looks. Between the jaws of it was held a buzzard's foot.

III.

Before the war buzzards and peregrines had been all but extinct along this range, and now it pained the keeper exceedingly to find that his absence abroad, together with that of other members of his calling, had allowed these 'renegades' a breathing-space in the very nick of time. The dwindling remnants had all but toppled over the edge of extinction—the noblest of our wild birds gone. But now the buzzard was afloat once more, the wild scream of the peregrine oft broke the quietude of the lonely corrie, and the man with the gun, who saw neither beauty nor romance in such life, set everywhere the engines for their downfall.

After Bute's encounter with the trap she and her mate flew straight to Bairnsface, and high on the topmost crags, a sheer four hundred feet from the broken slope below, they settled. The male bird alighted, as usual, on the dead branch of a wind-tortured pine, which, with the originality of its kind, had contrived to find roothold on a shelf where there was not enough earth to bury a mole. He would sit for hours on that naked stump, absorbing the view and the sunshine. And, ye gods, what a view it was! The hen-bird, wild-eyed and frightened, tried to alight on her favourite shelf, fell, and finally lay down on the moist, soft peat.

Whether she suffered much one cannot say, but it can scarcely have been otherwise. Patiently and bravely she set to work and trimmed the jagged stump. Her mate seemed not to know that any ill had befallen her. She

was sadly maimed, but the fact that she was free again was enough for him.

Next morning, with the first gray streak of dawn, Buteo was a-wing, soaring and gliding in the cutting gale, and calling to Bute to join him; but she was not there. The peregrine hurtled down from the blue, and landed, light as a thistle-seed, on a pinnacle of the crag. But at length Buteo saw her, seated so still that she might have been sleeping, down in the heather at the side of the burn a thousand feet below. She had gone there to drink, and now was resting, though, as her mate glided above with a joyous greeting, she spread her wings to join him. She spread her wings and beat the air, but, alas! she could not rise here in the deep heather. Those great planes were unable to catch and hold the air from so low a starting-point, for she had but one foot with which to give herself the launching spring. She struggled to an open space, frightened, mystified; and there, at last, the wind caught her wings and sped her upwards.

It was the last time the hen-buzzard was ever caught that way. Never again did she alight on closed-in ground, and when she took her quarry from the earth she merely skimmed the heather with her wings, flicking up her quivering prey as she glided by. Thus the keeper, all unwittingly, had produced a buzzard which would never be caught in a trap; and, since it is from their mother that young buzzards learn their hunting, who can say but that the disabled Bute may yet prove the salvation of her kind?

IV.

The wind shifted from the north, and now at last it bore the taste of spring. The lapwings left the lowland swamps, and wild and shrill their cheery calls rang out across the heather. The great flocks of curlews forsook the river flats and took to frequenting the vast bent allotments—screaming and alighting, soaring and hovering, like gigantic humming-birds. There was a stirring and an awakening in all the air. The noisy colony of jackdaws lower down the crag had long been busy stealing each other's sticks, and many of them had eggs by now. The ravens, midway down, had completed their nest, and spent hours admiring it. The peregrines were busy too; and directly below them, straight in view, a rock-dove had produced two of the purest, whitest pearls on a shelf of moss. She came and went a dozen times a day, gliding and alighting under the very eyes of those swooping freebooters; but among the people of the crag a truce was called at this season. The peregrines might strike her down a mile from home; here, in their stronghold, she was safe.

But in all this shifting and sorting the buzzards played no part. The female's leg quickly healed, and over the stump there formed a soft protecting pad. She had only

one foot with which to clutch her quarry, but since it was always of such a small and insignificant order, this handicapped her little. She fed chiefly on mice, which she swept from the ling and swallowed whole while flying; and the keeper on his rounds wondered why he so often found the bait flicked from the twig of his hawk sets, and the trap unsprung. Normally, Bute would have been busy at this season, but her injury left her sick and weak, and the dawning of the love moon found her quite unmoved.

No doubt it was the gleaming rock-dove eggs that caught the eye of the one real criminal of the cragland slope. Of inherent, devilish, snarling sin he was the material form. The peregrines might strike down many a noble game-bird, but their ways were open as the sky, and they cared not a jot for any man alive. This skulking prowler came by ways no man knew, and did bloody and unthinkable things in the shadowy alleys of the crags. He was no other than a huge wild-cat, barred and bristling, with eyes of emerald fire.

The hen-peregrine was basking by her nest when the wild-cat crept along the shelf and fell upon her. The great hawk struck out with a scream, the meaning of which all the crag folk knew. It sent Buteo shooting skywards from his twisted branch with a startled cry, while Bute came tumbling from the clouds to see what was amiss. And when they saw, their soft and plaintive 'Kew-kew-kew' changed to a chattering challenge.

The hen-peregrine, severely shaken, was sitting back on her tail with claws exposed, calling wildly to her mate; while the wild-cat, hunched and bristling, waited for a breach in the defence. He saw not the two descending shapes above till their shadows fell upon him; then he leapt to meet them with a hissing snarl, and was beaten back by savage wings. He turned to flee like the coward that he was, but Bute struck downward, and a wisp of feline fluff floated away. They forced him to turn and face them; then inch by inch, foot by foot, they drove him backwards to the edge. Back, back he crept, blinded, dazed by the maelstrom of lashing wings, snarling, hissing, striking wildly, till at the very edge he paused and crouched in the attitude of one who knows that he is done.

The buzzards might have relented now, for all they wished was to teach the cat the folly of invading their ancestral home, but at that moment the male peregrine came zipping over the brow, and saw with rage the big, ugly feline close by his newly finished nest. With a scream he dropped and struck—struck with a force that sent the great wild-cat whirling and clutching over the edge, to come to rest at length among the boulders far below. And there, while the female peregrine groomed her ruffled coat, the buzzards tore him limb from limb.

This was the sole occasion on which the buzzards showed their blood. There was none of that devilish ferocity about them which distinguished the peregrines. The buzzards killed only what they required for food, and, since their appetites were immense, they were seldom idle. The peregrines would dart at a baby rabbit, and when it escaped by the skin of its teeth, they would strike down a royal grouse in sheer ferocity, leaving it where it lay. Not so the buzzards. In a single day Buteo would kill a dozen moles, and having thus satisfied his needs, he would sit on the stunted bough, his feathers ruffled by the wind, and doze away the hours.

v.

The ravens hatched their eggs on the shelf below, and the hen-peregrine was busy sitting on her first blood-marbled clutch ere the hen-buzzard bethought herself to fall in with the will of her lord, and make the best possible of a bad job in completing the renovation of the old nest below the pine. She worked with a will now, and so did he, so that in a single day the nest was ready for their eggs.

At dawn the following day four men appeared at the brow of the cliff. One was the keeper. He carried ropes and a crowbar, while two of the others carried shot-guns, and one a long-range fowling-piece.

They peered over the edge, searching the face below, and high in the heavens overhead sounded the warning 'Kee-kee-kee!' of the tercel. His mate heeded it, and, rising from her eggs, launched outward into space. There was a loud report, and down she fell, a spinning, pitiable ball of feathers, to crash and rebound among the rocks below. 'Kee-kee-kee!' called her mate, and looking up, the men saw him descending in a spiral nose-dive.

'Look out!' cried the keeper. 'Here he comes!'

He came. He swooped towards his fallen mate, whose feathers, ruffled by the wind, spoke of the mystery of death to him, and high over her he hung on long, blue, tapered wings, calling, looking, wondering—wondering why she lay so still and limp.

Bang! Bang!

The long blue wings collapsed and he too fell, to lie beside his lady on the sweet and scented earth—no longer a dashing glory to behold, but merely a heap of bloody, crumpled feathers, from which the lustre faded with the fading of his life.

Farewell, little aeronaut! It cannot be otherwise while there are birds which men hold sacred to themselves; but I, who love the sport of the hills and the woods as much as any man alive, would see you protected, as I would protect any other rare and lovely thing.

A gratified grin curved the keeper's thick lips, while his keen eyes sought the sky above for any moving speck. And there he found the thing

he sought—two gliding points of black, circling, criss-crossing, as they flew against the silver clouds.

'That's them!' he said, meaning the buzzards. 'They'll come down soon as I begin to climb, so you want to be ready for them.'

The keeper knew every shelf and nesting-place of this ancestral home of a race of noble birds. By means of his rope he could gain the falcons' nest, and just below there, by the stunted pine, he would find the acerie of the buzzards. So down he went, his friends paying out the line. He took the eggs of the peregrines to exchange the priceless things for cash over the counter of a local taxidermist; then, at considerable peril, he climbed to the stunted pine. And here he found—an empty ravens' nest, lined by the buzzards, and ready for use!

Angry and disappointed, the keeper cursed his luck, then kicked the nest downwards into giddy space. Below him, on a shelf, he could see the glossy young ravens looking at him with their bright, inquiring eyes. To reach them was impossible, and he pondered a moment whether he should shower stones into the nest; but remembering that, whatever his own feelings, his employer had no quarrel with the ravens, he refrained from doing so, and shouted to the men above to haul him up.

High overhead, circling, watching, higher even than before, were the buzzards, and now and then a faint 'Kew-kew' wafted downwards on the breeze. The keeper knew that they had beaten him this year. He thought that they must be nesting on some other part of the crag which he did not know, for already the season was late, already the young grouse were a-wing. Little did he guess that it was the work of his own hands that had brought about this undesirable end, even as he had unknowingly produced a buzzard he could never trap.

A FAR-OFF VALLEY.

I THINK of a far-off valley,
Amid a lonely land,
Where, shadowed by a mountain,
Some wooden crosses stand.
There's no one in this valley
To tend the graves, where sleep
Those hearts from which there springeth
The flowers of peace we reap.
There's but the sun to scatter
Fair garlands where they lie,
The rain to weep above them,
The wind to breathe a sigh.

What of myself?—I live!
O God! why should I live
When nobler men must die?
O God! what can I give
My life to justify?
I think of a far-off valley,
Amid a lonely land,
Where, shadowed by a mountain,
Some wooden crosses stand.

C. G. S.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE 'IZZAT OF THE REGIMENT.

By Major W. R. FORAN.

I.

THE 'izzat of the Bhawelpur Light Infantry was the personal honour of every man in the regiment—and not without cause; for the word signifies prestige, honour, military reputation, *esprit de corps*, and a host of other things besides. Upon their colours, surrounding the crest—a dragon of fearsome aspect—were embroidered in letters of gold the names of eleven campaigns, and underneath ran their motto, in Persian, '*Taiyār Shiyā*,' which is to say, 'Ready and Fearless.'

It was essentially a regiment of the frontiers, made up of men of very different caste and race—Sikhs and Punjabis, Afridis, Pathans, and Waziris—and wherever war was being waged or unrest reported amongst the tribesfolk, there would the Bhawelpurs surely be found. Amongst the rank and file was a strong leaven of hillmen of the Border, who, coerced into submission in many grim and sanguinary little affairs of outposts, had, in the fullness of their admiration, sought service under the flag that had chastened their pride. The British officers, though mostly poor in this world's goods, were all rich in pride and a fierce exclusiveness, for it was traditional in the regiment that son should follow father in its service. Accordingly there existed between officers and men unbreakable ties of mutual affection and respect, which made greatly for efficiency. A corps wherein every man counts his life as of small value in matters which touch the honour of the unit does not include the word 'failure' in its vocabulary.

In the course of time it came to pass that Colonel Rice, who (like his father before him) had risen through all the stages from subaltern to the command, was placed upon the retired list, and journeyed home to a pension and distasteful idleness. He left behind him a great sorrow in the hearts of all who had served with him; for he was a man amongst men, sympathetic, yet a rigid disciplinarian, velvet or cold steel as the occasion demanded, stout of heart, and full of understanding. When he handed over to Major Trelawnay, his second in command, there were tears and lamentations in the native lines, and deep, inarticulate grief in the little Officers' Mess. The regiment was fit and trained up to

the very pink of condition, perfectly in tune, well-contented, and well-behaved—which last was in itself no mean achievement, for paragons of virtue do not flourish amongst the Bhawelpurs.

Trelawnay carried on with a quiet and thorough efficiency, and, because the heart of him was in soldiering, he felt a simple and comforting satisfaction in the fact that he was reaping the harvest of the faithful work of many years. He 'sensed' that he was approved of by all ranks under him; accordingly he waited for the confirmation of his appointment, and consequent promotion, to come through from Simla.

It happened, however, that the Commander-in-Chief held other views. He had long wanted to promote one of his Staff officers to a regimental command, and the retirement of Colonel Rice gave him an opportunity. In due course, therefore, word came to the Bhawelpurs at Wano, in Waziristan, that one Colonel Hosking had been gazetted to the vacancy.

Trelawnay was hit hard by this sudden shattering of his hopes, but he was too big a man to show bitterness at being superseded. At the same time, there crept into his secret heart grave misgivings. The regiment was difficult to handle, and he feared that long, unbroken service on the Staff was not likely to give an officer that delicacy of touch in handling men which was a fundamental essential. His doubts were shared by British and native officers alike, so that when Colonel Hosking arrived at Wano he was regarded with uneasy suspicion.

He proved to be a very polished gentleman, courteous and genial, mild-mannered and kind of heart; but the necessary underlying iron strength was lacking in him. His Staff work had developed him into a pattern of military theory, and had deprived him of every opportunity of controlling men. His breast was bright with the ribands of many decorations, yet they had not been won in the forefront of battle; his campaign medals he had earned not in the firing-line, but whilst serving on the Staff. In consequence his military experience had been gained almost exclusively from non-regimental sources; he had lost the knack of dealing with humanity in the raw; he thought in terms of units, not of individuals. This distinction is fine and somewhat subtle, but it is an important one nevertheless.

II.

Within a few days of his coming Colonel Hosking made his initial blunder. Instead of availing himself of the advice and the experience of his subordinate officers—which, in spite of personal opinions, were loyally at his service—he decided to rule the regiment after a system of his own devising. He ordered a full-dress parade, and announced his intentions in a speech of many honeyed words.

His unit, stiff and erect, in their turbans and scarlet tunics faced with emerald-green, listened to him in silence. They heard him promise to be their father and their friend, to be at all times accessible to all ranks, and learned that he desired their confidence above all things. Yet they were not impressed. They are strange men, these dwellers on the Border, and are full of an ingrained reticence; among them there are certain matters which may not be discussed.

The British officers exchanged glances, and held their peace; the native officers listened solemnly, and said no word; but a war-grizzled *hāvāldar* spoke swift words of anger to a sepoy who had whispered to his next file. When the parade had been dismissed, the men gathered into little groups and spoke of the matter. It was new to them, and in some subtle way it irritated them. They knew that the friendship and the strict justice of the British officers were theirs unasked, that the 'izzat of the regiment was their 'izzat too. It was a deep feeling that could not be shaped in words, and the colonel, their *kamān afsar sāhib*, had outraged their modesty in speaking of sacred personal things.

Colonel Hosking walked off the parade-ground with Major Trelawnay, and his bearing was jaunty and well satisfied; but the major's mind was full of forebodings that he could not voice. At the door of the Mess the colonel halted. 'I think now, Trelawnay,' he said with enthusiasm, 'that the men thoroughly understand me. I want them to look upon me as their best friend, and I propose to act on those lines myself. It's the whole secret of handling these fellows.'

The words surged up within Trelawnay, for he saw in the whole affair a confession of weakness; but he held them back, and his mouth twisted into a grim smile.

'My motto shall be kindness and gentleness in all things,' continued the colonel. 'Once let them know that they can bring all their private troubles to me, and be sure of my help and sympathy, and, by gad, Trelawnay, they'll follow me anywhere!'

Trelawnay felt constrained to protest. 'Justice they understand, sir, but kindness is usually translated as weakness amongst these men. In the hill-country, where most of our men are recruited, they don't have the word "kindness,"' he said.

Colonel Hosking looked swiftly at him; but the major was staring, his features set and his eyes unfocussed, out towards the rugged hills that cover the face of Waziristan. 'I'd like it clearly understood, Trelawnay, by all my officers, that I expect them to rule by kindness as well as by firmness, and I will not tolerate tyranny,' said the colonel bluntly. 'I shall hold a weekly *darbar*, where the men, irrespective of rank, can come to me with their complaints and worries. Kindly see that my wishes are made known.'

'Very good, sir,' answered Trelawnay stiffly, and saluted. He stood watching his commanding officer cross the Mess compound towards his own quarters. 'The Lord have mercy upon us!' he said softly. 'So "the old order changeth, yielding place to new;" and it's bound to lead to disaster. The colonel won't realise that he is dealing not with the glib-tongued Bengalis of Simla and Calcutta, but with men—and men of the Border.'

He sighed, and turned into the anteroom of the Mess. It was full, and there was the sound of many voices talking together. There came an awkward little hush as the second in command entered the room; and that, too, was a new thing amongst the Bhawelpurs. Briefly, Trelawnay repeated the colonel's orders, and turned to leave; but the adjutant drew him to one side.

'This will soon be no place for a self-respecting officer, sir,' he said. 'I'm thinking seriously of putting in for a transfer.'

Trelawnay studied the face of the younger man in silence. 'I shouldn't do that yet, Carter,' he advised at length. 'Better wait. I fancy that the colonel will soon find out that his policy is mistaken; and if he doesn't, we're going to want all the good men we've got to keep the 'izzat of the regiment safe.'

'All the same, sir,' said Carter uneasily, 'there's going to be hell to pay—you know that.'

'Don't squeal until you're hurt, my son,' advised Trelawnay gravely. He turned abruptly and left the Mess. He was passionately in sympathy with the adjutant, who voiced the general feeling, yet his loyalty and his fine sense of discipline kept him dumb.

III.

The first-fruits of the error of judgment came to light the following day. A certain sepoy, the recognised bad character of the regiment, but a fine soldier on service withal, one to whom fear was a thing unknown, appeared at orderly-room on a charge of using insulting language to a *naik*. The colonel heard the evidence, and the man, with thinly veiled insolence, admitted the charge. Then Colonel Hosking, as a special mark of clemency on taking over his command, dismissed the case with a warning as to future good conduct.

Trelawnay and Carter exchanged swift glances that were pregnant with dismay, knowing the inevitable result of ill-advised leniency, and the contagion of a bad example. Even the impassive faces of the native officers and the *hāvāldar* showed surprise and bewilderment.

It chanced that the adjutant, leaving the orderly-room for a moment, overheard the prisoner addressing the friends and kindred spirits who had gathered, half-afraid, to hear the consequences of his ill-doing.

'Ho, brothers!' exclaimed the sepoy boastfully, 'you see that I am free, for the *karnail sāhib*, hearing perchance of my great deeds, feared my anger. *Karnail Rice, sāhib bahadur*, was as a tiger in fierceness, and my fear for him and my love for him were great. This new *sāhib* is as mild as a she-goat, and we hillmen give neither fear nor love to she-goats—that is for women!'

He laughed loudly, and swaggered off towards his lines. On the way he met the *naik* who had put him on the charge-sheet, and he made a gesture of insult that put the black shame upon that proven warrior.

Sick at heart with helpless anger, Carter returned to the orderly-room. As he entered, two of the best *subadars* were making application to be allowed to retire on pension.

'We be old men, *karnail sāhib*, and have given over thirty years to the regiment, and now our *pension* is due to us; therefore let us go, *sāhib*.' They spoke in chorus with grave dignity.

Trelawnay and the adjutant were aghast at the swift development of the symptoms, for they foresaw a sequel of wholesale desertions, since the allegiance of the men of the Border, who are whimsy creatures, is hard to win, and harder to keep.

Trelawnay protested quickly. 'These two officers, sir,' he exclaimed, 'are most valuable men, of great experience and influence. It will be a most serious loss to the regiment if they leave us now, sir.'

'But they're both old men,' the colonel insisted. 'It is always bad policy to stand out against a lawful claim. Besides, it's a mistake to let any man think that he is indispensable. Nobody is.' He paused a second and looked into the non-committal faces of the two native officers. 'Requests granted!' he snapped.

Further protests were impossible. Trelawnay and Carter found something of great interest outside the screened windows, and their silence, and the silence of the other officers present in the room, was eloquent.

Orderly-room over, the colonel walked slowly across the parade-ground, and many eyes watched him. The British officers knew that he was stepping blithely to disaster; the natives, with their swift intuition, had weighed his qualities in the balance and found him wanting.

IV.

During the next seven days three veteran native officers applied for their pensions, and their applications were granted despite all objections; for Colonel Hosking, with the obstinacy of weakness, would not be turned from his mistaken principles.

Then the adjutant, writhing under the shame which was being put upon his beloved regiment, put in for a transfer to the Supply and Transport Corps, which, being strongly recommended by the colonel, in due course was sanctioned. The quartermaster applied for a Staff appointment, and, after a lapse of some weeks, went to it rejoicing. In a few months three of the British officers had departed on transfer to other regiments, with sorrow in their hearts, leaving heavier hearts behind them.

Trelawnay stood by the regiment, which was his world, and consoled the bitterness of his loneliness with the hope that something must soon occur to relieve the strain. The Bhawelpurs were consumed as by a great sickness. Discipline was relaxed, and slowly dwindled to vanishing-point; whilst crime increased daily. The unit, which had formerly been a model and a pattern, was an unhealthy mass of discontent and malpractice.

One by one the native officers resigned or took their pensions, until but two of the old-time men remained; and, what was worse, their places were filled by men of little worth who had fawned and lied their way to favour and promotion.

The new adjutant, one Roberts-Williamson, was a Staff officer friend of the colonel's, a man of weak character, utterly egotistical, and quite unfitted for the post—for an adjutant is a most important factor in moulding a regiment's moral. The new double-company commanders, with no real interest in the unit and its traditions, were men who preferred sport to soldiering. The best that could be said of the new quartermaster was that he meant well.

Before six months had passed, the Bhawelpurs were rotten with slackness. Colonel Hosking, always easily gulled by obsequiousness—a legacy from his life on the Staff at Simla—and blinded by his shibboleth of kindness, usurped the duties that belonged by right to other officers.

Trelawnay ate his heart out in silence. He saw that the colonel's passion for artificial popularity was the root of the evil; and the pity of it was that his intentions were of the best. In vain Trelawnay tried to pull things together; he was constrained to watch the decay of his beloved Bhawelpurs in an agony of helplessness.

The adjutant, like most weak men, was vindictive, and the Waziri sepoys had incurred his particular dislike. Accordingly he set to work to persuade the colonel that the two companies of Waziris were the source of all the trouble, and finally the companies in question were handed

over to him for a special disciplining. With his new powers, Roberts-Williamson proceeded to irritate his men by the constant imposition of fatigues and extra duties. Trelawney grieved to see the sepoy wearing surly faces, and smarting under the galling persecution; he overheard remarks in their lines that were significant, yet he was powerless to avert what was now inevitable. He protested to the colonel, who goaded him to bitter anger by treating him as well-intentioned but misguided.

'You seem to forget, Trelawney,' Colonel Hosking told him one day, when he had been urging discretion in handling the Waziris, 'that I am honestly fond of *all* my men, and I really believe that they reciprocate the feeling. The Waziris have always been bad men, and need more firmness than the others. Have you forgotten the last Waziri Expedition?'

'No, sir; I'm not likely to,' answered Trelawney, and he pointed to a long scar that furrowed the side of his head. 'I was adjutant then, and they gave me a little souvenir.'

'Then surely you realise that they are not particularly good characters?'

'I think they are all right, sir, when they are treated fairly; but that is not the case in this instance.'

'I disagree with you entirely, Major Trelawney; and I'm sorry that I must remind you that I am in command of the regiment,' retorted the colonel sharply, and abruptly ended the conversation.

That night a *jemaḍār*, going on leave, sought out the major in his quarters, and revealed to him in urgent words the perilous state of mind that was afflicting the Bhawelpurs; and his words were eloquent of the truth. Once again Trelawney went to the colonel, but succeeded merely in arousing his impatience and dislike.

Trelawney was afraid of actual mutiny.

The Waziris are not meek men, but high-stomached and full of pride. Their lives they count as of little moment, but their personal '*izzat*' is a sacred matter and at no man's service.

V.

Two weeks later occurred the anniversary of a battle wherein the Bhawelpurs had done much to turn defeat into victory, and had thereby covered themselves with glory. The colonel ordered that fitting celebration should take place. All parades were cancelled, bonfires were built upon the parade-ground, and the *subadar-major* was ordered to select athletes from the sepoys to perform their tribal dances.

The day dawned, and the regiment, delighted like children at the change from the usual routine, attended to a man. In the late afternoon a light was put to the bonfires, and as the yellow flames leaped hungrily towards the sky the colonel led his officers, dressed in the splendour of scarlet tunics, towards the dais

that had been constructed in the centre of the parade-ground. They seated themselves, and the colonel ordered the *subadar-major* to begin that part of the programme for which he was responsible.

Certain sepoys came forward with their instruments of music—*vinas*, with their sweet silver tinkling; *saringis*, strange stringed instruments; reed-pipes; and great kettle-drums.

The drums commenced to throb, and their changeless cadence smote and jangled upon Trelawney's nerves, though he was long familiar with the sound. Gradually a strangely mournful melody emerged from their pulsing background. A feeling of oppression stirred in Trelawney's heart, for the beat of the drums spoke to him a message that he could not interpret. He moved restlessly in his seat beside the colonel, and watched the faces of the sepoys. They seemed set in their usual impassive calm, but, as their blood stirred to the wild music, an air of subdued elation appeared upon them.

Then the throbbing monotone grew fainter and gradually died away. The makers of the music retired into the background, and the *subadar-major* approached the dais and saluted.

In a sonorous and flowery speech he extolled the virtues of the colonel, who sat back in his chair with a faint smile of satisfaction about his lips; for to him each word came from the heart, and was true. The oration concluded, he rose and made a brief reply of thanks; and again broke out the rolling crescendo of the drums. Again Trelawney's heart contracted with the prescience of evil; his hand fumbled nervously with his sword-hilt, and he found comfort in the rough grip. Into the circle of the fires came a troop of Waziri dancers, and in rushes and curious twisting evolutions they went through their tribal dances; and, above their shrill cries, rose and fell like waves the pulsation of the drums.

When the dance was concluded, a movement at the farther side of the circle of squatting sepoys caught Trelawney's eye.

Across the open space there came, marching erect and stiff, the tall figure of a young Waziri sepoy, dressed in full uniform, with his rifle at the slope. He came unflinching to the dais and saluted, then spoke in a ringing voice.

'*Karnail sāhib*,' he asked deliberately, 'is this a *darbar* of the regiment?'

Colonel Hosking, amazed at the man's sudden appearance, leaned forward in his chair. The adjutant half rose as if to interfere, but the colonel waved him back.

'It is!' answered the colonel quietly. 'If you have any favour to ask, or complaint to be redressed, speak freely. Have I not promised to give ear to all?'

'Then, *karnail sāhib*,' cried the sepoy, 'my '*izzat*' has been taken from me, and my head is bowed in shame. When *Karnail Rice*, *sāhib*

bahadar, took his presence from his children, I was *naik*, and my name was good amongst the *sibis* of the regiment. Then evil came upon me. I was arrested on a false charge by the *subadar-major*, who is an Afridi. Without a hearing, the stripes of *naik*—which were my pride—were taken from me. This is not justice, nor is it the way of the Bhawelpurs. My ears have been filled with tauntings and reproaches, and my 'izzat has been trampled in the dust of my own country.'

'What do you know of this case, Williamson?' the colonel asked the adjutant.

The adjutant stepped forward and saluted. 'This man was insolent, and spoke in the ranks on parade, sir. The *subadar-major* reported the facts to me, and I reprimanded him. He wished to give up his stripes, and I agreed to his doing so. The Waziri companies are out of hand, sir, and this man is the ringleader in all their devilry.'

With a surge of sudden anger Trelawney stepped forward. 'Excuse me, sir,' he said in deliberate tones, and his voice sounded cold and hard. 'This man was one of the best sepoy in the Waziri companies, and the best shot in the regiment. Until a week ago there has never, to my knowledge, been a complaint against him.'

'That's all very well,' said the colonel sharply; 'but the adjutant has inquired into the case, and finds the man guilty—discipline must be maintained.'

The sepoy waited patiently, glancing from face to face. There began again the insistent throbbing of the drums. Trelawney, watching closely, saw the light of strange fires burn and glow in the depths of the man's dark eyes—and he wondered.

'The evidence was perfectly straightforward, sir,' said the adjutant, with an angry glance at Trelawney. 'The *subadar-major* tells me that this man is the cause of a lot of mischief and dissent in the lines. I suggest, sir, that the appeal be dismissed.'

The talk had been in English until, in the last sentence, Roberts-Williamson used the vernacular for the sepoy's benefit.

They were the last words that the adjutant ever spoke. With startling suddenness, the sepoy dropped his rifle to his hip and sent a bullet crashing into his officer's heart. Uttering a shrill scream of fierce exultation, the Waziri turned and ran swiftly for the foothills.

The echoes of the shot reverberated and died away, and there fell upon the assembly an agonised silence, so tense and so deep that the throbbing of the drums seemed to be a part of it. The adjutant lay still in the dust, his scarlet tunic dark with the deeper red of his life-blood. On all the faces was frozen an expression of grim horror. The sepoy ran, unhindered, screaming his rage at the shame which he had bloodily avenged.

VI.

Trelawney was the first to recover, and he started in pursuit, calling upon the murderer, in Pushtu, to surrender. But the sepoy had a good start, and knowing that death was the price of his deed, resolved, in the manner of his race, to meet it fighting. As he ran he ripped off bayonet and scabbard, and thereby renounced his allegiance to the *sirkar*.

The soldiers, jostling each other aimlessly like frightened sheep, hindered Trelawney's passage, and when he burst through them the sepoy had reached a tall mound, surmounted by a black rock. There was no cover for many yards; and knowing that the man would wipe out his wrongs in blood, as is the fashion of the Waziris, Trelawney stopped, and waited for the coming of the armed party which had started in pursuit of the fugitive.

A *hāvāldar* snatched a rifle from a sepoy and ran towards the hillock. When within two hundred yards, he dropped on one knee and fired. The murderer, from behind the rock, fired almost simultaneously, and the *hāvāldar* dropped, with a bullet through his chest. Trelawney ordered the pursuing party to halt and lie down, for the open space before the mound, utterly bare of cover, was a death-trap. They opened up a scattering fire, which was utterly useless, since the Waziri has nought to learn of the art of taking cover. Trelawney commanded a *jemadār* and six men to encircle the mound and take the murderer in the rear. He, seeing that his hour was at hand, began to chant his death-song.

'Brothers,' he cried aloud, that all might hear, 'you know that the new *kamān afsar sāhib* has worked great wrongs upon the men of the Bhawelpurs, and our 'izzat has been taken from us. With shame in my heart, and the beating of the drums in my ears, I have been this day the avenger of my comrades. The *ajitan sāhib* I have slain because he has oppressed us Waziris beyond endurance, and therefore there is a great gladness in my heart. Presently I shall die; but if there be men amongst you, see that the *karnail sāhib* dies with me. This do for the 'izzat of the regiment.'

The colonel, who was standing at Trelawney's elbow, turned suddenly gray, and his face was the face of an old man; for the eyes of his men were upon him, and not upon the slayer.

'Men of the Bhawelpurs,' he cried, 'follow me, and we will take this murderer alive!'

But no man stirred, for the words of the sepoy were the words of one who stands in the shadow of death, and then the truth is spoken. In the silence, Colonel Hosking saw what he had done, and for a moment, in shame and remorse, he lost his head. Crying aloud that there was mutiny, he half drew his sword.

Trelawney reached out swiftly and thrust it back into the scabbard. 'Too late! Too late!' he said savagely. Then, turning, he spoke winged

words to the regiment. The bitterness that had been in his heart for many days gave him a strange power, and he played upon the feelings of his hearers as upon an instrument. He spoke of the 'izzat of the Bhawelpurs, and how the deed of that day would bring upon them the just scorn of the whole Indian Army. He touched the right chord; from their lips came a low murmur as of waves upon the beach, and to Trelawney came the knowledge that he had them in hand again, that the Bhawelpurs were a regiment once more.

He ceased. Colonel Hosking stood a little apart, his head bowed, his shoulders bent under his burden of shame.

Trelawney touched him lightly upon the arm. 'There is no mutiny, sir,' he said, and his eyes were hard and unsympathetic. 'The murderer will be arrested—but you must leave the regiment; you have heard the truth from the lips of one of your own men, and you know that it is the truth. The men know it also. Your career as a soldier is finished, sir!'

The colonel raised a tragic face to his and looked him full in the eyes; then he smiled—a little, twisted smile. 'It is true, Trelawney,' he said gently. 'It is finished. Without my 'izzat I am better dead.'

He turned and walked steadily towards the mound, his eyes turning neither to left nor to right, and his hands hanging empty at his side.

Trelawney quickly called for a storming-party,

and twenty men followed him. The murderer rose to his feet, aimed deliberately, and fired. Colonel Hosking stopped, and began to sway lightly backwards and forwards; then suddenly his legs crumbled beneath him, and he fell face downwards in the dust, a bullet in his brain.

Trelawney shouted orders to take the sepoy alive. The Waziri, standing erect and shouting defiance, began to empty his magazine rapidly, and in a moment four of the party lay cursing on the ground. When but one shot remained to him, he raised his rifle to his head, hesitated, then dropped it again to his shoulder and added yet another of his kin to the toll of his slaying.

The next moment Trelawney had his arms about the rebel, and the pair were rocking in a grim struggle. By a cunning twist the Waziri threw his officer, and as he fell plucked out his sword. Before the major could regain his feet, the sepoy placed the naked blade to his own breast and fell upon it heavily, so that the point protruded from between his shoulder-blades.

He lay, face downwards, heaving convulsively; then slowly he turned his head and looked up at the major, and from his blood-frothing lips came words. '*Huzūr*, it is fitting; my 'izzat is avenged!' and the life within him flickered and went out.

Trelawney stood and gazed on the dead face, set calm and serene in its long sleep. 'The 'izzat of the regiment is safe also,' he said softly. 'But, my God! the cost—the cost!'

ORCHID-COLLECTING IN BURMA.

By F. NICOLLS.

COMPARED with what took place in the nineteenth century, orchid-collecting in Burma seems to have gone somewhat out of fashion. In Burma, as in most tropical countries, orchids are chiefly epiphytal; that is, they grow upon forest trees apparently without deriving any nourishment from them, but taking advantage of their shade and of the dew or the rain which falls on them. The bulbs and the swellings on orchid-stems doubtless provide the plants with storage-places for water and such nutritive materials as they require.

At certain stages of their lives orchids seem able to live without air, and, packed in coconut fibre in deal boxes, to travel safely in the hold of a steamer during a voyage from the tropics to Europe. In the 'sixties of last century I was acquainted with a chaplain, a head of the commissariat department, and a commissioner in a town in Burma, all keen orchid-collectors, who had a staff of paid foresters in their employment to bring in specimens from remote places, and who annually added to their income several hundred pounds sterling from orchid-collecting. The number of orchid species is said to amount

to at least 5000, and though orchid-collecting never attained to the height of the 'tulipomania' of the seventeenth century, enormous prices were paid by wealthy British collectors for a new species. Hence there was always a keen search going on for fresh varieties, and if one came to hand extra men would be employed, and hundreds, if not thousands, of specimens would soon be brought in.

Those were times when jungle folk in Burma were very primitive and ignorant. They still collect and bring in orchids to be disposed of at the seaports; but they require now to be paid therefor in current coin of the realm, whereas formerly they would think themselves well rewarded if they obtained a couple of empty beer-bottles, or some discarded jam or sardine tins.

The three collectors I mentioned above would, were they now alive, find a very different state of things prevailing from the days when their names were given to new varieties which their collectors were the first to discover. In the case of such orchids, I believe, £100 apiece was often given for the first specimens that arrived in England. These species could now be had

in any number for perhaps a shilling a plant in Burma, and at a not very much higher price, probably, in England itself.

To the lover of nature and beautiful scenery orchid-collecting in Burma, and in the Shan States adjoining it, affords a delightful and fascinating occupation—even if there is no longer the additional attraction of making money by it, or of getting your name immortalised by having some newly discovered variety called after you. The country where orchids flourish offers to naturalists and sportsmen some of the most charming and interesting scenery in the world. The land is tropical and the sun is hot, but there is welcome shade in the forests, and the people generally are amongst the most good-natured, cheerful, and hospitable to be found in any part of the world. There are usually hills from 4000 to 5000 feet high within a day's march, where, however warm the day may have been, one is glad of a roaring fire in camp at night, and at least a couple of blankets in one's bed.

In the early morning a stroll with a gun will often enable one to get a varied bag in which jungle fowl, partridge, duck, pigeon, and sometimes a peacock may figure. Big game is scarce, although the Burmese say that where there are peacocks there are tigers. Tigers are not unknown in the Shan States, but are rarely met with. Bears are sometimes seen on the higher hills, and wild elephants are stated in some parts to do considerable damage to village plantations of rice and sugar-cane. But if you are after big game you require beaters and preparation, whereas you are almost certain to secure a meal any morning in an hour's walk in any direction you choose to take. In few other countries that I have seen or read of is bird-life of every kind so numerous.

The southern Shan States are also famous for

their orchids and wild flowers of every species, both on the ground and on forest trees. The rivers and the streams abound with fish, though they seem too wary to be caught with rod and line. Any one who is a lover of nature and interested in exploration should, if he can spare the time and the money, pay this little-known country a visit. A railway from Rangoon now enables the traveller to reach Kalaw, a charming station in the southern Shan States, where pine-trees grow and a cool climate is experienced throughout the year.

For many years now the northern Shan States have had a railway, and Maymyo, the summer capital of the Burma Government, is reached in a few hours from Mandalay, and in a day from Rangoon, by rail. But to enjoy a trip to the Shan States one should travel away from railways and civilisation, and see a delightful country and people in their primitive simplicity. Travelling in Burma is undoubtedly made more pleasant and cheerful by reason of the fact that the people are Buddhists and have no caste prejudices against associating with those of any nationality who treat them properly and do not put on 'side.' You feel this as you enter any house, however humble it may be. You are received with a cheerful smile, and the best of everything the owners possess is placed at your service as long as you are an inmate. Everywhere you find a marked difference from the exclusiveness shown in India to European travellers. This agreeable change may be attributed to the humane and tolerant principles inculcated by Gautama over twenty-four centuries ago. There is no zenana system amongst Buddhists as in Mohammedan countries. The women are as free as the men, and are treated not as slaves when they marry, but as comrades of equal standing and influence with the men.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER III.—ABOUT A TOWN HOUSE.

I.

IT was perhaps not inconsistent with the character of Lady Durwent that, although she had striven to secure the guiding of Malcolm's development, she should find herself totally devoid of any plan for the training of a daughter.

Vaguely—and in this she mirrored thousands of other mothers—there was a hope in her heart that Elise would grow up pretty, virtuous, amiable, and would eventually marry well. It did not concern her that the girl was permeated with individuality, that the temperament of an artist lay behind the changing eyes in that restless, graceful figure. She could not see that her daughter had a delicate, wilful personality,

which would rebel increasingly against the monotony of a social régime that planned the careers of its sons before they were born, and offered its daughters a mere incoherency of good intentions.

Full of the swift imaginativeness which makes the feminine contribution to life so much a thing of charm and colour, Elise pursued the paths which Youth has for its own—those wonderful streets of fantasy that end with adolescence in Society's ugly fields of sign-posts.

Lacking the companionship of others of a similar age, she wove her own conception of life, and dreamed of a world actuated by quick and generous emotions. She pictured love that would irradiate the gloom of everyday existence and make the night a thing of soft music and

Orient-shaded lights. With every pulsing beat of the warm blood coursing through her veins she demanded in her girl's mind that the world in which her many-sided self had been placed should yield the wines to satisfy the subtle shades of thirst produced by her insistent individuality.

And the world offered her sign-posts.

This must you do and thus must you talk; hither shall you go and here remain: these are the Arts with which you may enjoy a very slight acquaintance, but do not aspire to genuine accomplishment—leave that to common people; be lady-like, be calm and reserved; behold your brothers, how they swank!—but they are men and this is England; desire nought but the protected privileges of your class, and in good season some youth of the same social stratum as yourself will marry you, and, lo! in place of being a daughter in a landed gentleman's house, you will be a wife.

Into this little world of a kind-hearted, chivalrous aristocracy (whose greatest fault was their ignorance of the fact that the smallest upheaval in humanitarianism, no matter what distance away, registers on the seismograph of human destiny the world over) Elise Durwent found her path laid. Increasingly resentful, she trod it until she was fourteen years of age, when her mother, who had long been bored with country life, made an important decision—and purchased a town house.

Having done this, Lady Durwent sent her daughter to a convent, a move which enabled her to get rid of the governess discreetly, and left her without family cares at all, as both boys were now at Eton. Unencumbered, therefore, she said *au revoir* to Roselawn, and set her compass for No. 8 Chelmsford Gardens, London.

II.

Chelmsford Gardens is a row of dignified houses on Oxford Street—yet not on Oxford Street. A miniature park, some forty feet in depth, acts as a buffer-state between the street itself and the little group of town houses. It is an oasis in the great plains of London's dingy dwelling-places, a spot where the owners are rarely seen unless the season is at its height, when gaily cloaked women and stiff-bosomed men emerge at theatre-hour and are driven to the opera. Throughout the day the Gardens (probably so styled on account of the complete absence of horticultural embellishments) are as silent as the tomb; there is no sign of life except in the mornings, when a solemn butler or a uniformed parlour-maid appears for a moment at the door like some creature of the sea coming up for air, then unobtrusively retires.

No. 8 was exactly like its neighbours, consisting of an exterior boasting a huge oak door, with cold, stone steps leading up to it, and an interior composed of rooms with very high ceilings, an

insufficient and uncomfortable supply of furniture, large pictures and small grates, terrific beds and meagre chairs, and a general air of so much marble and bare floor that one could almost imagine that house-cleaning could be accomplished by turning on the hose.

After Lady Durwent had taken possession she sent for her husband, but that gentleman reminded her that he was much happier at Roselawn, though he would be glad if she would keep a room for him when business at the 'House' or with his lawyers necessitated his presence in town. Unhindered, therefore, by a husband, Lady Durwent prepared to invade London Society, only to receive a shock at the very opening of the campaign.

The Ironmonger had preceded her!

It is one of the tragedies of the *élite* that even peers are not equal. The law of class distinction, that amazing doctrine of timidity, penetrated even the oak door of 8 Chelmsford Gardens. The Ironmonger's daughter found that being the daughter of a man who had made an honest living rendered her socially the unequal of the daughters of men who, acting on a free translation of 'The earth is the Lord's,' had done nothing but inherit unearned substance.

Then there was her cheerfulness, and the menacing voice!

Turning from the aloofness of the exclusive, Lady Durwent thought of taking in famous performing Lions and feeding them. Unfortunately the market was too brisk, and the only Lion she could get was an Italian tenor from Covent Garden, who refused to roar, but left a poignant memory of garlic.

It was then that a brilliant idea entered her brain. Lady Durwent decided to cultivate *unusual* people.

No longer would she batter at oak doors that refused to open; no more would she dangle morsels of food in front of overfed Lions. She would create a little Kingdom of remarkable people—not those acclaimed great by the mealy mob, but those whose genius was of so rare and subtle a growth that ordinary eyes could not detect it at all. Her only fear was that she might be unable to discover a sufficient number to create a really satisfactory *clientèle*.

But she reckoned without her London.

For every composer in the Metropolis who is trying to translate the music of the spheres, there are a dozen who can only voice the discordant jumble of their minds or ask the world to listen to the hollow echo of their creative vacuum. For every artist striving to catch some beauty of nature that he may revisualise it on canvas, there are a score whose eyes can only cling to the malformation of existence. For every writer toiling in the quiet hours to touch some poor, dumb heart-strings, or to open unseeing eyes to the joy of life, there are so many whose gaze is never lifted from the gutter, so that when they

write, it is of the slime and the filth that they have smelt, crying to the world that the blue of the skies and the beauty of a rose are things engendered of sentimental minds unable to see the real, the vital things of life.

To this community of *poseurs* Lady Durwent jingled her town house and her title—and the response was instantaneous. She became the hostess of a series of dinner-parties which gradually made her the subject of paragraphs in the chatty columns of the press, and of whole chapters in the gossip of London's refined circles.

Her natural cheerfulness expanded like a sunflower, and when her son Malcolm secured a commission in the —th Hussars, her triumph was complete. Even the staggering news that Dick had been taken away from Eton to avoid expulsion for drunkenness proved only a momentary cloud on the broad horizon of her contentment.

When she was nineteen years of age Elise came to live with her mother, and as the fiery beauty of the child had mellowed into a sort of smouldering charm that owed something to the mystic atmosphere of convent life, Lady Durwent felt that an ally of importance had entered the arena.

Thus four years passed, and in 1913 (had peeresses been in the habit of taking inventories)

Lady Durwent could have issued a statement somewhat as follows:

ASSETS.

- 1 Husband; a Peer.
- 1 Son; aged twenty-five; decently popular with his regiment.
- 1 Daughter; marriageable; age twenty-three.
- 1 Town House.
- 1 Country Estate.
- The goodwill of numerous *unusual* people, and the envy of a lot of minor Peeresses.

LIABILITIES.

- 1 Son; aged twenty; at Cambridge; in perpetual trouble, and would have been rusticated ere now had he not been the son of a lord.
- 1 Ironmonger.

'My dear,' said Lady Durwent, glancing at her daughter, who was reading a novel, 'hadn't you better go and dress?'

'Is there a dinner-party to-night?' asked the girl without looking up.

'Of course, Elise. Have you forgotten that Mr Selwyn of New York will be here?'

'Is he as tedious as Stackton Duncleley?'

Lady Durwent frowned with vexation. 'My dear,' she said, 'you are very trying.'

(Continued on page 53.)

THE EXPLOITS OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL 'KLONDIKE' BOYLE.

By DOUGLAS WATSON.

PART I.

I.

SOME time ago a humorous weekly published a drawing of an inebriated gentleman in a hotel surveying a huge fish enclosed in a glass case. 'The man that caught tha' fish,' the 'i.g.' was saying after deep thought, 'is (hic) a liar.'

In writing of Joe Boyle, otherwise known as 'Klondike' Boyle—since the war Lieutenant-Colonel Boyle, wearing the Stanislaus, 4th class; the Vladimir, 4th class; the Order of Queen Anne with swords (all Russian decorations); the Order of the Crown of Rumania, the Star of Rumania and Grand Cross, and the Regina Maria, 1st class; a gentleman listed in the Rumanian Peerage as the Duke of Jassy—my only worry is in wondering how much of the truth I can write before the readers of *Chambers's Journal* charge me with invention.

As a matter of fact, Boyle's career is more extraordinary than any ever conceived by the vigorous pen of Jack London. With all his adroit genius for creating heroes of romance, Dumas never pictured a more engaging figure than this Canadian. In London, Petrograd,

and Paris, 'Klondike' Boyle is known as one of Europe's first gentlemen of adventure.

Without the least exaggeration it can be said of this native of Ontario that he juggled statesmen, diplomats, and generals as other men play with dice. In the tragi-comedy of Bolshevism he wandered on and off the stage at will, directing and changing the course of events by sheer force of a personality that could be felt even through the medium of an interpreter.

He is a man who has lived in the open, and has assimilated something of the vastness of nature's broad expanse. When I met him in the 'Ritz' in London, surrounded by Rumanian Staff officers, there was still an air of the North about his thick-set figure, with its powerful face and shaggy light-brown hair. He does not talk glibly; therefore, when he speaks, one listens.

'Colonel Boyle,' said the Queen of Rumania when she visited London, 'is Rumania's friend. Our country owes him a debt we never can repay.'

So much for so much, This is the true story of the exploits of 'Klondike' Boyle.

II.

Boyle was born in Woodstock, Ontario, the son of an Irishman who had settled in Canada many years ago. He is related to the Earl of Cork, and is devoted to the Empire—although possessed of his race's natural love for 'alarums and excursions.'

His first bid for fame was to start for the Klondike in 1897 as manager for a heavy-weight prize-fighter. Unfortunately for the completeness of this narrative, the name of the pugilist is unknown; but it can be assumed that he was knocked out, either by an adversary or by adversity, for his manager appears to have left him shortly after their arrival. At any rate, it was not in the nature of things that Boyle should remain a fighter's Boswell—one could as readily conceive of Lord Beaverbrook devoting his life to chronicling the activities of Ramsay Macdonald.

In the rush of '98 Boyle staked an eight-mile claim, subsequently selling it for a large sum. Now, if this were fiction the story would end here—any author knows that when his hero makes a million in the Klondike, his story is over. Give him a pretty wife, describe a sunset—and *voilà! C'est fini.*

Not so this adventurer of the North. Having achieved money, he started out to see what life held for him. He became heavily interested in railroads, in dredging, and invested money in various enterprises of Dawson City. In a short time he had ceased to be an individual, and had become one of the Yukon's sights of interest. It is not easy to dominate a mining-country, for the lure of gold draws men of jaw and character—but Boyle had both, and imagination besides. By common consent he was given the sobriquet of 'Klondike' Boyle, and his fame began to spread from Vancouver to New York. Probably the only place that hadn't heard of him as the 'Klondike King' was Woodstock, Ontario.

When the war broke out, Boyle gathered together two hundred choice spirits, called them 'The Yukon Pack Company,' took them to England at his own expense, and offered them to the British Government. Afterwards, as part of the Yukon Machine-Gun Battery, they did gallant work in France.

Some day, it is to be hoped, the full history of that little band will be written. It recalls old times described in Conan Doyle's *White Company*, when English knights used to raise bands of men, and crossing the Channel, waged chivalrous warfare upon the French, with much glory to themselves and their ladies' eyebrows.

But there is one difference—adventurous spirits as they were, the Yukon men went for a great cause; and to-night, in the wind-swept fields of Flanders, many of them are at rest. Is there any one whose imagination is so dead that there is not for him something gripping in the thought of those men of the North, who had

once wrestled with the earth for her riches, now lying asleep in her forgiving bosom?

III.

Possibly if Boyle had gone to France he would never have been heard of again; but the military authorities, in one of those flashes of intelligence which sometimes illuminate officialdom, decided that he should be sent with the Canadian Transport Mission to Russia. And that was the real beginning of the romance of 'Klondike' Boyle.

It was in June 1917, after consultation with the Russian General Staff, that he was sent to the south-western front to examine and report on the condition of their light-railway and horse-transport system. He took along with him the official interpreter of the General Staff, and had just completed six weeks' work when, on his way back to Stafka, there was a break in the line at Tarnopol. This struck Boyle as something which needed attention, so he entered the place to investigate. Things were in a 'pretty kettle of fish.' The officer commanding had be-thought himself and gone, the inhabitants were passing from a state of confusion to one of riot, and the enemy was preparing to exploit the situation.

'Assuming an authority I did not possess,' Boyle subsequently wrote in a charmingly naïve report, 'and with the assistance of two young Russian officers, I got a Russian Death Battalion (women) to throw a cordon round the town, and establish patrols, and restore some semblance of order.'

Having done that, Boyle stayed around for a day, during which time the place was twice attacked from the air, and feeling that everything was fairly satisfactory, proceeded on his way.

The incident needs no comment. D'Artagnan could not have done more.

After reaching Stafka, he was asked to attend a conference with the Government at Petrograd. He did so, made his report, and had the satisfaction of seeing his recommendations accepted in their entirety.

For the sake of space, as I want to write of his more spectacular exploits, it is necessary to pass over his work of the next few months. It is sufficient to note that he began to interest himself in Rumanian as well as Russian transportation, being furnished with a special train or a destroyer whenever he wished one. At that time Russia had about a million men in Rumania, and had not shifted a pound of flour for some weeks, whereas the army was eating a bread ration of two pounds a day per head. The Rumanian wheat was disappearing fast, and experts estimated they would be at the end of their supplies by January 1918.

Enter 'Klondike' Boyle.

He promptly arranged for eight draught

boats for Lake Yalpuh, prepared a system which was subsequently carried out, and for several months five hundred tons of flour per day were delivered from Russia to Rumania.

Having adjusted that trifling matter, the worthy Klondiker then hurried to Stafka and interviewed Kerensky, who, after the Korniloff trouble, had invested himself with the rank of Commander-in-Chief. At the conference with Boyle and Kerensky were General Alexieff and General Doukhonin, who later became the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces. Owing to General Alexieff's approval of Boyle's suggestions, the Canadian was placed in complete charge of reorganisation and construction-work on the Bessarabian railways.

At this stage in Boyle's career officialdom decided that he had been a free-lance long enough, and the general who was chief of the British Transport Mission informed him that he was under the Mission for orders. This struck Boyle as absurd, and he protested; but the British Ambassador at Petrograd and the War Office informed him that he was subject to regulations.

It is difficult to harness a hurricane.

Lieutenant-Colonel Boyle tendered his resignation to the Russians, offering first to complete his Bessarabian work, and then steal silently away. The Russians were much perturbed, and invited him to Petrograd to confer with the Minister of War, the Minister of Ways and Communications, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

'Gentlemen,' said Boyle, who felt that his knowledge of local affairs made supervision not only irritating, but unnecessary, 'I am tired of working in the position I occupy, not because of any effect it has on my work, but because of constant annoyances from the British and American Transport Missions.'

The matter was adjusted by the 'Stevens' Mission and the British one being kept to the civil area, while the man from Canada was placed in complete charge of the military area.

IV.

After a period of modified calm, punctuated by trying moments, he kept at the work until the Russians signed an armistice. As no one wanted to do any further work after that, Boyle went to Petrograd, and was among those present when the Bolsheviks seized the wheel and started their joy-ride.

To a man with a natural love for moulding chaos, the Bolsheviks offered an enticing prospect for further adventure. There was street-fighting for six days in Moscow, resulting in a freight blockade and a threat of general starvation. The Northern Army was starting for home, amusing itself by destroying estates, burning villages, and, to celebrate the new freedom, massacring peasants *en route*.

Realising that the plot of their drama was becoming somewhat obscured by the enthusiasm of the actors, the Bolsheviks did a wise thing. They took General Maniekouski, Minister of War, from the prison where they had incarcerated him, and, with an aplomb one is forced to admire, replaced him in the War Ministry and told him to feed the army.

'*Tschk!*' said the general. 'Send for Colonel Boyle.'

The general, being a soldier, knew that the military art consists in shoving responsibility on to other people's shoulders. He asked Boyle to go to Moscow and untie the knot; and Boyle, not being a *pucka* soldier, promptly agreed to do so.

Nothing daunted by the news from that city, he entered its bullet-harassed streets. In forty-eight hours freight was moving out of Moscow; and in a week things were running fairly smoothly.

How did he do it? It is difficult to state, but presumably even a Bolshevik stands aside for a man who knows where he is going. What a pity the Allies at large did not realise that elemental bit of psychology!

In case time hung heavy on his hands, Boyle was then placed in charge of the protocol between Russia and Rumania for both food and clothing. Up to that time Russia had delivered only promises. The Wizard of the Klondike waved his wand, and in eight weeks more than two-thirds of the promised goods were delivered. Some idea of the magnitude of this achievement may be gathered when it is realised that the protocol covered equipment for 350,000 men.

Having performed this herculean task, Boyle was just taking a breather, and wondering whose stables would have to be cleaned out next, when he was visited by the much-perturbed Rumanian Consul-General at Moscow. That official had received orders that he was to send to Rumania the archives of the Foreign Office, which had been deposited in Moscow when the evacuation of Rumania was contemplated; and also he was to send all the Rumanian paper money that was being printed there.

The proposition was a difficult one, as the load weighed twenty tons, and it was necessary to pass through the lines of the Bolsheviks and the Ukrainians, who were fighting. It was at this stage that Boyle's admiration of Rumania took definite and permanent form. As an ex-manager of a heavy-weight prize-fighter, he had felt for a long time that Rumania was a game little bantam, trying to hold her own in a ring crowded with heavy-weights. From what he could gather, she was getting the worst of it from friend and foe alike, so he decided to lend our little Ally a helping hand.

Having almost absolute authority on the railroads, he took charge of the archives and a vast sum of money, and after twice passing through the lines where the Bolsheviks and the Ukrainians

were at war, he reached Jassy in safety. After that he returned to Russia, and continued his work as chairman of the All Russian Food Board, which had been formed in November 1917.

It was during this period that Boyle paid a visit to Antonof, the leader of the Bolsheviks against the Cossacks, to ascertain the exact state of mind of that evil-reputationed general in case the Germans advanced. To the Canadian's surprise, he found the Russian an excellent leader and decidedly anti-German. Boyle and he had a most amiable meeting, and on parting swore eternal hatred of Germany. And history records that as long as his men held together Antonof never went back on his oath of war on the Hun.

Armed with Antonof's authority, Boyle then proceeded to Sebastopol. As his train arrived it was surrounded by a Bolshevik leader named Speiro and a committee of sailors.

'What does this mean?' demanded Colonel Boyle.

Speiro explained that a local newspaper had just announced that Britain had made peace with Turkey; the British Fleet had entered Constantinople, and was about to invade the Black Sea for the purpose of crushing the Black Sea Fleet, as a punishment for the Bolsheviks making war on Rumania. Therefore a resolution had been passed to arrest all Allied subjects, so that for every sailor of theirs killed they might execute ten Allied prisoners. They implied that Boyle would make a pleasant addition to their list.

Summoning his interpreter, Boyle addressed

them in a very few words, but with plenty of emphasis. He explained that the whole thing was untrue, that the newspaper was owned by German propagandists, and he called for volunteers to go and demolish the said newspaper.

This appealed to the mob as an idea of considerable originality, so they adjourned to the newspaper-office, arrested nineteen members of the staff, and then wrecked the place.

At the invitation of the committee, Boyle waited until next day, when large meetings took place. Speiro referred to Britain as Russia's best friend (this being received with wild applause). Later Boyle attended a meeting of all the committees of the Black Sea Fleet, and through an interpreter (Captain G. A. Hill of the 4th Manchesters) he explained that Britain never forsook her friends, that she did not want to interfere with Russian politics, but merely wished to stop Russians from killing each other, so that they could devote their energies to the much nobler task of killing Germans.

'The Huns,' he said, 'are sure to advance into your country for the purpose of making you more their slaves than you have ever been before.'

This caused a furore of appreciation, and the appearance of a British naval officer in uniform was a signal for wild applause.

The episode is not lacking in humour, but it turned the whole Black Sea Fleet solidly pro-Ally at the very moment when it seemed to be assuming an attitude of friendship towards Germany.

(Continued on page 56.)

GERMANY'S STORY IN STAMPS.

By DOUGLAS B. ARMSTRONG.

THE advent of the first postage-stamps commemorative of the German Republic, in designs symbolical of the rebirth of the Teutonic nation, marks the latest phase in Germany's history as exemplified in postal issues. The history of modern Europe and of the events which led up to the world war of 1914-18 are vividly recorded in the pages of the stamp-album, wherein may be traced the rise and the fall of the German Empire, and its disastrous bid for world domination. The story of Prussian aggression is brought home to the stamp-collector in no uncertain manner through the medium of his chosen hobby, the political developments being marked, almost without exception, by corresponding changes in the stamps of the affected countries.

The year 1849, which witnessed the general endorsement of the convenience of the postage-stamp by the nations of Europe, found Germany a loosely knit group of petty states, of which the most powerful was Prussia; France was once

more a republic, following upon the abdication of Louis-Philippe; Leopold I. of Saxe-Coburg occupied the throne of the now independent Belgium, whose neutrality was guaranteed by the Great Powers. At that time Bavaria alone amongst the German states had issued adhesive postage-stamps, but in 1850-51 she was joined by Baden, Hanover, Prussia, Saxony, and Württemberg. The early stamp issues of these states include a number of outstanding philatelic rarities, and are still much sought after by stamp-collectors the world over.

In 1880 a German-Austrian Postal Union was established, which was joined by a number of German states. The Baden, Thurn and Taxis, and Württemberg stamps of the period bore the inscription, '*Deutsch-Oestr. Postverein.*'

In 1864 Prussia and Austria together made war on Denmark, wresting from her the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, which event was signalled by the issue in the following year of special stamps under the joint administra-

tion of the two allies. Subsequently the provinces were divided, Austria taking Holstein and Prussia Schleswig; and this partition was marked by the appearance of two distinct series of postage-stamps, one for each province.

A dispute over the division of the spoils led to the Austro-Prussian war of 1866, when several of the German states threw in their lot with Austria. Military postmarks employed in this campaign, culminating in the defeat of the Austrians at Sadowa, exist on the stamps of the period in use by Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Württemberg, Saxony, and Hanover. The most important result of the Austro-Prussian war was the welding of the German states lying north of the Main into the North German Confederation. Two years later a general series of postage-stamps for the North German Confederation superseded the individual issues of Prussia, Brunswick, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Oldenburg, Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein, as well as those of the free Hanseatic towns of Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen. The stamps of the North German Confederation were supplied in two currencies, 'groschen' for the northern district, and 'kreuzer' for the southern. The kingdoms of Bavaria and Württemberg, and the grand-duchy of Baden, although in alliance with the other states, retained their independence, and continued to issue stamps of their own.

Of the grim struggle between France and Germany in 1870-71 the stamp-collector possesses many striking souvenirs. On the German side, apart from the distinctive cancellations of the field post-offices, special stamps were provided for use by the civil population in the occupied French territory. In design these labels were of the simplest possible description, consisting merely of the word '*Postes*' and a value in 'centimes' superimposed upon a reticulate ground. They were first brought into use on 6th September 1870. By means of dated postmarks on these stamps philatelic students have been enabled to follow the progress of the German armies in their march on Paris. The stamps of the German army of occupation were withdrawn in all districts excepting the conquered provinces of Alsace and Lorraine on 24th March 1871.

On 18th January 1871 the German Empire was proclaimed in the famous Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. Following on this event, a general issue of postage-stamps for the whole of Germany (with the exception of Bavaria and Württemberg) made its début on 1st January 1872, embossed with the device of the Prussian eagle and inscribed '*Deutsche Reichs-Post*.' Württemberg, however, exercised the right to issue its own stamps down to 1st April 1902, and Bavaria to the present day.

An early indication of Germany's foreign policy and the commencement of the celebrated

'*Drang nach Osten*' is afforded by the establishment of a postal agency of the North German Confederation in Constantinople on 1st March 1870, to which distinctive postage-stamps were later supplied.

Germany's colonial aspirations took definite form between the years 1884 and 1888, when the contemporary German postage-stamps began to be used by the post-offices of the newly acquired overseas possessions of the Cameroons, Kaiser Wilhelm's Land, Togoland, and South-West Africa. To these was added in 1890 German East Africa; and about the same time the stamps used in the various colonies were overprinted diagonally with the name of the colony, thus appropriating them to colonial use. The ceding of Heligoland by Great Britain on 9th August 1890 caused the stamps of that islet showing the national arms surmounted by the British crown to be superseded by those emblazoned with the arms of Prussia, first issued in October 1889, a year and more after the accession of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

In 1897 the German 'mailed fist' made itself felt in the Far East by the dramatic seizure of the port of Kiauchau on the Shantung Peninsula. Simultaneously the current German postage-stamps were issued there, overprinted diagonally with the single word 'China.'

The year 1899 saw the German flag carried into the Pacific; the appearance of German stamps overprinted 'Samoa' signalled the annexation of the 'Pearl of the South Seas.' About the same period Germany entered the field of Moroccan politics as a rival of France, German postal agencies being opened in a number of Moorish towns on 20th December 1899 as an adjunct to commercial and political penetration.

The German militarist movement which culminated in the final bid for world supremacy may be said to have originated about the time of the British reverses in South Africa. In the stamp-album it is marked by the introduction, early in 1900, of patriotic postage-stamps, the low values of which were adorned with a mail-clad figure of the titular deity 'Germania,' grasping a sword-hilt. The inspiration of this martial design is commonly attributed to the ex-Kaiser himself, who was so strongly impressed by the dramatic portrayal of this character by Fraülein Anna Führung of the Imperial Opera that he commanded her likeness to be presented upon the national stamps. Another patriotic design figures on the two marks value of the same series, which was taken from an allegorical painting by Anton von Werner, typifying the union of North and South Germany, which is described as follows: 'The two factions are represented by two warrior heroes of ancient Germany, clasping hands and burying the old ill-will of the race. In the background at the left are seen the Alps, with

the Rhine at their base; and likewise at the right is the Baltic Sea, with the cliffs of the island of Rügen, the limits of the German Fatherland; whilst above the reunion of North and South hovers the goddess of Victory, holding aloft the Imperial Crown, which sheds its lustre over all. At the bottom is the legend, "*Seid Einig, Einig, Einig!*" ("Be united, united, united!")'

The unveiling of the magnificent Kaiser Wilhelm I. memorial in Berlin forms the subject of the design of the three marks value (after the painting by W. Pape); whilst the same artist's picture of Wilhelm II. delivering an address to the Reichstag on the anniversary of the constitution of the German Empire is shown on the highest denomination, five marks. The War Lord is depicted surrounded by his staff and representatives of the Imperial Government, grasping in his hand the standard of the 1st Regiment of Guards, in the act of concluding his oration with the words '*Ein Reich, Ein Volk, Ein Gott*' ('One Empire, one People, one God').

Coincident with the appearance of these national postage-stamps, a general type of stamp was adopted for the German colonies, bearing a representation of the Imperial yacht *Hohen-*

zollern. This design was chosen as emblematic of the newly founded German Navy League, for the *Hohenzollern*, although used as a royal yacht, was in reality an armoured cruiser, owing to the fact that the Reichstag declined to vote money for the construction of a purely pleasure-craft.

The outbreak of the world war and the violation of Belgian neutrality are perpetuated for all time in the sinister Gothic overprint 'Belgien' imposed upon the German stamps issued under the Imperial Governor-Generalship. Later issues, with the name omitted, but surcharged with new values in 'centimes' and 'francs,' were also employed in northern France during the German occupation. Similar overprints marked the temporary military successes in Poland, Russia, and Rumania.

The passing of the German colonies and the beginning of the end are betokened by the overprinting of the former German colonial stamps in Samoa, New Guinea, Togoland, Cameroons, East Africa, &c., under Allied administration, and the break-up of the German Empire is proclaimed by the addition of the legends '*Volksstaat Württemberg*' and '*Freistaat Bayern*' to the stamps issued under the Revolutionary Governments of those erstwhile kingdoms.

THE FATE OF OLD MANUSCRIPTS.

By Rev. N. FARQUHAR ORR, B.A., B.D.

OF those literary treasures which classical authors bequeathed to the world, only a small portion have been preserved. Time, spite, and ignorance have contrived for us, the heirs, an irreparable loss; and if it be asked how this has happened, it can be replied, 'The character of the destroyer suits equally well the bigot, the blockhead, and the barbarian.' How great is the loss may be surmised when we recollect that Livy's *History* originally consisted of one hundred and forty-two books, of which but thirty-five remain. Of the twelve books of Tacitus's *Histories* there are only four extant. Chance has saved for us nineteen out of the eighty or ninety dramas of Euripides. Plautus is credited with one hundred and thirty comedies, and of these one hundred and ten have been lost. The same fate has overtaken the autographs of the Bible; and we are dependent in some instances upon manuscripts prepared many centuries after the books were first written. Nor has fortune been much kinder in the case of the writings of certain modern authors. Louis XIV. destroyed with his own hands works of Fénelon. The letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu were burned by her mother, though her Turkish correspondence was saved. Some valuable family manuscripts belonging to the Duke of Bridgewater were also destroyed by fire because, it is reported, he wished to conceal his descent from mean antecedents.

Of all the wealth of literature, far more has perished than industrious research is ever likely to recover. Yet, much as we regret the loss of so many works of genius, we are at the same time provided with the very interesting story which attaches to their fate. The splendid library at Alexandria was destroyed by religious fanaticism, both Christian and Mohammedan. Four thousand manuscripts (so the story goes) were used for heating the stoves by the master of the baths in the time of Caliph Omar. At Granada Ximenes burned five thousand Korans. Twelve thousand copies of the Talmud perished in the flames at Cremona. The Persians destroyed the literature of Phœnicia and Egypt, the Jesuits that of Bohemia. Many manuscripts in the quaint Peruvian picture-writing were lost for ever owing to the bigotry of Roman Catholic priests. The brilliant writings of Origen were burned by the orthodox. The ancient learning of the Irish monasteries suffered at the hands of invaders. And the ruin of what escaped the malice of man was completed by the not less certain process of decay. Part of our impoverishment is due to neglect. In his *Monasteries in the Levant* Curzon draws a pathetic picture of the fate which overtook the manuscripts stored in the monastery of Pantocratoras. He was told that he would find all that was left of the library in the great square tower. 'I went to look at the place, and leaning

through a ruined arch, I looked down into the lower storey of the tower, and there I saw the melancholy remains of a once famous library. By the dim light which streamed through the opening of an iron door in the wall of the ruined tower, I saw above one hundred ancient manuscripts lying among the rubbish which had fallen from the upper floor, which was ruinous, and had in great part given way.' He rescued at great risk to himself one or two folios from the heap, but found that the rain had washed the outer covers quite clean, while the rest of the books were glued into a solid mass by the damp. In another monastery he found valuable manuscripts being used as covers for large pots containing preserves. Sometimes the loss of manuscripts has been brought about by a misfortune which no care could have foreseen or provided against. Such was the case with Hudde, a rich burgomaster of Middelburg. For thirty years he had travelled through China gathering many literary treasures. Having mastered the language and made a collection of singular importance, he was unfortunately shipwrecked on his way home, and the library thus laboriously acquired was lost for ever. The same unhappy fate overtook Guarino Veronese after he had searched Greece for literary spoils. As he was returning to Italy richly laden he was wrecked, and all his treasures found a grave in the deep. The loss so affected him that it is said his hair turned white. Another great library which filled three vessels was seized on its way to Naples by pirates, who could not be expected to appreciate their prize, and threw every book overboard. In this manner must many priceless cargoes have found their way to the bottom of the sea as they were being carried by conqueror or book-lover from one shore to another.

But the Fates have not always proved hostile. The discovery of lost manuscripts yields just as fascinating a story. By some queer trick of Fortune's hand the bigotry and the neglect of man have often been defied. The same inscrutable chance which has robbed the world of its treasures, after cheating us, has restored a portion. So thought Poggio the Florentine when, from under a heap of rubbish in a decayed coffer in a tower belonging to the monastery of St Gall, he unearthed a copy of Quintilian. The best manuscript of Tacitus was preserved in another monastery in Westphalia. A precious volume was rescued from a printer about to use it to line the covers of his books, another from the hands of a fishmonger, a third from a maker of battledores. An original Magna Carta, with all its seals intact, was spared the ignominious end of being cut up for measures by the scissors of a tailor. For a long time the letters of Cardinal Granvella lay forgotten in a garret, and they were only brought to light when sold to the grocers for waste-paper. The falling of a false ceiling in a chamber

in Lincoln's Inn revealed a vast collection of State papers gathered together by Thurloe, the secretary of Cromwell. Most interesting of all, perhaps, was the discovery that beneath the writing of certain manuscripts there lay the work of an earlier and more important author. Such manuscripts are called *palimpsests*. So scarce was writing material in the Middle Ages, and so durable the parchment of the old manuscripts, that the monks were often tempted to expunge the old writing and use the books again for their breviaries and liturgies. But fortunately they did not in all cases do their work so thoroughly that all traces of the original were lost. After being chemically treated, the palimpsest of Ephraim the Syrian was found to yield an important version of the Scriptures. It is not long since a parchment was discovered at Rome on which part of a book of Livy had first been written and then effaced.

Of recent years most fruitful and surprising results have attended the manuscript-hunter. But it has been mainly in one direction. The monasteries were so thoroughly ransacked by scholars after the great Revival of Learning that very few classical treasures could have escaped their eyes. Until a century ago, however, they still contained many rare and important copies of the Bible. Egypt and Syria then became the centre of a new exploration. The climate, the seclusion of the monasteries, the jealous guard of the monks, contributed to the preservation of many remarkable volumes. In 1837 Curzon paid a visit to the famous monasteries of the Nitrian desert. His object was to ascertain the whereabouts of an oil-cellar in the monastery of Souriani, where he had been told were many manuscripts. On arriving he feigned an interest in the cellar, and asked to be conducted thither. No trace of any book was to be seen. Then he spied a narrow low door, which led him into a small stone vault, where, piled to a depth of two or three feet in a promiscuous heap, lay a number of Syriac manuscripts. Most of the leaves were loose, and the heap, on being disturbed, scattered clouds of pungent dust. Curzon secured four volumes, and the monks brought out another, very large and very heavy. So bulky was this one that Curzon was obliged to leave it behind. The regret which he felt on abandoning it was deepened when he subsequently learnt it was a very important manuscript of the fifth century. The contents of the cellar were afterwards purchased by Dr Tattam in 1842, and sent to the British Museum. Here Mr Cureton, with infinite patience and labour, succeeded in arranging a great many volumes. Altogether the manuscripts, both perfect and imperfect, numbered about a thousand. The labour of sorting out fragments of leaves from some twenty bundles and piecing them together must have been immense. These bundles contained the sweepings from the floor of the room where the manuscripts

had lain for ages. Concerning the chief manuscript of the collection, Cureton writes: 'Among all the curiosities of literature, I know of none more remarkable than the fate of this matchless volume. Written in 411 A.D. in the country which was the birthplace of Abraham, it was at a subsequent period transported to the Valley of the Ascetics in Egypt, probably in 931. In 1839 it was brought from the solitude of the African desert to the most frequented city in the world. Thus, after various fortunes in Asia, Africa, and Europe, it has already survived one thousand four hundred and thirty-six years.'

Egypt has also been the scene of more recent discoveries. There, recently, a new impetus was given to the search for old manuscripts by the unearthing of many interesting documents. From old rubbish-heaps wills, invitations to dinner, homely letters, farming transactions, and the like have been recovered. Occasionally the find has been of great importance. The *Mimes* of Herodas, a little-known Greek writer, is an example, and on examination proves to have an almost modern tone. Mr Whibley in an article (*Nineteenth Century*, 1891) selects one extract, which may be given here:

'There are three *dramatis personæ*—Metriche, a "grass-widow;" Threissa, her maid; and Gyllis, an old lady.

'Metriche. Threissa, there is a knock at the door; go and see if it is a visitor from the country.

'Threissa. Please push the door. Who are you that are afraid to come in?

'Gyllis. All right, you see, I am coming in.

'Threissa. What name shall I say?

'Gyllis. Gyllis, the mother of Philainis. Go indoors, and announce me to Metriche.

'Threissa. A caller, ma'am.

'Metriche. What, Gyllis; dear old Gyllis! Turn the chair round a little, girl. What fate induced you to come and see me, Gyllis? An angel's visit, indeed! Why, I believe it's five months since any one dreamt of your knocking at my door.

'Gyllis. I live such a long way off, and the mud in the lane is up to your knees. I am ever anxious to come, for old age is heavy upon me, and the shadow of death is at my side.

'Metriche. Cheer up! don't malign Father Time; old age is wont to lay his hand on others too.

'Gyllis. Joke away; though young women can find something better to do than that. But, my dear girl, what a long time you've been a widow! It's ten months since Mandris was despatched to Egypt, and he hasn't sent you a single line; doubtless he has forgotten you, and is drinking at a new spring. For in Egypt you may find all things that are or ever were—wealth, athletics, power, fine weather, glory, goddesses, philosophers, gold, handsome youths, the shrine of the god and goddess, the most excellent king, the finest

museum in the world, wine, all the good things you can desire, and women, by Persephone, countless as the stones and beautiful as the goddesses that appealed to Paris.'

(Gyllis now reveals the purpose of her visit.)

'Gyllis. Listen to the news I have brought you after this long time. You know Gryllus, the son of Metachene, who was such a famous athlete at school, got a couple of blues at his university, and is now amateur champion bruiser? Then he is so rich, and he leads the quietest life; see, here is his signet-ring. Well, he saw you the other day in the street, and was smitten to the heart. And, my dear girl, he never leaves my house day or night, but bemoans his fate, and calls upon your name; he is positively dying of love.'

(Metriche, however, proves insensible to these flattering advances and remains faithful to Mandris.)

'Metriche. By the Fates, Gyllis, your white hairs blunt your reason. There is no cause yet to deplore the fate of Mandris. By Demeter, I shouldn't like to have heard this from another woman's lips. And you, my dear, never come to my house with such proposals again. For none may make mock of Mandris. . . . Threissa, let us have some refreshments; bring the decanter and some water, and give the lady something to drink. Now, Gyllis, drink, and show that you aren't angry.'

So the quarrel ends. The dust-heaps of Egypt held this new-old romance for a millennium and a half. And when at last it is brought again to the light of day, a few sentences are sufficient to give us more insight into the daily life of the Egypt of long ago than the most laborious researches and precise statements of the scholar.

'REJOICE, AND AGAIN I SAY, REJOICE.'

My song shall be of birds and flowers

And all the lovely things of earth;

The little leaves that clap their hands,

The health and wholesomeness of mirth;

The wonder in a baby's eyes,

The clinging clasp of loving hands;

The glee of frolic waves, that chase

Each other up the golden sands.

The morning stars together sang

When this old earth of ours was young;

'Tis we have lost the 'hearing ear,'

Not they who leave their songs unsung.

Some poets dip their pens in tears,

And some in wormwood and in gall—

With ev'ry 'bush afire with God'

And love the banner over all!

Oh, were my quill a feather dropp'd

From some bright angel in his flight,

My muse might soar on higher wing

To spread the gospel of delight!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, Yesterday.

A VERY remarkable book has been published.

It consists of the thoughts and ideas—embellished with a little exuberance, some invective, and occasional violent epithets—of a man who has always been sincere in his public statements and conduct. This book is of himself, and therefore it is a sincere statement. That is one of the chief reasons why it is remarkable, and why it grips the persons who read it, catches not merely at their minds, their reason, and their taste—it might not do all that—but, as truth and honesty, lays hold of something else within them. Looking back along the literary annals of his time, every casual reader knows that there comes now and then—not often, perhaps not once in a decade or even a generation—some book which, for a reason that it is difficult to define, runs through the life of the people—and other peoples too—like a flash of fire. It is rarely that any book does this on the strength of literary or artistic value, or because of the information that it contains, or because of revelation. Sometimes it is because of opinion. It is hard to seize on the point of quality that makes these works great in the minds of their admirers; it is often elusive or indefinable. But is it not the fact that if you make a close examination of such works you find that a dominant quality common to most of them is sincerity? Nothing ever did appeal to the minds of readers so keenly as plain sincerity; nothing ever will appeal to them so much. Literature in general was sincerer in the past than it is to-day, when the vices of opportunism and posing are so much practised; writers of old did not pretend so much. So now, when, not in books so much as in public words and actions, there is such insincerity, such deception; when even the most responsible persons express a sort of truth with the most important reservations, and snatch always at the opportunism of a moment, a book of sincerity is grateful, like a draught of sparkling water to lips that are parched and thick with thirst. This new book is the *Memories* of Lord Fisher. Catching the people who are vaguely meditating upon the general neglect of truth and honesty in affairs, this book with its sincerity, so unbridled that sometimes it becomes indiscretion, achieves a

remarkable effect. It is not well written—far from that (as to which an explanation to come). It is one of the worst-written books ever published, and it embraces some features that, but for the sincerity of this swearing sailor, would be merely ludicrous. Again, very many will disagree with opinions and ideas that Lord Fisher expresses on non-technical matters such as they can understand. Thus, rightly or wrongly, from the point of view of the good of the nation, a large proportion of our people will dissent from a plan that he seriously propounded and submitted many years ago to King Edward and others—the plan of sending our navy into the harbour of Kiel, and definitely ridding ourselves of the increasing menace of the German Fleet there and then, without any warning and without any declaration of war. That might—or it might not—have averted the world war; it might—or it might not—have postponed it. But even if such a plan ever was seriously thought of by any one in authority in this country, and then abandoned, as it must have been, is this the moment to disclose it, or would it better have been left forgotten in its abandonment? The nation holds rightly that though it made the most serious mistakes, and though its general policy, especially that horrible ‘balance of power’ arrangement, was stupid, it did not desire the war, and did nothing in the last resort to provoke it. This talk, then, of the scheme for ‘Copenhagening’ the German Fleet in Kiel harbour gives an uneasy twitch. It was a proposal for a bad thing—although Lord Fisher may not admit any badness about it—to avoid a worse evil that might befall us. There is worldly justification for such courses, but they have nothing whatever to do with morals and right. But, then, it is a point for Lord Fisher that hardly anything we have seen in these latter days has had much to do with pure and elemental right, though there has been the pretence of it. Again, much of the book is written in the manner of hasty, careless impulsiveness; it is a statement of thoughts as they rose in the writer’s own secret mind, all unpolished and unprepared for exportation to the people. So it is inevitable, this sailor being what he is, that much of the book should be in a form that village folks of the last generation

might have considered vulgar, because it is so far removed from their pretty conventionalities. Lord Fisher from time to time uses what many of those people would call 'bad language.' Here, anyhow, is a volume containing strange revelations, much history of Britain and her glorious navy, the views, the opinions, the earnest desires, the veritable naval passions, of this adventurous sailor, his animadversions upon the management of the navy at the present time, and his ideas for the future, and they are flavoured with unqualified sincerity. This, then, of necessity is a great book. Because of its dominating quality it abounds in blazing indiscretions. Lord Fisher has ambled well with kings—and the tales he tells of them! . . . 'On another occasion I was driving with him (King Edward) alone, and, utterly carried away by my feelings, I suddenly stood up in the carriage and waved to a very beautiful woman who I thought was in America! The king was awfully angry, but I made it much worse by saying I had forgotten all about him! But he added, "Well, find out where she lives and let me know," and he gave her little child a sovereign and asked her to dinner, to my intense joy!' Pretty proceedings, these, they would say in the villages where conventions rule and kings are praised and prayed for. But that is nothing, merely in passing.

* * *

Being a sailor, and a very special sailor, too, there is a considerable exuberance about Lord Fisher, beyond his candour. Likewise there is an ebullient humour which saves some of his harshest criticisms and condemnations from savagery. It is in a way a book of hornpipes and marlinespikes; the ocean wind blows through all its pages; it lashes to a foam; the salt spray is all about us; we roll on the North Sea, and do not rest in town; one feels wet, and seems at times to need some sort of spiritual oilskin. But, for all that, it is a deeply serious book, one in which high policy is set forth, and a path is pointed for an empire. We spoke of an almost ludicrous side of it. Well, see. Besides a Preface there is a 'Preamble' to the book, and the type of that 'Preamble'—some of it—half-an-inch in height, carefully measured, is the biggest we have seen in any book save some of the older Bibles used in churches. Let us quote that 'Preamble,' for it is a text. 'There is no plan nor sequence! Just as the thoughts have arisen, so have they been written or dictated! The spoken word has not been amended—better the fragrance of the fresh picked flower than trying to get more scent out of it by adding hot water afterwards! Also, it is more life-like to have the first impulse of the heart than vainly to endeavour after studied phrases! Perhaps the only curiosity is that I begin my life backwards, and leave my birth and being weaned till the end! "The last shall be first" is good for autobiography! I think a text is a good thing!

So I adopt the following (from R. L. Stevenson) as being nice for the young ones to read what follows: "To be honest, to be kind, to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary, and not be embittered, to keep a few friends, *but those without capitulation*, above all on the same grim condition to keep friends with himself, here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy." We are told in a Note even before the 'Preamble' and the Preface, a Note that comes either from publisher or friend, that had Lord Fisher been allowed his own way there would have been no book. The volume consists in the main of the author's *ipsissima verba*, dictated during last September. One or two chapters were put together from fugitive writings which Lord Fisher had collected and printed ('in noble and eloquently various type') as a gift to his friends after his death. He himself in the Preface tells us that a gentleman he had never heard of once sent him a cheque for two thousand guineas, and asked him to let him have a short article on any subject. Lord Fisher returned the cheque. One is not surprised to hear that he has had 'some generous offers from publishers.' Sir George Reid said to him, 'Never write an autobiography. You only know one view of yourself—others see you all round.' But, says Lord Fisher, 'I don't see any harm in such *Memories* as I now indite! In regard to Sir G. Reid's observation, there's one side no one else can see, and that's the "inside." He has just talked this book to a typist as he thought it in more or less disjointed bits, with all the interjections included, thus: 'Again, this is a digression—but such must be the nature of this book when speaking *ore rotundo* and from the fullness of a disgusted heart, that such Lions should be led by such Asses.' The book can't convey my feelings, however carefully my good friend the typewriter is taking it down. All the quill-drivers, the ink-spillers, and the Junius-aping journalists will jeer at you as the editor, and say, "Why didn't you stop him? Where's the argument? Where's the lucid exposition? Where's the subtle dialectician who will talk a bird out of a tree?" . . . We'll get along with the Dardanelles now.' . . .

* * *

Let us for expediency catch the habit of the author and take him in items here and there. So only a trifle of his war thoughts and policies may be disclosed; but then the whole, such as it is, could be represented in nothing less than the book itself. His criticism of some of the war methods applied to the navy is not nice. All heard vaguely, some time after they had begun their speedy operations, of the 'Hush-Hush' ships, though according to war-time secrecy the facts were not permitted to be noised about. But *the* feature of these ships with big

guns was their tremendous speed, and Lord Fisher argued that that speed was armament in itself. The authorities, however, crippled the speed eventually in order to add real steel armour to the ships. So Lord Fisher speaks of them in this wise: 'One of the charms of the Christian religion is that the Foolish confound the Wise. The Atheists are all brainy men. Myself, I hate a brainy man. All the brainy men said it was impossible to have aeroplanes. No brainy man ever sees that speed is armour. Directly the brainy men got a chance they clapped masses of armour on the "Hush-Hush" ships. They couldn't understand speed being armour, and said to themselves, "Didn't she draw so little water that she could stand having weight put on her? Shove on armour!" and so bang went the speed, and the "Hush-Hush" ships, whose fabulous beauty was their forty shore-going miles an hour, were slowed down by these brainy men. Don't jockeys have to carry weights? Isn't it called handicapping? Isn't it the object to beat the favourite—the real winner? There really is comfort in the 27th verse of the 1st chapter of 1 Corinthians, where the Foolish are wiser than the Wise.' And then he proceeds to make strange disclosures about Admiralty ideas: 'Yes! and we still have ancient admirals who believe in bows and arrows. There's a good deal to be said for bows and arrows. Our ancestors insisted on all churchyards being planted with yew-trees to make bows. There you are! It's a home product! Not like those damn fools who get their oil from abroad! And I have now the Memorandum with me, delivered to me when I was Controller of the Navy by a member of the Board of Admiralty desiring to build sixteen sailing-ships! Again, didn't the Board of Admiralty issue a solemn Board Minute that wood floated and iron sank? So what a damnable thing to build iron ships! Wasn't there another solemn Board Minute that steam was damnable and fatal to the supremacy of the British Navy? Haven't we had admirals writing very brainy articles in magazines to prove that there was nothing like a tortoise? You could stand on the tortoise's back; you weren't rushed by the tortoise, whereas these "Hush-Hush" ships, they were flimsy, and speed was worshipped as a god. One mighty man of valour (only "he was a leper" as regards sea-fighting) told me at his luncheon-table that when one of these "Hush-Hush" ships encountered at her full strength of nearly a hundred thousand horse-power a gale of wind in a mountainous sea, she was actually strained! It's all really too lovely; but of course the humour of it can't be properly appreciated by the ordinary shore-going person. Yes, the brainy men, as I said before, crabbed the "Hush-Hush" ships; they couldn't understand that speed was armour when associated with big

guns because the speed enabled you to put your ship at such a distance that she couldn't be hit by the enemy, so it was the equivalent of impenetrable armour although you had none of it, and you hit the enemy every round for the simple reason that your guns reached him when he could not reach you. . . . What these splendid armour-bearers say is, "Give me a strong ship which no silly ass of a captain can hurt." . . . It all really is very funny—if it wasn't disastrous and ruinous!'

* * *

Let us take his naval and resourceful lordship in one of the patches of his casual revelation upon matters of the past. He was along the Mediterranean, and came into touch with Abdul Hamid, for whom, he tells us, personally he had a great regard, as the ambassadors had not. One who knew of these matters, he says, considered Abdul Hamid the greatest diplomat in Europe. 'Abdul Hamid,' he dictates to the typist, 'was exceeding kind to me and invited me to Constantinople, and he descanted (the Boer War then being on) what a risk there was of a big coalition against England. Curiously enough, his colleague the Pope had the same feeling. It is very deplorable, not only in the late war but also in the Boer War especially, how utterly our spies and our intelligence departments failed us. I was so impressed with what the Sultan told me that I set to work on my own account; and through the patriotism of several magnificent Englishmen who occupied high commercial positions on the shores of the Mediterranean, I got a central forwarding station for information fixed up privately in Switzerland; and it so happened, through a most providential state of circumstances, that I was thus able to obtain all the cypher messages passing from the various foreign embassies, consulates, and legations through a certain central focus, and I also obtained a key to their respective cyphers. The chief man who did it for me was not in Government employ; and I'm glad to think that he is now in a great position—though not rewarded as he should have been. No one is. But as to any information from an official source reaching me, who was so vastly interested in the matter, in the event of war where the Fleet should strike first, all our diplomats and consuls and intelligence departments might have been dead and buried.' Here is another revelation of a different kind and of much more recent date. All British people know how the *Queen Elizabeth* was the pride of the navy during the war. Now that peace—of a kind—is here, there is a bigger and a grander ship, the wonder of the world, the *Hood*, afloat. Please Providence, and the *Hood* will not need to do such fighting and face such risks as 'Q.E.' as they called her in the navy, did. Nor, then, will the *Hood* have such a moment of supreme glory as that of which we were witness when, in the

North Sea on a November day, Beatty stood on her quarter-deck and took the salute of the Grand Fleet that went sailing by in his honour—with the German Fleet prisoners among them. We remember the pride of a seafaring nation when in whispers we heard something of the steaming, shooting, tonnage, magnificence, of the *Queen Elizabeth*, but the pride was tempered by certain tremors as the news was known that she had gone to the Dardanelles. One submarine, one torpedo, one big ship, however big, and, alas! sometimes catastrophe. There were anxious moments then. So hear Lord Fisher at the end of a letter to Lord Cromer: 'As to the *Queen Elizabeth*, Mr Churchill is right in saying there was great tension between Kitchener and myself. He came over to the Admiralty, and when I said, "If the *Queen Elizabeth* didn't leave the Dardanelles that night I should!" he got up from the table and he left! and wrote an unpleasant letter about me to the Prime Minister! *Lucky she did leave!!* The German submarine prowling round for a fortnight looking for her (and neglecting all the other battleships) blew up her duplicate wooden image.'

* * *

Here and there he touches upon various points of comparison between sea-war and land-war. We are given to understand that if Britain had concentrated on the sea-war during the fateful five years, it would have been better for Britain. 'I was the originator,' he says, 'of the Naval War College at Portsmouth—that's quite a different thing from an Imperial General Staff at the War Office. The vulgar error of Lord Haldane and others, who are always talking about "clear thinking" and such-like twaddle, is that they do not realise that the army is so absolutely different from the navy. Every condition in them both is different. The navy is always at war, because it is always fighting winds and waves and fog. The navy is ready for an absolute instant blow; it has nothing to do with strategic railways, lines of communication, or bridging rivers, or crossing mountains, or the time of the year when the Balkans may be snowed under, and mountain passes may be impassable. No! The ocean is limitless and unobstructed; and the fleet, each ship manned, gunned, provisioned, and fuelled, ready to fight within five minutes. The army not only has to mobilise, but—thank God! this being an island—it has to be carried somewhere by the navy, no matter where it acts.' Then a little later there is this breezy incident related: 'On one occasion I got into a most unpleasant atmosphere. I arrived at a country house late at night, and at breakfast in the morning, I not knowing who the guests were, a Cabinet Minister enunciated the proposition that sea and land war were both in principle and practice alike. At once getting up from the breakfast table, in the heat of the moment, and not knowing that distinguished

military officers were there, I said, "Any silly ass could be a general." I graphically illustrated my meaning. I gave the contrast between a sea and a land battle. The general is somewhere behind the fighting-line, or he ought to be. The admiral is *in* the fighting-line, or he ought to be. The admiral is indeed like the young subaltern, he is often the first "over the top." The general, at a telescopic distance from the battle-scene and surrounded by his Kitcheners, and his Ludendorffs, and his Gross von Schwartzhoffs, has plenty of time for the "clear thinking" à la Lord Haldane; and then, acting on the advice of those surrounding him, he takes his measures.' But there is another view of the question of army and navy to be taken. In 1904 he had been to see what the submarines could do in the English Channel, where they had been practising and manœuvring, and he is enormously enthusiastic upon the courage and resource of the young commanders. He would like to 'shove the same ginger into the young military aspirants . . . but the whole secret is to catch them very young and mould them while they are then so plastic and receptive to be just what you want them.' He writes to his close friend, Lord Esher, saying that they should 'embark an army corps every year and give them sea-training.' But once adventure forth with Lord Fisher into the possibilities and the likelihoods of the future, and we see strange visions. He believes, as we know, most fervently in oil, though there is nothing very visionary in that. And here is a prophecy: 'Now we've reached the Epoch—prodigious in its advent—when positively the Air commands and dominates both Land and Sea; and we shall witness quite shortly a combination in one structure of the aeroplane, the airship, the parachute, the common balloon, and an aerial torpedo, which will both astound people by its simplicity and by extraordinary possibilities, both in war and commerce (the torpedo will become cargo in commerce). The aeroplane has now to keep moving to live—but why should it? The aerial gyroscopic locomotive torpedo suspended by a parachute has a tremendous significance.'

* * *

The business side, as we may call it, of Lord Fisher's book has so much importance and significance that the lighter side, that of simple but rare anecdote, more or less detached from high service affairs and dealing with great personages, may be too much neglected, though it occupies so many of the pages. King Alfonso has been much in the public eye of late. King Edward went with Lord Fisher to Cartagena many years ago, and there Don Alfonso was very cordial to Lord Fisher because, we are assured, Britain had seven Dreadnoughts ready before the Germans had one. 'In fact,' says Lord Fisher, 'when I told him this piece of

news, as we were walking up and down the deck, with King Edward and Queen Alexandra watching us from two deck-chairs, King Alfonso was so delighted that he threw his arms round my neck, cried "You darling!" and kissed me. Then he put his hand in his waistcoat pocket, took out a chocolate, and popped it into my mouth.' Those who read history merely in history-books never imagine, perhaps, that kings could be so gay. But the Fisherian anecdotes of King Edward are the most entertaining things. It is hard to fancy that august and very popular

monarch, 'white with anger,' putting to Lord Fisher the very pertinent question, 'Look here, am I the king, or are you?' or the admiral telling His Majesty that 'kings don't count;' or his remarking once, 'Sir, that was a real low form of cunning on your Majesty's part sending to ask after Keir Hardie's stomach ache!' and the king, turning on him 'like a mad bull,' and saying, 'You don't understand me. I am the king of ALL the people! No one has got me in their pockets, as some of them think they have!' The admiral was much devoted to the king.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER IV.—PROLOGUE TO A DINNER-PARTY.

I.

EVEN *unusual* dinner-parties begin like ordinary ones. There is the discomfiture of the guest who arrives first, subjected to his hostess's reassurances that he is not really early. After what seems an interminable length of time, during which a score of conversational topics are broached, and both hostess and guest are reduced to a state bordering on mutual animosity, the remainder of the party arrive *en masse*, as if by collusion. The butler (who likes to chew the cud of reflection between the announcements) is openly pained, while the distracted hostess must manage the introductions, and, as friendships are begun or enmities renewed, endeavour to initiate the new-comer into the subject of conversation immediately preceding his or her entrance. As the good woman's subconscious mind is in the kitchen, and as she is constantly interrupted by the necessity of greeting new arrivals, she usually succeeds in mystifying every one, and creating that atmosphere of 'nerves' so familiar to denizens of the best sets.

But we had almost forgotten—there is always one guest who is late.

The fateful hour mentioned in the dinner invitation arrives, strikes, and floats down the mists to the eerie catacombs of the Past. The hostess knows that the cook, with arms akimbo, is breathing rebellion, but tries to blot out the awful vision by an extra spurt of hollow gaiety.

Ten minutes pass.

Conversation flags. The portly bachelor who lives at his club wonders why he didn't have a chop before he came. His fellow-diners try to refrain from the topic, but it is as hopeless as trying to talk to an ex-convict without mentioning jails. Finally, in an abandon of desperation, they all turn inquiringly to the hostess, who, affecting an ease of manner, says pleasantly, 'Dear me! What *can* have detained Mr So-and-so? I wonder if we had better go in without him?'

And then he arrives—the jackass—and in a

sublime good-humour! He tells some cock-and-bull story about his taxi breaking down, and actually seems to think he's done rather a smart thing in turning up at all. In short, he brings in such an air of geniality and self-appreciation that the guest who arrived first has more than a notion to 'have him out' and send him to a region where dinner-parties are popularly supposed to be unknown.

No—the lot of a lady who gives dinners is not a happy one.

II.

On this Friday night of November in the year 1913, Lady Durwent sat by the fire in the drawing-room and discussed music with Norton Pyford. Having sacrificed his watch on the altar of art, he had been compelled to rely on appetite, with the result that he arrived just as eight was striking. Lady Durwent did her best, but as she knew nothing of music, nor he anything of anything else, the situation was becoming difficult, when the entrance of Madame Carlotti brought welcome relief.

That lady was wearing a yellow gown rather too tight for her, so that her somewhat ample flesh slightly overran the confines of the garment, giving the effect that she had grown up in the thing and was unable to shed it. This impression was heightened by a mannerism, repeated frequently during the evening, of grasping her very low bodice with her hands, exhausting her breath, pulling the bodice up, and compressing herself into it. It was an innocent enough performance, but invariably left the feeling that she should retire upstairs to do it.

She wore a yellow flower in her hair; her stockings were a rich yellow with a superimposed pattern like strands of fine gold, and her dainty feet were enclosed in a pair of bronzed shoes. As her lips were heavily carmined and her eyes brilliantly dark, Madame Carlotti's was a distinctly illuminating presence.

But the sunniness of her entrance was dimmed by the lack of audience. She had not expended

her genius to throw it away on a strangely dressed young man whose hair fell straight and black over a large collar that had earned a holiday some days before, and whose velvet jacket was minus two buttons, the threads of which could still be seen, outstretched, appealing for their owners' return.

'Lucia, my dear,' said Lady Durwent, just like an ordinary hostess, 'you look' (*sotto voce*) 'simply wonderful! I think you have met Mr Norton Pyford, the Norton Pyford, haven't you?'

'Hah d' ye do?' said the Pyford.

'Chaired,' minced Madame Carlotti.

'Lucia, take this chair by the fire. You must be frozen.'

'Ah, grazie, Sybil. What a perfectly mesurable climate you have in this London!'

'Just what I tha-a-y,' bleated Mr Pyford, sinking into his chair in an apparently boneless heap. 'The other night, at a fella's thupper-party, I'—

'MRS LE ROY JENNINGS.'

The resolutionist swept into the room clothed in black disorder, much as if she had started to dress in a fit of temper and had been overtaken by a gale.

She knew Madame Carlotti.—She did *not* know Mr Norton Pyford, the Norton Pyford.—She was glad to know him. He muttered something inarticulate, and glancing at the ring of women about him, shrank into his clothes until his collar almost hid his lower lip.

'We were discussing,' said Lady Durwent, vaguely relying on the last sounds retained by her ear—'discussing—suppers.'

'Don't believe in 'em,' said Mrs Jennings sternly; 'three regular meals—tea at eleven and four, and hot milk with a bit of ginger in it before retiring—are sufficient for any one.'

The Italian took in the forceful figure of the New Woman and smiled with her teeth.

'Madame Jennings,' she said, 'perhaps finds sufficient distraction in just ordinary life,—and *una tazza di tè*. But we who are not so—*comment dirai-je?*—so self-complete must rely on frivolous things like *una buona cena*.'

'Don't believe in 'em,' reiterated the resolutionist; 'three regular'—

'Ah, *c'est mauvais*,' gesticulated Madame Carlotti, who alternated between Italian and French phrases in London, and kept her best English for the Continent.

'Mr Pyford,' put in Lady Durwent, desecrating a storm on the yellow and black horizon, 'has just written'—

'Mr H. Stackton Dunckley,' announced the butler, with an appropriate note of *mysterioso*. Lady Durwent summoned a blush, and rose to meet the ardent author, who was dressed in a characterless evening suit with disconsolate legs, and whose chin was heavily powdered to conceal the stubble of beard grown since morning.

'You have come,' she said softly and dramatically.

'I have,' said the writer, bowing low over her hand.

'I rely on you to be discreet,' she murmured.

'Eh?'

'Discreet,' she coquetted. 'People will talk.'

'Let them,' said Mr Dunckley earnestly.

'Madame Carlotti, I think you know Mr Dunckley—H. Stackton Dunckley—and you too, Mrs Le Roy Jennings; you clever people ought to be friends at once. And I want you to meet Mr Pyford, the'—

'Hah d' ye do?'

'How are you?'

'Ro—splendid, thanks.'

'We were discussing,' said Lady Durwent—'discussing'—

'MR AUSTIN SELWYN.'

Every one turned to see the guest of the evening, as the hostess rose to meet him. He was a young man on the right side of thirty, with dark, closely brushed hair that thinned slightly at the temples. He was clean-shaven, and his light-brown eyes lay in a smiling setting of quizzical good-humour. He was of rather more than medium height, with well-poised shoulders; and though a firmness of lips and jaw gave a suggestion of hardness, the engaging youthfulness of his eyes and a hearty smile that crinkled the bridge of his nose left a pleasant impression of frankness, mingled with a certain *naïveté*.

'Mr Selwyn,' said Lady Durwent, 'I knew you would want to meet some of London's—I should say some of England's—accomplished people.'

'Oimè! I am afraid that obsolescences me,' smiled Madame Carlotti, whose social charm was rising fast at the sight of a good-looking stranger.

'No, indeed, Lucia,' effused the hostess. 'To be the personification of Italy in dreary London is more than an accomplishment—it—it'—

'It is a boon,' said Dunckley, coming to the aid of his floundering loved one.

'Exactly,' said Lady Durwent with a sigh of relief. 'Madame Lucia Carlotti—Mr Selwyn of New York.'

'Buona sera, signora.'

'Buona sera, signore.'

He stooped low and pressed a light kiss on the Neapolitan's hand, thus taking the most direct route obtainable by an Anglo-Saxon to the good graces of a woman of Italy.

'How well you speak Italian!' cooed Madame Carlotti; 'so—like one of us.'

The American bowed. It was rarely he achieved a reputation with so little effort. The remaining introductions were effected; the clock struck eight-thirty; and there followed an awkward silence, born of an absolute unanimity of thought.

'Of course, you two authors,' said Lady

Durwent, forcing a smile, 'knew of each other, anyway. It's like asking H. G. Wells if he ever heard of Mark Twain.'

The smile in the American's eyes widened. 'Lady Durwent flatters me,' he said. 'I am not widely known in my own country, and can hardly expect that you should know of me on this side of the Atlantic.'

'What,' said Mr Dunkley—'what does New York think of "Precipitate Thoughts"?''

The American considered quickly. He wished that in conversation, as well as in writing, people would use inverted commas.

'Whose precipitate thoughts?' he ventured.

'Mine,' said H. S. D., with ill-concealed importance.

'Oh yes, of course,' said Selwyn, wondering how any one so stationary as the other could project anything precipitate. 'New York was keenly interested.'

'Ah,' said the English author benignly, 'it is satisfactory to hear that. Of course, the great difference between there and here is that in New York one impresses: in London one is impressed.'

An ominous silence followed this epigrammatic wisdom (which Dunkley had just heard from the lips of a poet who had succeeded in writing both an American and an English publishing house into bankruptcy) while the various members of the group pursued their trains of thought along the devious routes of their different mentalities.

'Dear me!' said Lady Durwent anxiously, 'what can have detained'—

'MR JOHNSTON SMYTH.'

With a jerky action of the knees, the futurist briskly entered the room with all the easy confidence of a famous comedian following on the heels of a chorus announcing his arrival. He looked particularly long and cadaverous in an abrupt, sporting-artistic, blue jacket, with sleeves so short that when he waved his arms (which he did with almost every sentence) he reminded one of a juggler requesting his audience to notice that he has absolutely nothing up his sleeves.

'Lady Durwent,' he exclaimed, striking an attitude and looking over his Cyrano-like nose with his right eye as if he were aligning the sights of a musket, 'don't tell me I'm late. If you do, I shall never speak to the Duke of Earldub again—never!'

As he refused to move an inch until assured that he was not late, and as Lady Durwent was anxious to proceed with the main business of the evening (to say nothing of maintaining the friendship between Smyth and the Duke of Earldub, whose part in his dilatory arrival was rather vague), she granted the necessary pardon, whereupon he straightened his legs and winked long and solemnly at Norton Pyford.

'Good gracious!' cried Lady Durwent just

as she was about to suggest an exodus to the dining-room, 'I had forgotten all about Elise!' She hurriedly rang the bell, which was answered by the butler. 'Send word to Miss Elise that'—

'Milady,' said the servitor, addressing an arc-light just over the door, 'the Honorable Miss Durwent is descending down the stairs this werry minute.'

III.

There are moments when women appear at their best—fleeting moments that cannot be sustained. Sometimes it is a tremor of timidity that lends a fawn-like gentleness to their movements, and a frightened wistfulness to the eye, too subtle a thing of beauty to bear analysis in words. A sudden triumph, noble or ignoble, the conquering of a rival, the sound of a lover's voice, will flush the cheek and liberate the whole radiance of a woman's being. Such moments come in every woman's life, when the quick impulse of emotion achieves an unconscious beauty that defies the ordinary standards of critical appreciation. It is that little instant that is the torch to light a lover's worship or a poet's verses—to send strange yearnings into a young man's breast and set an old man's memory philandering with the distant past.

It was such a moment for Elise Durwent as she stood in the doorway, the overhanging arc touching her hair and shoulders with the high lights of some master's painting. Conversation ceased, and in every face there was the universal homage paid to beauty, even though it be tendered grudgingly.

She was dressed in a gown of deep blue, that colour which renders its ageless tribute to the fair women of the world, and from her shoulders there hung a black net that subdued the colour of the gown and left the graceful suggestion of a cape.

'I am so sorry, mother,' she said. 'I was reading—and quite forgot the time.'

Austin Selwyn stroked the back of his head, then thrust both hands into his pockets. There was something in the girl's appearance and the contralto timbre of her voice that left him with the odd sensation that she was out of place in the room—that her real sphere was in the expanse of unbridled nature. He could see her wealth of copper-hued hair blown by the western wind; he could picture her joining in Spring's minuet of swaying rose-bushes.

'My daughter Elise—Mr Austin Selwyn.'

He bowed as the words penetrated his thoughts; then, glancing up, he felt a sudden contraction of disappointment.

The girl's eyes had narrowed, and were no longer sparkling, but steady—almost to the point of dullness. Her lower lip was full, and too scarlet for the upper one, which chided its sister for the wanton admission of slumbering passion;

and her voice was abrupt. He almost cried out '*Legato, legato,*' to coax back the lilt which had caressed his ear a moment before.

He was dimly conscious that dinner was announced, and that amidst a babel of tongues he was being led by, or was leading, Lady Durwent into the dining-room. He heard the resolutionist and Dunckley both talking at once, and felt the melancholy languor of Pyford floating like incense through the air. He had an obscure recollection of sitting down next to his hostess; that the table, like Arthur's, was a round one; that Johnston Smyth was seated beside Miss Durwent and was ogling one of Lady Durwent's maids. Then he remembered that he had heard some voice in his ear for several minutes past, and, growing

curious, took a surreptitious glance, to find that it belonged to Madame Carlotti.

'Meester Selwyn,' she said indignantly, 'you have not been listening to me.'

'That is true, signora,' he said, 'but I have been thinking of you.'

'Yes?' she purred, leaning towards him. 'What did you thought?'

He turned squarely to her in an impassioned counterfeit of frankness. 'Are all Italian women beautiful?' he murmured.

'Hush-sh!' Her hand touched his beneath the table, reprovingly and tenderly.

'Mr Selwyn,' said Lady Durwent, 'you have not tasted your soup'—

(To be continued.)

'KLONDIKE' BOYLE.

PART II.

V.

IN the next and most important phase of Boyle's labours, it will be seen that, largely through him, peace was arranged between the Bolsheviks and Rumania. We have forgotten too soon how pluckily Rumania fought on when the Allies let disaster grip her by the throat. Tortured, robbed, betrayed, she believed in Britain, and her gallant army was ready to retire into Russia and fight on, even if the Germans occupied all Rumania. And then, to fill her cup, the spectre of Bolshevism raised its skeleton's grin on her borders, and the Russia she had always known as her friend became her enemy.

At the risk of his life, a Canadian from the Yukon braved the anger of Rackovski, the most powerful member of the Russian Supreme College. This man, who was himself a Rumanian, would not hear of peace with Rumania; but by deliberate intrigue Boyle turned the man's associates against him, and secured an offer of peace, which he took to Rumania, passing through the lines, and being fired at by Bolshevik gunners. In the subsequent negotiations Boyle had to act as intermediary; and on one occasion, while he was flying just above the Dniester in an aeroplane, a Rumanian battery fired at him, and death was missed by a matter of inches.

Eventually peace was signed, and Boyle's greatest achievement was completed.

VI

But though his greatest achievement had been performed, his outstanding exploit was yet to come.

Both Rumania and Russia were holding prisoners, and in Odessa there were some fifty odd Rumanians who had been detained, prac-

tically as hostages. Included among them were generals, a number of high naval officials, a few senators and members of parliament, and various wealthy business men. Colonel Boyle was given authority to effect the exchange of this party for a similar number of Russians, and, as well, to superintend the safe-conduct of 100,000 Russian troops who were being disarmed and returned to their own country.

Rackovski gave him authority for a special train to take the Rumanians from Odessa to Benderi; but this man, one of the Bolshevik leaders, was a German agent, and not only lied to Boyle about the position of the enemy, but left Petrograd secretly a day before Boyle. As a result, early one morning a gang of Bolsheviks, known as the Rumanian Revolutionary Battalion (in reality a number of Bulgarian escaped criminals), went to the prison, and taking the Rumanian prisoners, placed them on board the steamship *Imperator Traian*.

At nine that morning Boyle received this information from Madame Pantazi, a Canadian woman married to the Director of the Rumanian Navy, who was himself one of the fifty prisoners. Pluckily offering her services as interpreter, she accompanied the 'Klondike King' as he proceeded to turn things upside-down.

He first procured an order of release from the Bolshevik leader Brashanaw, and succeeded in getting the prisoners from the ship to the dock, although they were still guarded. At that time they were loading the *Imperator Traian* with the villainous Rumanian Revolutionary Battalion, and things began to assume an ugly aspect. This band of men delivered the ultimatum that the fifty prisoners should accompany them to the Crimea, or be shot where they stood.

Boyle held his ground until a riot started and about eighty armed men lined the side of the ship, when he ordered the prisoners on board;

then, though the revolutionary leaders tried to stop him, he forced his way on to the ship as well, conscious of the fact that what little chance the captives had of life rested entirely in his hands.

In passing, it is pleasant to be able to relate that Madame Pantazi's fearless conduct resulted in her being personally decorated by the King of Rumania.

Eventually the ship reached Theodosia, in the Crimea, where Boyle and his party were interned in the Naval Quarantine Grounds, close to the docks. Boyle at once got in touch with the British vice-consul, who turned out to be a splendid type of man, and together they discussed the confused political situation of the town, and how best to exploit it. As usual, various Bolshevik parties were fighting for supremacy. The Rumanian revolutionary scoundrels were plotting with some local anarchists to get control, but up to the moment the real leader was a working-man, who dominated everything by innate personality.

Boyle went to see this man, who not only expressed his desire to help the prisoners, but secretly gave the Canadian permission to leave the town, and to procure twenty Chinese members of the International Army. While these Oriental gentlemen were known by this euphonious name, they were actually paid murderers of absolutely unbiassed minds. With this merry band Boyle returned to the town, and contrived to make arrangements with a little ship, the *Chernamore*, to take the prisoners to Sebastopol. One hour before sailing-time he cut the telephone-wires to the town, marched his party to the ship, and leaving ten Chinamen at the entrance of the dock to hold it against attack by the revolutionaries, he managed to get away with his fifty prisoners and ten Chinese.

On arrival at Sebastopol he was notified that the prisoners belonged to the Black Sea Fleet, who would take charge of them, but that he could have a special train for himself to any destination he chose. As this meant certain death for his charges, Boyle lined up his ten warriors and addressed them something after this fashion: 'Gentlemen, there is going to be a scrap, and I intend it to be a fight to the finish. Will you stand by and help me?'

A huge fellow on the right with two knives in his belt was appointed spokesman.

'You pay us two roubles a day?' he said.

'Yes,' said the colonel.

'Very well; we fight.'

With this substantial backing, Boyle refused to give up his prisoners, and after some heated controversy the fleet agreed to let him continue his journey, provided he could get a safe-conduct from General Mackensen. To secure this he telephoned to the Prime Minister of Rumania, who was successful in getting it from Mackensen.

Armed with the document, Boyle set sail, and landed his prisoners at Sulina (at the mouth of the Danube), where the Russians from the Rumanian prisons were waiting under guard of two officers.

The Klondiker announced his intention of sailing with his new cargo on the Thursday morning, it being then Tuesday, when a fresh and formidable situation presented itself.

The port was in the hands of the Austrians, who had four monitors and two large seaplanes there. One small Rumanian cruiser was also anchored in the harbour, and on Tuesday evening the commander of this ship notified Boyle that the Austrian commander had ordered him to inform the Canadian that he could not sail. The reasons given were that it was a Bolshevik ship, that Austria was at war with the Bolsheviks, and that a British officer was on board.

Boyle protested that he had Mackensen's safe-conduct. The Austrian was not only adamant, but arrogant. Boyle demanded that the Austrian's case be put in writing. The commander did so, amidst a verbal duel which was marked by lack of politeness on both sides. The Austrian claimed that he was under orders from the Austrian High Command, and not from Mackensen.

Nothing daunted, Boyle refused to change his sailing, and sent the following historic message to his enemy: 'I am a Briton, and therefore I keep my word. I say I am going to sail at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, and I will sail at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. You are an Austrian, and therefore you will not keep your word. You say you will prevent me. You shall not prevent me.'

Early on Thursday morning Boyle got steam up, and the four monitors cleared for action. One dropped down-stream, one took position on the opposite side of the canal, and the remaining two drew up directly in front of his little ship. In addition to these manoeuvres, the two seaplanes were manned, and their machine-guns trained on the adventurer.

'I sized the situation up,' Boyle said to a friend of his in London some months afterwards, 'and figured that from a fighting standpoint I hadn't much chance. My boat was only a poor little freighter with one 2-inch gun in the stern, but I thought that if they sank me it would be excellent propaganda in stirring up trouble between the Germans and the Austrians. So I put my prisoners on shore, cleared all the lines but one at the bow and one at the stern—and waited for ten o'clock.'

At 9.30 a message arrived asking the colonel to meet the Austrian commander on board the Rumanian cruiser, and as the Canadian had suggested that ship as a suitable meeting-ground, he went aboard. The Austrian was extremely nervous, and in jerky sentences informed Boyle that he had received confirmation of Mackensen's

telegram, and his party would be allowed to proceed.

'Very well,' said the colonel; 'but I want you to understand that I should have sailed with or without your permission.'

And having thus had the last word, he boarded the *Chernamore* with his prisoners, and steamed from the harbour. Throughout the affair Commander Lazv, of the Rumanian cruiser, proved a staunch and fearless friend.

Words are strange things. The most carefully planned phrases frequently fail to convince. Occasionally a man writes a sentence almost without thought of construction, and it lives for centuries.

'I am a Briton, and therefore I keep my word.'

We shall not soon forget that.

VII.

Boyle's subsequent activities were confined to Rumania and south Russia, but his later work was of a political nature, and the War Office will not authorise its publication. In Rumania he took charge of the food situation, and performed such a number of offices for our Ally that he has been called 'The Saviour of Rumania;' and Joe Boyle of Dawson City was created Duke of Jassy.

There is no space to deal with his last great exploit when he organised an expedition to save the Russian royal family. As usual, he broke down all obstacles, and nothing but the unwillingness of the ill-fated royalties to venture

from their palace-prison in the Crimea stood in the way of their freedom. The King of Rumania had asked Boyle to undertake the task, and intended to place the Palace of Sinaia at the ex-Tsar's disposal.

And that is the story of 'Klondike' Boyle. It is doubtful if Canadian history can show a man more fearless and audacious, or one whose adventures have been more debonair and chivalrous.

As I finish this little sketch word comes that the Canadian Government is to give Rumania an open credit for \$25,000,000 for trade with Canada. On more than one occasion I saw Lieutenant-Colonel Boyle making his way to the Canadian Trade Commissioner's office in London, so it is not difficult to trace the hand of the 'Klondike King' in this matter. This is but one little result of the work of the man who so honourably wore 'CANADA' on his shoulders, and made that name stand for absolute integrity. I believe Boyle is to become a permanent resident in Rumania, where he will act as guardian to Rumanian-Canadian interests.

I had almost forgotten this. The French Government bestowed the Croix de Guerre on 'Klondike' Boyle for invaluable services in connection with the French. But that exploit is something that will have to remain a mystery until the 'Klondike King' talks. And, from my knowledge of him, I think that will not be for a long, long time.

THE END.

THE CANDLESTICK.

By T. PARSON.

I.

EARNSHAW was out; but when I gave my name, his housekeeper beamed intelligently, and directed (rather than invited) me to wait.

'He expected to be in by four, I know,' she explained; adding the benevolent afterthought, 'I'll bring you a cup of tea.'

Accordingly I found myself standing by a sizzling wood-fire in a comfortable study, and as I drank the tea I half-enviously wondered where my friend procured it, his furniture, his housekeeper, and his other appurtenances. The whole place seemed comfortable; the room possessed just that degree of shabbiness which is attained only by good old furniture, and which invites repose.

I sat down in the grandfather-chair by the sheepskin rug and looked about me. The room faced west into a well-kept shrubbery, where an elderly man was working with a leisureliness born of long practice. The light came through this window with a glow that made me feel drowsy after my long walk from the station.

My attention wandered among the objects caught by the sinking sun and by the leaping flames in the hearth. Earnshaw's taste did not lead him to the collection of knick-knacks, though I knew that the drawing-room contained china handed down from his forebears. But here, where the bachelor did his work and spent much of his leisure, there was little to arrest the eye—two large book-cases, a well-covered writing-table, a fine clock on the mantelpiece, which chimed the third quarter as I turned towards it; and the other ornaments beside it were of the same grave and respectable sort.

The sunlight grew dimmer and began to retreat in a thin streak of gold along the carpet. I watched it move until it touched something that glittered brightly on the writing-table. The next moment the glint had vanished, and since at the same time the leisurely gardener also ceased his monotonous whistling, and lounged away out of sight and hearing, I suddenly felt strangely alone. I turned to the stirring fire and stretched out my legs across the rug. But though I looked at the incandescent

sparks that fell like liquid from the logs or flew in troops up the chimney, I began to feel eerie, and my thoughts moved uncomfortably. Suppose Earnshaw did not turn up in time for me to catch my train back to the north? Suppose I waited till it was too late, and he did not put me up for the night? I was meandering along this track like a girl on her first week-end visit without her mother. I shook myself upright, and decided that I was dropping asleep, a proceeding that makes a man appear foolish if his host comes into the room without awakening him. I began to wonder how much Earnshaw had altered since those South African days when he was a good fellow who could see the point of a joke—even if levelled at himself. We had been great pals in those days, and though we had seen little of each other since, and neither of us was a good correspondent, I had reason to believe that he still kept his regard for me, as I for him.

A log fell forward, sending a flame shooting up the old chimney and lighting for a moment every corner of the small room. Good heavens! What was that? I could have sworn that a hand was laid on the writing-table, just by the candlestick I had already noticed. To my excited vision the candlestick moved ever so slightly to one side. Nonsense! I must be more fatigued than was usual with me after a journey; the flaming fire was playing tricks with my senses.

I rose and strolled round the room, looking at everything in turn, and scanning the garden between the heavy folds of the curtains. I lifted the candlestick and gazed at it thoughtfully, reflecting that to be caught examining the household possessions of even an old friend is not a dignified situation. I remained standing by the table, however, long enough to admire the chasing of the brass, its clear-cut finish not yet defaced by the polishing of years. I am completely ignorant of the origin and the value of such things, and as I put it back in its place the words crossed my mind, 'Brummagem, I suppose; most of them are.'

It struck me as rather odd that Earnshaw should care to flank his elegant silver inkstand, bearing an inscription and the date 1782, by a single brass candlestick, when he must have a suitable pair somewhere about the house. But it was no business of mine, and as I moved back to the fire I picked up the current number of *Punch* from where it lay in my path on a spindle-legged table.

For a few minutes I turned over the pages, but the clock striking the hour made me look up. A slight sound came from across my shoulder; this time there was no mistake about it. I looked round with a queer feeling that something was about to happen; there was nothing of surprise or fear in my mind—I was simply expectant. . . .

II.

I found myself in a long, low room, on the upper floor of a house, to judge by the sounds from without. A great beam supported the ceiling, but the room was otherwise not of a rough appearance. The polished floor was covered with skins of beasts; the walls were hung with a few good etchings, one of which I recognised to be a Rembrandt. A leaf of newspaper lay upon the floor; but either the light was not good enough to enable me to read any of it, or the script was in a foreign tongue. The air was hot and stifling, and strangely dry upon my cracked lips; yet there was a growl of thunder in the distance. Beside the window was a trail of ashes; it looked as if papers had been hastily burned and flung out, only to be partially borne back by the breeze. The whole room seemed to be, not gradually decaying from neglect, but suddenly abandoned, left to itself, covered with the undisturbed dust of forgotten things. Something about its forlorn state told me that desertion, panic, a sudden *trek*, had left the house forsaken. My mind leaped to realisation. How many other deserted homesteads had I not seen, though I could swear that never before had I been in this particular room? There was the usual furnishing of a Dutch bedchamber; there was heavy old wood, blue and white pottery, and brassware that still gleamed in spite of its woeful tarnish.

I waited in some excitement for what might follow. There were footsteps coming along a corridor or a landing outside the door, which presently opened slowly, giving entrance to a young girl. I was filled with amazement that such a creature should yet be alive in such a house. I was impelled to speak, but the knowledge came that, though my spirit and intelligence were there, she could not see me. She came slowly into the room, her eyes full of a troubled doubt. She paused in the centre of the floor and looked up thoughtfully to the sky above the mimosas and the pepper-trees outside. Her dress, though it was torn, as if she had clambered through thorns, was good, and suited to the house; her hair was neat; and her face, if wan, was made interesting by the mobile lips and the large dark eyes.

Suddenly she started and moved to the window, looking with a frightened gaze at something in the distance. I realised that the sound that had been in my ears all the time was increasing and coming nearer. It was the tramp, tramp, tramp, and jingle, jingle, jingle, of armed men and their accoutrements. The trees outside obscured the view. The garden seemed familiar, though I had not seen such a blaze of Indian cress for years. But sounds are easy to recognise; there were shouts, words of command, men dismounting, a horse galloping away

—all the things among which I had lived in the old South African days.

Then there were voices beneath the window, an officer's and another's, probably a sergeant's. From where I stood and could not move, they were invisible; but I could catch a word or two of their conversation—the tones were English. The girl in the window seemed in some way to be my own embodiment; or, rather, we were in so complete a sympathy that I knew what she felt, though I could not use her senses. I knew the terror that thrilled her as she looked and listened.

They were to burn down the house. A horror indescribable seized me at the thought. Could the girl understand what they were saying? I felt sure she could not. Perhaps she knew a word here and there; but she showed no more terror than before, nor any sign of an attempt to escape. Of course, there would be a search through the house, and some one would discover her and see that she was safely disposed of. I thought I recognised some of the voices below; good fellows all of them—there was nothing to fear from them. Then there came more words of command; the search was to begin. I knew the kind of thing—the inspection of the house, the selection of loot, the survey of surrounding land. I realised that in this case the search would not be prolonged, since the empty state of the farmstead was unmistakable.

There were hurried steps along the *stoep* and on the stairs. The room appeared to be in a wing of the house, for I could hear men coming up and then turning away at a little distance from the door, until their boots made but a muffled beating along the floors. But at last one man stopped, a singularly deliberate, even tread that I knew, without realising whose it was. The girl shrank and glanced desperately out of the window, whence words still rose in business-like tones. There was no safety as she understood it there, but with a faint murmuring sob she sprang across the room. She hesitated, listened, and, as the steps came nearer, she opened a door at the foot of the bed and disappeared.

The door of the room by which she had entered was pushed open more widely, and Earnshaw came in. He was as I remembered him in those days of 1900, travel-worn, but neither dishevelled nor disreputable-looking. His step was military, but it had something of the caution that marked his character. He had seen as many Boer interiors as I had, but, like myself, he seemed to find something individually interesting in this. He paused close beside me. His sight crossed mine, but there was no recognition of my presence in his eyes. He looked past me, appraising the objects in the room; delft-ware was not to his taste, but he examined some small brass ornaments with attention. He had scarcely been in the room twenty

seconds before a voice somewhere in the house called his name. Picking up a brass candlestick, he opened the other door, left it ajar, and departed without a glance behind him.

I could now see what the door had hidden; it was merely a shallow cupboard with a shelf about the height of a man's shoulder, upon which three books forlornly lay. The cupboard was, indeed, too small to harbour a human being with any comfort, and my unknown had disappeared completely. Where was she? Was she in the house, or had she left it by some secret way? I had heard of such happenings, and some explanation of the kind was necessary to account even for her presence in the house.

The tramping steps descended the stairs; they marched to within a short distance of the house, and there halted. There were sounds that for a while puzzled me; other men were moving quickly to and fro; there was a scraping of brushwood along the ground, the sound of chopping wood in the distance. Were they cutting timber for a fire? Then I realised what they were doing; the wood was wanted for a fire, indeed—they were going to burn down the house. For some reason—for its strategic position perhaps, or its employment as a harbour for secret meetings—the old homestead was considered too important to be left standing. I drew my breath sharply; I glanced at the cupboard, but there was still no sign of the hidden girl. There was a louder crackling below the window, then a roaring blast; then a puff of smoke obscured the sky and the trees; an acrid vapour filled the room. The men's voices were muffled by the noise of the fire, but they were still near, surrounding the house; there was no possibility of any person escaping without being seen, unless by a secret way. My senses began to leave me; my vision was obscured by the dense smoke, and my hearing by the increasing roar. I felt myself falling, the stout joists giving way beneath. . . .

III.

'My dear fellow, I'm most awfully sorry to have deserted you; it simply couldn't be helped!'

It was Earnshaw's voice bringing me back effectually across twenty years. My misgivings had no foundation; Earnshaw was hospitality itself, and I stayed with him that night. But it was not until the next morning that I alluded to my vision.

'What a fine piece of brasswork!' I said, picking up the candlestick and turning it between my fingers.

Earnshaw smiled. 'You know where I got it from?' he asked.

'Well, I didn't; but now I think I do.'

'That's a bit cryptic.'

I laughed; yet the dream, or whatever it

was, had made too great an impression on me to be easily dismissed. If I told Earnshaw what I had seen, he could at least satisfy my doubts as to where the candlestick had been found, and whether any living thing could have been hidden there. But I was also psychologically interested, and it was, from this point of view, important that we should present our respective evidence individually. An idea struck me.

'I have a whim,' I said, 'which I hope you will gratify without question. Write on this leaf of my pocket-book the outline of how you found that piece of brass, and let me give my version of what occurred on a paper which you shall provide.'

The beginning of my suggestion surprised him; at the end he was mystified, but he acquiesced readily enough. In his profession men learn that the way to find the meaning, if any, that lurks in what people want to tell you is to let them tell you their tale in their own way. So I set to work with my fountain-pen, and he removed the lid from the old inkstand. Our scribbling took but a minute or two; then we exchanged experiences.

My statement was the gist of what is narrated above; Earnshaw's ran as follows:

'I got the brass candlestick from a Boer farm at—during January 1901. The house was

to be burned down, and we went through it first.'

Earnshaw read my version thoughtfully, then glanced sharply at me. 'Queer thing!' he said at last. 'I suppose it was a dream. I don't recall any cupboard.'

'There's another thing that strikes me,' I interpolated. 'Do you remember the day? This is January, you know.'

'So it is. I don't, as a matter of fact, recollect the precise day—only the month. It may be significant—if you attach enough importance to your dream.'

'I suppose it was of the nature of dreams. Let us hope it is only that.'

He looked so uncomfortable that I half regretted my confidence. The knowledge, or whatever it was, could do no good now; but is not that often the case with psychic experiences? So far as we can judge, in many cases they serve no object. This argument, indeed, substantiates rather than vitiates my claim to have gone through such an experience in Earnshaw's study. You may call it a 'queer thing' if you like; I prefer to call it a vision, of which I may some day be fortunate enough to see the sequel, including the miraculous escape of the hidden refugee. But a further source of inspiration can scarcely lie in the single candlestick. Can any one help me by producing its neighbour?

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE 'UNIT' CONCRETE COTTAGE.

IF the enormous number of small houses required in this country are to be built within a reasonable time and at a cost that will allow of their being let at commercial rents, it is abundantly clear that bricks (or stone) and mortar, in combination with wood floors and fittings, must be abandoned in favour of less expensive forms of construction. Many experiments have been, and are being, carried out with concrete houses, several of which were described recently in these notes. One of the latest schemes is known as the 'unit' method, whereby standardised houses are built in pairs with standard concrete blocks, their appearance being very similar to that of dwellings constructed of stone blocks. The outside walls are double, with an air-space of about 2 inches between them, the two thicknesses, which each measure $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, being bonded together by steel ties—one every 3 feet for each alternate course. The floors are also of concrete, but those of the living-rooms, the bedrooms, and the hall are covered with a patent jointless composition which does away with the necessity for linoleum or oilcloth. Window frames and doors are of steel, and the windows are of the French type.

The front doorway has a porch in a recess under the first floor. One design shows on the ground floor a living-room 13 feet 1 inch square, a scullery 10 feet 7 inches by 7 feet 10 inches, a hall, a larder, and a coal-cellar; while upstairs are three bedrooms, the largest measuring $13\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 12 feet. This type of house can be built for a little over £500. Such abodes are proof against fire and damp, and cannot harbour vermin: moreover, their appearance is by no means displeasing.

A NEW LIFE-RAFT FOR SHIPS.

Although the need for life-saving appliances at sea is not so pronounced as was the case during the U-boat campaign, the pre-war risks from shipwreck still remain, and these will be added to for years to come by the danger of encounter with stray mines. The drawback to most of the existing forms of lifeboats or life-saving rafts is that the occupants are exposed to wind and sea, being drenched with spray in bad weather, and having no means of warming or drying themselves. Under such conditions deaths from exposure are common, even though assistance is forthcoming within a comparatively short period. The invention of a Hull man, Mr Reginald B. Parsons, bids fair to overcome this

danger, as in his life-raft the shipwrecked are completely protected from the elements, are plentifully supplied with air, and, if necessary, with artificial heat. Hitherto the chief difficulty has been to admit air into enclosed floating chambers while keeping out water in a rough sea, but Mr Parsons has solved this problem by an ingeniously contrived wire trap-door in the top of each chamber. A model raft, which has been exhaustively tested, takes the form of four steel tanks mounted at the corners of a square wooden framework. This contrivance has been tried on the Boating Lake at Hull with ferrets in the tanks. The model was turned over many times, and buckets of water were poured over the trap-doors, yet after more than an hour the ferrets were alive and unharmed. In the full-sized raft, to be constructed if, and when, sufficient financial help is forthcoming, it is proposed to make each tank eight feet square, giving accommodation for twenty-five persons, and provision for a wireless installation is to be made, where this is thought advisable. Ample room would be available for heating apparatus and for stores of food and drink. To prove the value of the invention, Mr Parsons and his partner are prepared to be taken out to sea in the roughest weather, and to be launched overboard in such a raft, there to remain for any length of time deemed necessary to demonstrate the efficiency of the contrivance.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN HAIRCUTTER.

Most men look upon having their hair cut as a necessary evil which involves a serious waste of time in these days when barbers' shops are crowded with waiting customers. Moreover, the risk of infection from the implements used in hairdressing saloons is quite appreciable. For these reasons the device known as 'Everyman's British Safety Haircutter' will be welcomed, in that it enables every man to cut his own hair. The invention consists in principle of two safety-razor blades mounted one upon each side of an ordinary comb, and is operated thus. The apparatus is placed vertically in the hair near the crown of the head, and is drawn downwards through the hair until the point is reached at which it is desired that the cutting should begin. At this point the haircutter is inclined to the scalp at about the same angle as a razor forms with the skin in shaving, thus enabling the blade on the side next the head to grasp the hair, and causing the overgrown locks to be evenly trimmed if the downward motion of the apparatus is continued. The hair may be trimmed to any desired length with this device, even to the extreme shortness produced by clippers at the back of the neck, the length varying with the amount of projection of the teeth of the comb beyond the cutting edges. The amount of projection is regulated by means of two easily adjustable screws; while by turn-

ing a little handle the device can be loosened and moved along to the coarse or the fine end of the comb as may be desired, the coarse end being used for thick hair, and the fine end for thin hair. A further movement of this handle opens out the apparatus for the purpose of cleaning or renewing the blades. The correct cutting angle is soon learnt by the novice, after which no difficulty is experienced in securing a smart appearance.

NEW FOOD-CONTAINER FOR THE TRENCHES.

During the late war one of the commonest difficulties with which the soldier in the trenches had to contend was that of preserving his food from the depredations of rats and the contaminating attentions of flies. To overcome this difficulty, Mr E. A. Dennis, who spent four and a quarter years with the N.Z.E.F., has invented a tin receptacle for food which exactly fits into an ordinary mess-tin. The ends of this food-container are provided with four lever-topped vessels, for butter, jam, milk, and condiments respectively, while the middle portion is available for other foods. At the end of a march the new food-receptacle, which is called the 'Campaigner,' could be taken out of the mess-tin, leaving the latter clear for the protection of the iron rations from rats. The system would also allow of jam, margarine, and milk being issued in lever-topped vessels which would fit the 'Campaigner,' thus appreciably simplifying the quartermaster-sergeant's duties, as, instead of having to serve out rations from bulk, he would simply issue the necessary vessels to each man every one, two, or three days.

ANOTHER 'ONE-RING' GAS COOKER.

Some time ago a gas cooker was described in these notes for which it was claimed that all the operations carried out on the ordinary type of cooker with the aid of a number of burners could be performed with the help of one ring. Similar claims are made for the 'Wifesjoie' one-ring cooker, in which, moreover, several novel features are embodied. In appearance the apparatus resembles a small table with a cast-iron top which contains the gas-ring. This ring is fixed on a swivelling arm; hence it can be moved to any part of the hot plate where extra heat is required. An oven is included in the equipment, also a fifteen-gallon boiler, which provides hot water for washing dishes, for baths, and other purposes. The apparatus can be fitted with long legs, which place the top at a convenient height, or it may be provided with short legs for standing on a table. A toaster and griller can be used simultaneously with the general cooking. The apparatus is said to consume 35 feet of gas per hour as a maximum, and to keep four pots boiling, or two pots boiling and the oven at cooking heat, on 30 feet per hour. If desired, an oil-stove of

the 'Primus' variety may be substituted for the gas-ring.

NOVEL PLAN OF BUILDING A DRY-DOCK.

Not only is the recently completed dry-dock at Pearl Harbour in the island of Oahu, Hawaii, one of the largest in the world, but the work of construction was carried out on entirely novel lines. A much smaller dock was originally proposed, and the intention was to construct it in the usual manner by building a cofferdam round the site to keep out the water. This plan, however, proved impracticable, as the strata under the bottom were not strong enough to withstand the upward thrust of the water trying to get in, as was discovered when an attempt was made to pump out the first section. To overcome this difficulty a floor of concrete, 6 feet deep, was laid under water and pegged down with piles. The pumps were then started again, but just when the concrete was beginning to show, the cofferdam collapsed, and the floor was forced upwards, involving the destruction of two years' work. After this failure it was decided to adopt an entirely new method of construction, while the length was increased to 1000 feet, and the width at the top to 138 feet. The depth was fixed at $32\frac{1}{2}$ feet to the keel blocks at mean high water. The system adopted involved the construction of the dock floor under water. This was done in sixteen cross sections. It was not found practicable to make the floor of the dock heavy enough to resist the upward thrust of the water by its own weight, but with the side walls resting on the floor, the weight would be sufficient to prevent the whole dock floating up when empty. This meant that the middle of the floor would have a tendency to rise, but would be held down by the side walls. Under such conditions it was necessary to make up the floor sections of steel girders, which were filled in with concrete to give them the greatest possible weight. Each section was built in a floating dock, but to lessen the weight during transit the spaces between the steel girders were not completely filled with concrete until after the section had been placed in position. The sections were lifted out of the dock and laid in position by what is referred to in the *Scientific American* as a cofferdam boat. This structure was long enough for its ends to pass over the ends of the floor section. When one of the sections was to be laid, the floating dock in which it had been built was sunk by admitting water, until the cofferdam boat could be floated over the floor section and attached to it. The dock was then sunk lower and the cofferdam boat with its burden floated out, to be subsequently towed to its correct position at the site of the dock under construction. Here, the bed having been already dredged to the requisite depth, and piles driven to give a firm foundation, water was admitted to the compartments of the cofferdam

boat until the floor section was sunk into place. At each end of the cofferdam boat there was a chamber large enough to accommodate the portion of the side wall belonging to the section. These chambers were pumped out dry, and the walls built in the usual manner. The compartments of the boat were then pumped until it rose sufficiently to be towed clear of the section, doors being opened to give a clearance for the side walls. The sections were laid with narrow spaces between them. For the floor these were filled under water, but between the side walls the work was done dry inside cofferdams. At the inner end of the dock a curved wall was built up of concrete blocks, keyed to the floor, to the ends of the side walls, and to each other. The outer end was, of course, filled by a caisson or hollow steel gate floated into position. It will be remembered that, to lessen the weight during removal, the floor sections were only partially filled with concrete; hence, to give weight enough to prevent the whole structure floating up, these were loaded with broken rock before the water was pumped out. The final operation was the removal of this rock and the filling of the steelwork section with concrete.

LARGE GRAIN-ELEVATOR.

Next to those consisting of oil, grain cargoes lend themselves to quick handling and easy storage better than any other type of produce. In the United States grain is handled on a very big scale, and according to the Wheat Export Corporation, as quoted in the *Scientific American*, New Orleans beat all other ports in the tonnage of grain handled during the war, the export reaching the grand total of 1,861,000 tons. This result was made possible by the public grain-elevator belonging to the Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans, which has a storage capacity of 2,622,000 bushels, equipment for unloading trucks and barges at the rates of 20,000 and 6000 bushels per hour respectively, and for loading vessels at the rate of 100,000 bushels an hour. The storage-bins have the appearance of enormous wide organ-pipes, and they rise to a great height. As the grain is received at the ground, or water, level, it has to be raised to a distributing-floor over the bins—in fact, even considerably above this level, as it has first to pass by gravity through automatic weighing-machines, and thence by spouts to about a third of the bins. In addition to being raised, the grain has to be conveyed over considerable distances in a horizontal direction, and this is done by rapidly moving endless bands known as conveyers, the grain being simply fed on to the band by a spout. It is thrown off where desired by passing the belt round two pulleys on a travelling carriage, these forming a step in the band. A spout catches the thrown-off grain, which runs by gravity into the desired bin. In the New Orleans elevator the distri-

buting-floor is nearly 100 feet above the ground-level, and it is provided with five huge moving bands or conveyers. These throw off into shoots passing through the floor and delivering into enormous jointed spouts, the ends of which are fitted with wheels, so that they can be easily moved about to the openings over the bins. The bins number more than 300, and some of them hold as much as 12,500 bushels, while smaller ones have capacities of 2900 bushels. The grain from up-country reaches the elevator in river barges and railway cars, the former being unloaded by a pneumatic elevator which works on the vacuum-cleaner principle, and is so constructed that it readily adapts itself to the rise and fall of the water. Railway cars are run direct into the main building, and their contents fall by gravity into the elevator 'boots,' whence they are raised to the necessary height. Ships are loaded through shoots into which the grain is thrown by conveyer-bands. Ships and barges lie along both sides of a jetty out in the river and parallel with the shore. Surmounting this jetty, and raised high above the ground, is a gantry containing conveyer-bands for loading and discharging. From a tower in the middle of the gantry four conveyer-bands, each having a capacity of 25,000 bushels an hour, carry the grain to or from the main building. It is necessary to cool the grain when its temperature exceeds 95 degrees, and this is effected by raising it to the top of the building and dropping it, or by using a cooler bin. Steel and reinforced concrete have been used exclusively in the construction of this huge elevator, and all the machinery is driven by electric motors.

A CARAVAN DE LUXE.

Luxurious horse and motor caravans are by no means unknown in this country, but it is doubtful whether any have been so elaborate as one recently built by a well-known American motor-car manufacturing company for the use of its executive. The body is mounted upon a two-ton motor-lorry chassis, and it contains sleeping-berths for four persons, in addition to sleeping accommodation for the driver, which is provided by converting a special seat into a bunk at night. Under each berth is a locker for clothes, while a complete kitchen equipment is arranged at the back of the vehicle. At the front of the body are two cross seats which accommodate the driver and those who wish to view the scenery as they go along. Various lockers under the body are provided for tools and other items, and here also are the water-tanks. Electric current for twenty-five lamps is supplied by a separate motor and dynamo in conjunction with a storage-battery. A tender in the shape of a motor-bicycle, which may be used for subsidiary journeys off the main track, is carried at the back of the body.

A SIMPLE PREVENTIVE OF SEASICKNESS.

When first heard, the statement that seasickness can be prevented by stuffing the ears appears almost incredible. Such, however, is the belief of Major Lemon, a medical officer in the United States Army. Starting from the well-established physiological fact that the semi-circular canals of the inner ear have to do with the maintenance of the equilibrium of the body and the co-ordination of its muscular movements, he came to the conclusion that the violent motion of a vessel in a rough sea might give rise to sensations in the ear which would produce seasickness. To avoid these, he hit upon the expedient of packing his ears with sterile gauze, and both in his own case and in that of others whom he induced to try the experiment the results proved to be highly satisfactory. The 'remedy' is certainly a simple one, and the matter appears to be worthy of the fuller investigation and research which Major Lemon proposes to make.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE PEAT-MOSS.

PALE stars in shrouds of moon-mist lie in every
stilly pool;
A weary wind is wailing 'mong the pines a dirge
of dule;
It brings upon its drooping wing the heather's dewy
breath;
The sea is crooning low a mocking song of love and
death.

When here we plighted troth, the glowing heather's
breath was wine;
The fairies clinked their tiny spears in every wind-
kissed pine;
The placid sea smiled in the sun as if it blessed the
vow—
Its music held no menace then; but, ah! it mocks
me now.

The moonlit moss-hags gape like graves that hunger
to be fed;
The ghostly glimmers in the pools are tapers for the
dead;
The solemn pine-trees sway in grief above an unseen
bier,
And I am desolate, and weep for one that kissed
me here.

P. TAYLOR.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL*.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MR PHIPPS OF 'THE OLD FIRM.'

A JACOBITE TALE.

By G. APPLEBY TERRILL, Author of *Within Touch*.

PART I.

I.

A FEW miles short of Canterbury I brought the sorrel to a stand, partly because he was no credit to his posthouse, but dead weary already, and partly because here was a nook that long ago had won my fancy. It was a deep cup, with pastures and woodlands for its sides, and a nice space of cultivated fields at the bottom, where also was a prosperous farmhouse.

The sky was blue, save for one great tumble of white cloud to the south; and, despite the lateness of the season, I thought the place looked as well as ever it had. It was very English, very homely. Had the farmer been visible I should have enjoyed to ask him how he had done with his harvesting and his autumn ale, and whether he found the flat over-moist for his grain of a wet summer. The height of the slopes gave an air of complete seclusion to the scene; and perchance it was this that attracted me as much as anything, since a liking for seclusion was grown to be a second nature with me.

A dusty tradesman on a jaded hack I was, this October afternoon of 1696, near to the finish of the eighth secret visit I had made to England since the winter of 1690 for the purpose of trying what I could do in the matter of flinging the Prince of Orange off the throne, and putting back King James thereon. Seven times I had returned to France unscathed and unpursued, and with some promising business accomplished, so that our little court there was wont to call my good fortune marvellous. None deemed it so marvellous as did I myself, however, who alone knew of a certain weak spot in me, very liable to cause disaster.

Often I thought on this weakness with self-reproach: sometimes with keen shame, as when my poor king at St Germain would lay his hand on me—a hand become tremulous from the sorrows of exile—and declare I was the most proven, trusty friend that ever heartened his sovereign in adversity.

Not that I had swerved a hair in my faithfulness to him whom his people had used so ill. No, indeed! But always during my last hours

in England I would run a risk I should not have. Coming coastward, with letters in my keeping that were much more to be guarded than my life, since their discovery would peril the lives of the writers, I yet, for my own ends, took a flirt with danger. I could not resist so to do, though all I ever gained was a smart of freshly stirred sadness, which made it truly difficult for me to come with the bright mien I wished into the presence-chamber of St Germain, where was mournfulness enough and to spare.

II.

Ruth, my wife, was the reason of the weak spot in me.

I had been contemplating the farm scarce a minute, when she was vivid in my thoughts again.

We were wedded in '86, and surpassingly happy for two years—that is, until the Prince of Orange came. Then all the Whig spirit in her, all the hatred of the king and of his late brother's memory, which her malcontent family had fostered in her, broke forth. I had known of this defection when I wooed her, had known even that she pondered vengefully on the death of her cousin for treason in '85; but, seeing her so tender to me, and she but a child still, I had thought to chide and coax her from these ways.

With my utmost wit I strove to do this now. I failed, and that was but a small part of my discomfiture. To my bitter astonishment, she was suddenly changed towards me by the turn of the times, carried to wild excitement by the triumph of her side. I heard her, who was so dear to me, reprove me because I turned not false traitor, call me traitor to her and to all right-minded folk, upbraid me with cruel gibes or angry tears, and at length vow steadily that she hated me as much as the king, there being nought to choose betwixt us. When His Majesty was escaped over to France, and I was on the point of joining him, I entreated her—how I entreated her!—to bear with me and come with me; for I could not harden my heart to bring her away by force. But, in the hottest anger yet, she bade me go alone, and not think to see

her more, since my wilfulness had divorced us beyond mending.

On my first return to England I learnt that she was dwelling at my house of Shepherdsholme in Kent, which her kinsman Lord Somers had separated by some argument of the law from the rest of my confiscated property, and given to her as her own right. This house, by strange fate, I had never seen, His Majesty having made me a birthday gift of it on the very day of the Hollander Prince's landing, which gave me something else to think on. But I knew where it lay—and that not above six miles from the beach whence I should ship to France—and I was sure that no servant of mine who might be there would betray me. So on the night of my embarkation (a job needing darkness) I rode aside to it, and, my knocking being answered by a stranger servant, begged that my wife would see a Mr Phipps. And presently she came to me in the small room where I waited alone.

For a moment she was softened, even letting me kiss her, and asking with some awe how durst I venture into England. Yet anon, when she had it from me that I was persuading men back to the king, she stood aloof from me in a mood that most quickly became a storm of rage. Beginning with a taunt ill suited to her sweet lips, namely, that 'the lanthorn-jawed old bigot over the water [His Gracious Majesty] would fool me to the block,' she added that such would serve me justly and be best for the nation, as I was bent to enslave and ruin it. Then, breathing fast, she cried that, as she lived! I should not ruin it—that she saw her duty—that her serving-men should take hold of me and carry me to the magistrate. And she spoke with such a quivering of her body and such a marked danger-light in her eyes that forthwith I made for the door of the chamber, getting at my pistols in belief that I should have to fight a way to my horse, and at the same time feeling dumbfounded that this could be my Ruth, that was used to lean fondly on my bosom and show me all the love in her eyes.

But ere I was at the threshold she was sunk down and weeping agonisedly. So I turned back, remaining with her an hour, which was all the time I could spare. For a while she was contrite. Then her manner grew very cold; and, going with me to the hall to let me forth, she would neither kiss me nor wish me to come again; and before my foot was in the stirrup she shut the door. I heard her turn the lock at once, as if she were well rid of me and glad she could bar me out. I was to hear that prompt locking many times, and the echo of it would go with me to France, keeping my heart desolate until I was preparing to cross to England again.

III.

Now, as I have said, I was completing my eighth venture. I had spent two months in

London, chiefly tampering with affairs of the fleet, which at least should have had grateful recollections of the king; and I had stifled indoors for a week at a stretch, and gone a-visiting ministers by their cellar stairs with sea-coal and stubble on my cheeks. But here in the pure breeze of Kent I showed my own face, passing along in the character by which I was become known commonly, that of Mr Phipps, a merchant out of the north country—in a plain coat and plainer peruke, and with my sword strapped to the little trunk behind my saddle in so useless and simple-minded a fashion that none dreamed how ready lay a pistol in either pocket of Mr Phipps's skirts. And none save a highway thief was like to find out.

Though Ruth had such a large share of my thoughts as I lingered by the farm, I yet received some profound satisfaction from considering how deftly I always avoided the notice of the authorities. For many weeks past I had been busy under their noses, daring more than ever before; yet I had left London at the hour I wished, and now was safe beyond their sight, unsuspected, unthought of.

I patted the sorrel's neck and laughed aloud, gaily.

Had I not warranty for gladness? There were signatures of huge value written against certain of the letters in my breast. Two of them the king himself—though in one of those excitable, sanguine humours which on occasions relieved his despair—had declared I should not get. And I was going to see Ruth this evening.

Though I could hope for nothing but to part from her presently with the wretchedest pain, none the less, as ever was the case, I was almost beside myself at the prospect of standing before her, of taking her hand, perhaps, if she were very merciful, of putting my arms for an instant around her.

She was at home. I had been careful to discover that. Not again, since an unforgettable night three years before, when, reaching Shepherdsholme, I was told she was in London, had I laid myself open for a disappointment so terrible. Yes, she was at home—yet far from expecting me. For, though I held myself despicable for it, never did I let her know I was in England till I was in the act to leave, just half-an-hour's night-galloping from my sloop; I could not forget the danger that once had shone in her eyes, and (what was yet more ominous) would often again have shone, it seemed to me, had she not veiled it.

My reverie taking this colour, I lost the mood for laughter. I was accustomed to Ruth and my letters agreeing ill in my mind, but now of a sudden they clashed so violently as to nauseate me. These vital signatures, which I had enticed only by the most vehement assurance of my wariness, the most solemn pledging of my honour! Whither was I carrying them!

I felt my hand clench on the rein and my face go hot. But one thing was certain: I could not force myself from England without a sight of Ruth. Ruth!—two years my mate, then these eight long years so harsh a stranger that it was past belief she was ever my lover. Ah, well, she was the lover of no one else. There was true solace for me in that; and I hoped she knew it was the same with me, despite her several fleers that she would wager some French damozel had took me from her.

Recalling this unreasonable logic, I smiled, so varying was my temper, thanks to her, this afternoon. Then, with a last glance round the valley, I roused the sorrel and set him trotting towards Canterbury and the 'Blue Stag' posthouse.

IV.

The road was good and his step more willing, and soon the steady click-clock of his hoofs got me to whistling and humming softly; for, whatever might be the quality of my thoughts, a kind of careless elation would ever take me at intervals when my horse was beating a measure through a fair country-side. Thus I played with ilits and snatches; and I am afraid that to more than one air I idly fitted some words of compliment to 'Mr Phipps of "The Old Firm"' and his skilful methods of business, since I exulted in my work.

The 'Blue Stag,' a quiet house that suited me, I usually found empty of any traveller of substance. To-day, however, when I walked into the room where I was wont to eat a meal, I came upon an occupant—a large, stout man sitting before two bottles of wine, his riding-cloak thrown back somewhat, showing a rich blue suit. He stared across the bottles at me in plain annoyance, then shifted his gaze to the bar of the door as if wondering why he had forgot to fasten it. Finally, with a sigh, he folded a letter he had been reading, and seemed to resign himself to the intrusion of mean company, though he could not suppress a discourteous greeting as he surveyed the dust on me.

'My man,' said he, 'are you that blackguard express from London that has hired all the horses and drove me to find one at this posthouse? But I am before you here. The chestnut in the shed is mine. Touch her, and you shall suffer, whoever your master be.' And he eyed me very grimly as he sat back, a trifle puffed from his speech.

But I heeded not his words, for I knew him instantly, and all my business faculties were alert. Here was a fine piece of luck in my path—an old rustic Tory of uncommon influence, who had meanly gone over to the Prince of Orange, and ever after had seemed to regret it and to balance unsteadily between him and King James. But, having wide estates and a selfish, timid mind, he could be induced neither to send word to St Germain nor to receive an envoy there-

from, though it was often bruited he was about to do both.

I shut the door and sat down in the window-seat.

'To-day is liker summer than October,' I said. 'A queer whim of the weather, Sir Jacob Bristowe.'

I saw that he was surprised at my telling him his name, and also resentful of my familiar manner.

'I know most faces in these parts,' said he, 'but not yours. Who are you?' Which was what I wanted.

'My name is Phipps,' said I; 'and my trade might be worth your hearing.'

He put forth his lip with contemptuous indifference, and poured wine into his glass. 'What is it?'

I stood up and walked to his table, looking at him very gravely. 'Declare in all honour that you will put me from your memory if we agree not to trade, and I will tell you,' I said; 'not otherwise.'

Whereupon his ill-humour was jolted afresh. 'Trade!' he said, gaping at me and flushing with spleen, and attempting to glare me out of countenance. 'I trade—with a chance pedlar-fellow that'—Then, perceiving no anger in my eyes, but rather mirth, he broke off, very puzzled. 'Is it the wine-running?' he asked.

'First,' I replied, 'it is the vowed word of Sir Jacob Bristowe.'

He frowned me over from top to toe, and, getting no cringe out of me, muttered something anent 'a brazen rogue.'

Whereat he got his cringe in sooth, I bending quickly to hide my merriment.

'Perhaps I could do with a few casks,' he said cautiously, 'if you were a safe man. Um—ye-es, I give you my word of honour.'

Though his honour was certainly not of the best, this sufficed for me now. I sat down by him, laying aside my hat, which, though that was not my intent, soothed his dignity enormously.

'You are a trader?' said he, quite amiable.

'A merchant,' I replied. 'I am in England representing "The Old Firm."' I waved my hand Channelward.

"The Old Firm"? A shadow of uneasiness crossed him.

'Ay, the trusty old firm—James & Jamieson, of St Germain.'

'My soul!' he exclaimed, starting up like a fat, scared boy, his heavy face pale in a second. 'What have I let myself in for?—Go away!' he muttered, trembling. 'I will hear no more.'

'You have let yourself in for nothing,' I said. 'Like you, I am prepared to forget this talk. So you will take no hurt from listening.'

I motioned to his chair, and, after hanging off a while, he sat again, emptying his glass and folding his mouth as one who meant to be immovable.

'My firm,' said I, 'will be very generous in the matter of debts—heavy, black debts, mind you—which this realm owes it. It will forgive and forget every single one, hold rancour against no man, in return for a trivial sum.'

'A trivial sum?'

'Three crowns,' said I. 'Trivial enough to you folk who bestowed it on a stranger. Three crowns; and all who contribute to this settlement of the *Bill*'—

'I will not see King William settled bloodily. I will not see him harmed,' he interrupted with real decision.

'I am of no plot party, sir,' I replied with a touch of stiffness. 'I speak for the head of the firm. Pack your Dutchman back to Holland; that satisfies us. Now mark you—all who contribute to the payment of the three crowns will get a most handsome return for their honesty. And all wise men are contributing; for it is certain that "The Old Firm" must quickly come back.'

v.

For half-an-hour I urged him, pausing only while the post-keeper entered and set down a refreshment for me; and a dozen times in that half-hour I saw Sir Jacob incline this way and that. At last he jumped up again, with a weird choking sound, and throwing a glance at the door to make sure it was closed tight, swung round on me in a veritable fury.

'Perish you!' he cried, 'for this evil trade of yours.' He clenched his fist at me. 'Pah! what a trade! To sneak into England and lure men from their uprightness! To bring them to ruin and death; to wither the lives of their children!'

For a moment he silenced me. Not by his rage or his reasoning, but because his words were words that Ruth had spoken, and so hit me sadly. Then I recalled myself.

'Sir,' I said, 'I do sneak and lure, and I risk my own life pretty badly. But it is because, until the end, I stand true to my king—the man who fought the Dutch for us, the man who loved our navy, the man who was too honest to hoodwink you, wherefore you drove him out, robbing him of his very daughters, and nigh breaking his heart.'

With which flourish I drank a beaker of wine to St Germain and turned to my meal. From the corner of my eye I noted Sir Jacob shifting his feet and rubbing his chin with his knuckle, and very soon he was in his chair once more.

'Is he—King James—much altered in appearance?' asked he with furtive curiosity. 'And what of the young gentleman, the Prince of Wales? What think you of him?'

At that I abandoned my food, and twenty minutes after I had Sir Jacob won over.

'But a letter—a letter!' he protested. 'I dare not give you such, Mr Phipps. You cannot

think I would. I have no proof that you are what you say.'

With a sigh, being ever reluctant to shed the cloak of Mr Phipps, I took my commission from my wallet. 'You would recognise His Majesty's hand?' I asked.

He nodded.

'That is all writ by it.' And I passed the paper to him.

He read a few lines, and then his brows went up high, and laying it on the table, he scrutinised me, at first blankly, but soon with a smile that rather drew me to him.

'My lord viscount,' he said, uncovering and standing, and holding forth his hand, 'I must ask pardon for rough words; but indeed your lordship makes a most excellent loose, adventurous fellow.'

Whereat we both laughed and shook hands; and very calmly he got to writing his letter, though wishing first to bar the door, which I would not hear of, as being just that indiscreet move which might arouse suspicion.

But when his note was in my wallet, and I about to go, his placidness left him, and he gripped me by the arm, actually with tears springing to his eyes. 'My lord,' he said pleadingly, 'tell me again it will be safe—that there is no chance it shall come into any hands but the right!' His big face worked with apprehension. 'You have so cajoled me, my lord, that I know not whether I have done well or madly. And I have three daughters, quite young! For their sake you will take strict care of it?'

I patted his arm. 'It is as secure as if already at St Germain,' I said.

'Ah,' replied he, his tone somewhat reassured. Then, mopping his forehead and cheeks hastily with a brilliant kerchief from the Indies, he added, 'I am no downright brave man like you, my lord. Faith! and you are light of spirits with it all. Perchance—and I trust so—you have lost little by your loyalty?'

I thought of Ruth. 'Only the world,' I said with a moody smile, setting my hat on.

vi.

The French mare from the 'Blue Stag' took me smartly out of Canterbury in the gathering twilight, and being instantly affectionate towards me, and proud of her paces, would have borne me at a gallop had I not held her. Whereupon, to give play to her sportiveness, she was pleased to shy frantically across the road at the sight of every third or fourth clump of bush we approached, to the near unshipping of Mr Phipps's trunk.

Between these whiles, however, she trotted faultlessly, and many a refrain I hummed, with extra zest inasmuch as I was gratified by my latest bit of work, and also inclined to welcome the salt taste of the Channel which was already

in the air. For, although Sir Jacob had named me a brave man, there were occasions—such as when, newly landed, I rode into the shadows of London, or when I lay wakeful at night in my lodging there—sundry occasions on which a sudden, nasty fear seized me that my courage and cunning were both on the point to desert me. These fits were short, but bad enough, truly; and England at this time, still a-ring with the late silly murder plot, being no pleasant place for me, I should feel some relief to be out of it despite my hunger for Ruth.

So I sniffed the saltiness eagerly, and, the wind coming from France, was assured that the sloop would be off the beach at her proper hour—nine o'clock.

After a few miles, since, alas! I durst not go to Ruth too long before the sloop was at hand to flee to, I walked the mare; and my thoughts reverting to Sir Jacob and his entreaties and his tears, my falseness in visiting Shepherdsholme with my pack of letters stung me deeper than ever before. But I must have that sight of Ruth!

Staring into the darkness, my teeth set, I pondered. The mare had taken me perhaps a mile farther, when a most simple way out of the trouble occurred to me, one that seemed in no wise foolhardy and should have been my custom years ago. And thereafter I gave my reflections to Ruth with an easy conscience, and wondered

much whether she would take the little string of rubies I had for her, or coldly push them back to me, as was the case with my last gift.

For a while I but walked the mare, to her great impatience; and though the night was so early, I found it marvellous quiet. A man or two moved in the villages, but out in the blackness of the road I met with no traveller, nor heard sound of any, save that now and then far behind me I caught the tread of some pack-horses, as I took them to be from their pace being little more than my own.

At length I went atrot again, noting that the light wind was increased and gusty, though hardly enough to presage an awkward sea-crossing; and something past seven o'clock, with my heart beginning to leap beyond bounds for joy, I swung off the main road into the three-mile-long lane that led to Shepherdsholme—and half-way through it I drew rein under an old tree, dead of lightning, that was called 'Gospel Oak' (Ruth herself had told me), and had strange writhing branches which I could discern by peering carefully.

Out of the saddle, my arm through the mare's rein, I made a small pit in the mould beneath the tree, put my wallet therein, and covered it up—to be come for later. There it should be safe from every one.

And now—Ruth! Ruth!

(Continued on page 91.)

LEAVES FROM A CATALOGUER'S WALLET.

I.—GENERAL LA FAYETTE'S 'MOTHER.'

By W. ROBERTS.

WE know, from his own confessions, of the happy facility with which Mr Artemus Ward's wax 'figgers' could be manipulated to fulfil any sudden call on the part of his patrons for new celebrities. But life would be a monotonous business if facility was confined to any one trade. Facility, in fact, has been the salt of our national life, and without it we should now be under the heel of the Hun. Adaptability (which is perhaps another form of facility) of a very varied character will be especially familiar to those who have studied the history of portraits, engraved and otherwise. It is well known, for instance, that the portrait of a Mrs Hodges has done duty as Mrs Fitzherbert, and again as the Princess Caroline of Brunswick; that a portrait of Lamotte, the French spy, served also as a portrait of the Rev. Mr Hackman, who shot Miss Ray; and that Faithorne's portrait of Endymion Porter has passed muster as Robert, Earl of Essex. In most cases the 'fakers' have not even gone to the trouble of touching up the engraving—for example, adding a different beard or altering the shape of the face—but have contented themselves (such was

their happy belief in human credulity) with simply putting a fresh inscription on the print. Curiously enough, the prints with the false inscriptions are usually no less valuable than those with the true. Demand creates supply; and in the case of oil-paintings, the supplying of 'ancestors' is too profitable an industry to be neglected. If newly-rich people with plenty of money to spend, and with not too exacting a taste, must have portraits of their real or imaginary ancestors, there is sure to be some one happy to oblige them. It may not be pleasant for an ancestor-worshipper to be told that he is offering incense at the wrong shrine, or that he is paying homage to the memory of a man who was no credit to his family, and perhaps even a disgrace to his country; yet the devotee is always willing to risk the chance of such unpleasant possibilities.

There is much to be said in favour of collecting portraits of great men and beautiful women, painted or engraved by famous artists. These things are genuine chapters of history, a kind of conquest over death and time. And fascinating as are the portraits of celebrities,

those of their parents are scarcely less interesting. Portraits, for instance, of the parents of Shakespeare or Ben Jonson, Voltaire or Cervantes, might aid us in coming to some conclusion as to whether or not these men derived their genius from their progenitors. Rembrandt's portraits of his father and mother are fairly conclusive evidence that one of the greatest artists who ever lived owed very little of his genius to either of his parents. But portraits may be collected for various reasons, national as well as individual. Capitals like London, Edinburgh, and Dublin have specialised on national lines with exceedingly interesting results. Galleries in nearly every state in North America have of recent years been keen collectors of portraits and pictures by native artists—particularly portraits of men who have contributed to the building up of the great republic, and more especially men who had a hand in the famous Revolution. Perhaps no man not born in America appeals more forcibly to the American imagination than the Marquis de La Fayette, and to him successive generations of Americans have paid due homage. Engraved portraits of him are to be found in every collection, private and public, throughout the States, and of monuments to his memory there are many.

A national affection for a great man does not necessarily stop at the man himself; it almost automatically extends to his parents. And what could crown a fine collection of pictures in an American gallery with greater glory than a portrait of La Fayette's mother? It would be perfectly reasonable to argue that Madame de La Fayette, like all the other great ladies of her time, sat for her portrait; and it is easy to realise with what satisfaction an American would add her portrait to his collection. Such a portrait, or what claimed to be such, was offered some years ago to a famous collector (since dead), was purchased by him, and for some considerable time hung among his splendid collection of old masters. And it might still be hanging there but for a curious and interesting series of circumstances which robbed it of the faintest claim to that honour.

The picture was ascribed to Nicolas de Largillière, and on that point there could be no two opinions. Largillière was born in 1656, and lived until 1746. As he painted portraits of the leading men and women in France of his time, and as a portrait of Madame la Marquise de La Fayette occurs in a list of his works in the *Dictionnaire général des Artistes de l'École Française*, by Bellier de la Chavignerie, there was so far no reason to question either the name of the artist or that of the lady in the picture. But when it became a matter of collecting some biographical details concerning the mother of the great La Fayette, what should have proved an easy task seemed full of elusive uncertainties. Her name was not to be found

in any of the historical memoirs of the time; she was scarcely mentioned in such genealogical publications as were to be consulted in London. Even the dates of her birth and death, which most will admit are important facts in any biography, were not forthcoming. After many and vain efforts, an appeal for information was made to the gentleman who inherited the La Fayette seat at La Grange, the descendant of the fifth Marquis de La Fayette, and by him every particular was courteously supplied. The mother of the famous Marquis de La Fayette, a great lady and rich heiress, lived entirely secluded from the Court and fashionable gatherings of Paris. She was Marie Louise Julie de La Rivière. Born about 1737, she married at the age of sixteen or seventeen her kinsman the fourth Marquis de La Fayette, became a widow at twenty-two, and died about 1768, when her son, who was destined to figure so conspicuously in history, was a child of eleven.

A mere glance at the dates will show that the future Marquise de La Fayette was a girl of about eight or nine when Largillière died in 1746; and so this portrait, if painted by Largillière, could not represent the mother of the great La Fayette, for the portrait showed a lovely and evidently very lively young lady of over twenty years of age. Then it must be a portrait by Largillière of an earlier Marquise de La Fayette, the grandmother of the general, argued the venders of the picture when asked to explain the discrepancy as shown by the dates. The canvas had the date 1730 on the back; but, as a matter of fact, the grandmother was married in 1708, and in 1730 would have been a matron of at least forty years of age, and not a frisky young thing of twenty or so. Moreover, as all the family portraits had been most religiously preserved at the La Fayette seat at La Grange, and as every one was known to La Fayette's descendant, it was curious that an important portrait of the Marquise, entirely unknown to the family, should suddenly come to light and be exhibited in London among other pictures forming part of a great collection.

It having been proved that the portrait was neither of the mother nor of the grandmother of the great La Fayette, it was not necessary to go any further in the matter, so far as the owner was concerned. But inquiries of this kind are never satisfactorily disposed of until every problem has been sifted to the bottom—to prove a negative is only to get half-way to the bottom. Fortunately, in this instance it was not only easy to prove that the portrait did not represent a Marquise de La Fayette, but that it did represent a Marquise de Migieu; that ever since it was painted, nearly two centuries ago, it had been in the possession of a member of the *ancienne noblesse* of France; and that it was at a château in Savigny-les-Beaume (Côte d'Or)

until a short time before it found a temporary home in the collection of an American millionaire. It was seen at the château by an eminent expert, who noted the date 1730 on the back of the canvas. The owner was anxious to sell the picture, but was equally anxious to suppress all record of its *provenance*. Eventually the picture was sold, doubtless at a good price, for fine examples of Largillière's work are not picked up every day. And so by some curious chain of circumstances, which doubtless will never be pieced together, on the road to Paris, or perhaps when it got there, the beautiful

portrait of Madame de Migieu not only lost its identity, but acquired a new and much more 'selling' name!

It is perhaps hardly necessary to add that the so-called portrait of the mother of La Fayette never figured in the catalogue of the American millionaire's collection, and that it quietly passed back to the vendor from whom it was purchased. But counterfeits of the kind are not easily killed; and even now the picture may be adorning some transatlantic gallery as that of the mother of the general who contributed so much towards the freedom of the United States of America.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER V.—THE OLYMPIANS THUNDER.

I.

IT must be admitted in defence of Lady Durwent's dinners that, at any rate, the conversation was *unusual*. The art of matching mind against mind, of summoning thought and wedding it to speech, the interchange of spirited controversy which marks the meeting of active brains, was at least essayed at Chelmsford Gardens.

Like other social arts of past ages, conversation has become the accomplishment of the few. The chatter that has taken its place, the poverty-stricken diet of music-hall humour never rising higher than a play on words, the intimate inanity of exclusive Society—these are signs of our development no less than the thinly veiled indecencies which muddy the talk of the ultra-smart set.

Among the few benefits accruing from the war, we can at least place the temporary interruption to the tyranny of the commonplace. The decade preceding 1914 was a prolific one—it is doubtful if we shall ever see another period so productive of powerful nonentities.

With all its faults, war stirred the sluggish brain of the world—and supplied a genuine topic of conversation.

II.

Lady Durwent was blessed in the possession of a cook whose artistry was beyond question, if the same could not be said of the guests to whom she so frequently ministered. She was a descendant of the French, that race which makes everything tend towards development of the soul, and consequently looks upon a meal as something of a sacrament. She prepared a dinner with a balance of contrast and climax that a composer might show in writing a tone poem.

On this eventful evening, therefore, the dinner-party, stimulated by her art and by potent wines

(gazing with long-necked dignity at the autocratic whisky-decanter), rapidly assumed a *crescendo* and an *accelerando*—the two things for which a hostess listens.

H. Stackton Duncleley had held the resolutionist in a duel of language—a combat with broadswords—and honours were fairly even. The short-sleeved Johnston Smyth had waged futurist warfare against the modernist Pyford, while the Honourable Miss Durwent sat helplessly between them, with as little chance of asserting her rights as the Dormouse at the Mad Hatter's tea-party. The American had held his own in badinage with the daughter of Italy on one side and his hostess on the other, the latter, however, being too skilled in entertaining to do more than murmur a few encouragements to the spontaneity that so palpably existed.

'Let me see,' said Lady Durwent as the meal came to a close and the butler looked questioningly at her. 'Shall we'—she opened the caverns of her throat, producing a volume that instantly silenced every one—'SHALL WE HAVE COFFEE IN HERE OR IN THE DRAWING-ROOM? I suppose you gentlemen, as usual, want to chat over your port and cigars alone.'

H. Stackton Duncleley protested that absence from the ladies, even for so short a time, would completely spoil his evening—receiving in reward a languorous glance from Lady Durwent. Johnston Smyth, who had done more than ample justice to the wines, offered to 'pink' at fifty yards any man who would consider the proposition for a moment. Only Norton Pyford, in a sort of befuddled gallantry, suggested that the ladies might have sentimental confidences to exchange, and leered amorously at Elise Durwent.

'Well,' said Lady Durwent, 'I am sure we are all curious to hear what Mr Selwyn thinks of England, so I think we shall have coffee here. Is it agreeable to every one?'

Unanimous approval greeted the proposal, and,

at a sign from the hostess, cigarettes, cigars, and coffee made their appearance, with the corresponding niceties of 'Just one, please,' 'Well, perhaps a cigarette might be enjoyable,' 'I know men like a cigar,' 'After you, old man,' and all those various utterances which tickle the ear, creating in the speaker's breast the feeling of saying the right thing and doing it rather well.

Throughout the dinner the daughter of the house had sat practically without a remark, and even when chorus effects were achieved by the rest, remained with almost immobile features, merely glancing from one to another, momentarily interested or openly bored. Several times the American had looked furtively at the arresting face, marred by too apparent mental resentment, but the barricade of Johnston Smyth's angular personality had been too powerful for him to surmount with anything but the most superficial persiflage.

He had watched her take a cigarette, accepting a light from Smyth, who surrounded the action with a ludicrous dignity, when she looked up and met his eyes.

'Mr Selwyn,' she said, speaking with the same rapidity of phrasing that had both held and exasperated him before, 'we are all waiting for the verdict of the Man from America.'

'Over there,' he smiled, 'it is customary to take evidence before giving a verdict.'

'Good,' boomed the resolutionist; 'very good!'

'Then,' said Lady Durwent, 'we seven shall constitute a jury.'

'Order!' Johnston Smyth rose to his feet and hammered the table with a bottle. '*Oyez, oyez*, you hereby swear that you shall well and truly try'—

'Can't,' said Norton Pyford, pulling himself up; 'I'm prejudiced.'

'For or against?'

'Against the culprit.'

'My discordant friend,' said Smyth, producing a second bottle from an unsuspected source and making it disappear mysteriously, 'means that he is prejudiced against England. Am I right, sir?'

'Not exactly,' drawled the composer. 'I don't mind England—but I think the English are awful.'

'That is a nice point,' said Lady Durwent.

'Ah,' broke in Madame Carlotti, 'but, much as I detest the English, I hate England more. *Nom de Dieu!* I—a daughter of the Mediterranean, where the sun is so rarely a stranger, and the sky and the water it is always blue. In Italy one lives because she is alive—it is sufficient. Here it is always gray, gray, always gr-r-ray. When the sun comes—*sacramento!* he sees his mistake and goes queek away. Ah, Signor Selwyn, it is *désolant* that I am compelled to live here.'

A roar of unfeeling laughter greeting her familiar plaint, Madame Carlotti took a hitch in

her gown and reimprisoned some of her person which had escaped from custody.

'Then,' said Johnston Smyth, 'if we are all of a mind, there is no need to have a trial. You have all seen the accusation in Mr Selwyn's eye, you have considered the unbiassed evidence of the lovely Carlotti'—

'But jurors can't give evidence,' muttered Mr Dunckley.

'My dear sir, I know she can't, but she *did*,' said Smyth triumphantly. '*Oyez, oyez*—all in favour'—

'But,' interrupted the American, 'are we not to hear any one for the defence?'

'No,' said Smyth, who was thoroughly happy as a self-constituted master of ceremonies. 'No one would accept the brief.'

'Then,' said Selwyn, 'I apply for the post of counsel for the defence, for in the limited time I have been in your country I have seen much that appeals to me.'

'Of course, it is a well-known fact,' said Dunckley sententiously, 'that American humour relies on exaggeration.'

'No, no,' said Johnston Smyth, hushing the voices with a *pianissimo* movement of his hands, 'it is not humour on Mr Selwyn's part, but gratitude. In return for Christopher Columbus discovering America, this gentleman is going to repay the debt of the New World to the Old by discovering England.'

'SHALL WE HAVE SOME PORT?' said Lady Durwent, opening the sluice-gates of her vocal production.

III.

'Speaking of America,' said Mrs Le Roy Jennings a few minutes later, Johnston Smyth having sat down in order to do justice to the wine of Portugal, 'she is in the very vanguard of progress. Women have achieved an independence there unknown elsewhere in the world.'

'That is true,' said Lady Durwent, who knew nothing whatever about it.

'You are right,' said Madame Carlotti. 'The other day in Paris I heard an American woman whistling. "Have you lost your dog?" I asked. "No," she says; "my husband."'

A chorus of approval greeted this malicious sally, followed by the retailing of various anti-American anecdotes that made up in sting what they lacked in delicacy. These showed no signs of abatement until, slightly nettled, Selwyn put in an oar.

'I had hoped,' he said, 'to find some illuminating points in the conversation to-night. But it seems as if you treat not only your own country in a spirit of caricature, but mine as well. We are a very young race, and we have the faults of youth—but then youth always has a future. It was a sort of post-graduate course to come to England and Europe to absorb some of the lore—or isn't it one of your poets who

speaks of "The Spoils of Time"? Your past is so rich that naturally we look to you and Europe for the fundamental things of civilisation.'

'And what have you found?' asked Elise Durwent.

'Well,' said the American, 'much to admire—and much to deplore.'

'In other words,' said Johnston Smyth, 'he has been to Edinburgh and to London.'

'That is so,' smiled Selwyn; 'but I don't'—

'All people,' said Smyth serenely, 'admire Edinburgh, but abuse London. Over here a man will jest about his religion or even his grandfather, but never about Edinburgh. On the other hand, as every one downs London, and as an Englishman is never so happy as when he has something on hand to grouse about, London's population has grown to some eight millions.'

'I think, Mr Smyth,' said Lady Durwent, 'that you are as much a philosopher as a painter.'

'Lady Durwent,' said the futurist, 'all art is philosophy—even old Pyford's here, though his amounts almost to theology.'

For a few minutes the conversation drifted in inconsequential channels until H. Stackton Dunckley becalmed everything with a laborious dissertation on the lack of literary taste in both England and America. Selwyn took the opportunity of studying the elusive beauty of Elise Durwent, which seemed to provoke the eye to admiration, yet fade into imperfection under a prolonged searching. Pyford grew sleepy, and even Smyth appeared a little melancholy, when, on a signal from Lady Durwent, brandy and liqueurs were served, checking Mr Dunckley's oratory and reviving every one's spirits noticeably.

'Mr Selwyn,' said Mrs Le Roy Jennings, in her best manner, 'after you have subjected England to a microscopic examination for a sufficient length of time, you will discover that we are a nation of parasites.'

'I would rather you said that than I, Mrs Jennings.'

'Parasites,' reiterated the speaker, fixing an eye on some point on the wall directly between Selwyn and the hostess. 'We sprawl over the world—why? To develop resources? No! It is to reap the natural growth of others' endeavours! Yes! The Englishman never creates. He is the world's greatest brigand'—

'Too thoroughly masculine to be really cruel,' chimed in the irrepressible Smyth.

'Brigand,' repeated Mrs Jennings, not deigning the artist so much as a glance, 'skimming the earth of its surface riches, and rendering every place the poorer for his being there.'

There was an awesome silence, which no one seemed courageous enough to break.

'Yes,' said H. Stackton Dunckley finally, 'and in addition England is decadent.'

'But, Mr Selwyn'—again the American heard the voice of Elise Durwent, that quick intensity of speech that always left a moment of startled

silence in its wake—'you have discovered something admirable about England. Won't you tell us what it is?'

'Well,' he said, smiling, 'for one thing, no one can deny the beauty of your women.'

'All decadent nations,' said H. Stackton Dunckley, 'produce beautiful women—it is one of the surest signs that they are going to pieces. The Romans did at the last, and Rome and England are parallel cases. As Mrs Le Roy Jennings says, they are parasitic nations. What did the Romans add to Greek art? The Greeks had this—he made an elliptical movement of his hands—'the Romans did that to it'—he described a circle, then shrugged his shoulders, convinced that he had said something crushing.

'So you think English women beautiful, Mr Selwyn?' said Lady Durwent, trying to retrieve the conversation from the slough of her inamorato's ponderosity.

'Undoubtedly,' answered the American warmly. 'It is no doubt the out-of-door life they lead, and I suppose the moist climate has something to do with their wonderful complexions, but they are womanly as well, and their voices are lovely.'

'I smell a rat,' said Smyth, who was smoking an unlit cigarette, which had fastened itself to his lip and bobbed up and down with his speech, like a miniature baton. 'When a man says a woman's voice is sweet, it means that she has bored him; that what she has to say interests him so little that he turns to contemplation of her voice. This American is a devilish cute fellow.'

A babble of voices took up the charge and demanded immediate explanation.

'To a certain extent,' said Selwyn stoutly, 'there is much in what Mr Smyth says.'

'List to the pigmy praising the oracle,' chanted the artist.

'I do not think,' went on the American, 'that the English girls I have met are as bright or as clever as the cultured young women of the continent of America. In other words, with all her natural charm, the English girl does not edit herself well.'

'In that,' said H. Stackton Dunckley, 'she reflects the breed. The Anglo-Saxon has an instinctive indifference to thought.'

'As soon as an Englishman thinks,' minced Madame Carlotti, 'he leaves England with its *cattivo* climate and goes to the Colonies. *C'est pourquoi* the Empire is so powerful—its brains are in the legs.'

'Come, come,' laughed Selwyn, 'is there no one here but me who can discover any merit in old England?'

'Yes,' said Pyford gloomily; 'London is only seven hours from Paris.'

'Ah—*Parigi!*' ejaculated Madame Carlotti with the fervour born of the feeling in all Latin women that Paris is their spiritual capital.

'And yet,' said Selwyn, after a pause to see if Madame Carlotti's exuberance was going to develop any further, 'in literature, which I suppose is the natural art of the Anglo-Saxon temperament, we still look to you for the outstanding figures. With all our ability for writing short stories—and I think we are second only to the French in that—England still produces the foremost novelists. In the sustained effort required in the formation of a novel, England is yet first. Of course, musically, I think England is very near the bottom.'

'And yet,' said Johnston Smyth, 'we are the only people in the world candid enough to have a monument to our lack of taste.'

Every one looked at the artist, who stroked his left arm with the back of his right hand, like a barber sharpening a razor.

'In that part of London known as Kingsway,' he said, 'there is a beautiful building called "The London Opera House"! He thrust both hands out, palms upwards, as if the building itself rested on them. 'It stands in a commanding position, with statues of the great composers gazing from the roof at the passing proletariat emanating from the Strand. Inside it is luxuriously equipped, as befits the home of Opera.'

'Yes,' said the American, as the speaker paused.

Smyth produced a watch from nowhere in particular. 'It is just past ten,' he said. 'I am not sure whether it is Charlie Chaplin or Mary Pickford showing on the screen at this hour, at the London Opera House.'

A murmur of applause acknowledged the artist's well-planned climax. He looked about with a satisfied smile, then replaced the watch with the air of pocketing both it and the subject.

'But—you have opera?' said Selwyn wonderingly.

'Of course,' said Smyth; 'and where? In a vegetable-market. In Covent Garden. Yet England has been accused of hypocrisy! What other nation is so candid?'

By one of those unspoken understandings that are the rules of mobs and dinner-parties, it was felt that the topic was ceasing to be exhaustive and becoming exhausting. Lady Durwent glanced interrogatively about the table; Madame Carlotti took a hitch in her gown; Norton Pyford emptied his glass and sat pensively staring at it as if it had hardly done what he expected, but on the whole he felt inclined to forgive it; Johnston Smyth made a belated attempt to be sentimental with the Honourable Miss Durwent, whose lips, always at war with each other, merely parted in a smile that utterly failed to bring any sympathy from her eyes; Mrs Le Roy Jennings took a last sip of coffee, and finding it quite cold, put it down with a gesture of finality.

'Lady Durwent,' said Austin Selwyn—and the quality of his voice was lighter and more musical than it had been—'I suppose that a man

who deliberately goes to a country to gather impressions lays himself open to the danger of being influenced by external things only. If I were to base my knowledge of England on what her people say of her, I think I should be justified in assuming that the century-old charge of her decadence is terribly true. Yet I claim to have something of an artist's sensitiveness to undercurrents, and it seems to me that there is a strong instinct of race over here—perhaps I express myself clumsily—but I think there is an England which has far more depth to it than your artists and writers realise. For some reason you all seem to want to deny that; and when, as to-night, it is my privilege to meet some of this country's expressionists, it appears that none has any intention of trying to reveal what is fine in your life as a people—you seek only to satirise, caricature, or damn altogether. If I believe my ears, there is nothing but stupidity and insularity in England. If I listen to my senses, to my subconscious mind, I feel that a great crisis would reveal that she is still the bed-rock of civilisation.'

Madame Carlotti raised her glass.

'To America's next ambassador to England!' she cried.

IV.

The momentous evening was drawing to a close.

Rain, in fitful gusts, had been besieging the windows, driven by an ill-tempered wind that blustered around the streets, darting up dark alleys, startling the sparks emerging from chimney-pots, roaring across the parks, slamming doors, and venting itself, every now and then, in an ill-natured howl.

Inside the refuge of No. 8 Chelmsford Gardens a fire threw its merry warmth over the large music-room, and did its best to offset the tearful misery of the November night.

Conversation had dwindled in energy with the closing hour of the affair, and seizing an auspicious moment, Norton Pyford had reached the piano, and for twenty minutes demonstrated the close relation of the chord of C Minor to the colour brown. Modernist music, acting on *unusual* souls as classical music on ordinary souls, stimulated the flagging conversational powers of the guests, and he was soon surrounded by a gesticulating group of dissenting or condoning critics.

Selwyn noticed that Elise Durwent had not left her seat by the fire, and absenting himself from the harmonic debate, he took a chair by hers.

'You are pensive, Miss Durwent,' he said.

She smiled, with a slight suggestion of weariness, though her eyes had a softness he had not seen in them before.

'I am very dull company to-night,' she said, 'but ever since I was a child, rain beating against the windows has always made me dreamy. I

suppose I am old-fashioned, but it is sweeter music to me than Mr Pyford's new harmonies.'

He laughed, and leaning towards the fire, rubbed his hands meditatively. 'You must have found our talk wearisome at dinner,' he said.

'No,' she answered, 'it was not so bad as usual. You introduced a note of sincerity that had all the effect of a novelty.'

Her mannerism of swift and disjointed speech, which broke all her sentences into rapidly uttered phrases, again annoyed him. Though her voice was refined, it seemed to be acting at the behest of a whip-like brain, and she spoke as if desirous rather of provoking a retort than of establishing any sense of compatibility. Yet she was feminine—gloriously, delicately feminine. The finely moulded arms and the gracefulness of body, indicated rather than revealed beneath her blue gown, intrigued the eye and the senses, just as the swiftly spoken words challenged the brain and infused exasperation in the very midst of admiration. The complicated elements of the girl offered a peculiar fascination to the eternal instinct of study possessed by the young American author.

'Miss Durwent,' he said, 'if I was sincere to-night, it was because you encouraged me to be so.'

'But I said nothing.'

'Nevertheless, you were the inspiration.'

'I never knew a girl could accomplish so much by holding her tongue.'

A crash of 'Bravos' broke from the group around the piano; Pyford had just scored a point.

'You know,' resumed Selwyn thoughtfully, 'a man doesn't go to a dinner-party conscious of what he is going to say. It is the people he meets that produce ideas in him, many of which he had never thought of before.'

She tapped the ground with her foot, and looked smilingly at his serious face. 'It is the reverse with me,' she said. 'I go out to dinner full of ideas, and the people I meet inspire a silence in me of unsuspected depth.'

'May I smoke?' asked Selwyn, calling a halt in the verbal duel.

'Certainly; I'll join you. Don't smoke your own cigarettes—there are some right in front of you.'

He reached for a silver box, offered her a cigarette, and struck a match. As he leaned over her she raised her face to the light, and the blood mounted angrily to his head.

Though a man accustomed to dissect rather than obey his passions, he possessed that universal quality of man which demands the weakness of the feminine nature in the woman who interests him. He will satirise that failing; if he be a writer, it will serve as an endless theme for light cynicism. He will deplore that a woman's brains are so submerged by her emotions; but let him meet one reversely constituted, and he steers his course in another direction with all possible speed.

Selwyn had come to her with a comfortable, after-dinner desire for a *tête-à-tête*. He expected flattering questions about his writings, and would have enjoyed talking about them; instead of which this English girl with the crimson colouring and the maddening eyes had coolly kept him at a distance with her rapier brain. He felt a sudden indignation at her sexlessness, and struck a match for his own cigarette with such energy that it broke in two.

'Miss Durwent,' he said suddenly, lighting another match, 'I want to see you again—soon.' He paused, astonished at his own abruptness, and an awkward smile expanded until it crinkled the very pinnacle of his nose.

'I like you when you look like that,' she said. 'It was just like my brother Dick when he fell off a horse. By the way, do you ride?'

'Yes,' he said, watching the cigarette-smoke curl towards the fireplace, 'though I prefer an amiable beast to a spirited one.'

'Good!' she said, so quickly that it seemed like the thrust of a sword in tierce. 'You have the same taste in horses as in women. Most men have.'

'Miss Durwent'—his face flushed angrily and his jaw stiffened—'I'll ride any horse you choose in England, and'—

'And break the heart of the most vixenish maiden in London! You are a real American, after all. What is it you say over there? "Shake!"'

She slapped her hand into his, and he held it in a strong grip.

'But you *will* let me see you again soon?'

'Certainly.' She withdrew her hand from his with a firmness that had neither censure nor coquetry in it, and the heightened colour of her cheeks subsided with the sparkle of her eyes.

'When?' he said.

'To-morrow morning, if you like. I shall have horses here at eleven, and we can ride in the Row, providing you will put up with anything so quiet as our cattle.'

'That is bully of you. I shall be here at eleven.'

'I thought all Americans used slang,' she said.

'You are the first English girl I have met,' he answered with extraordinary venom in his voice, 'who has not said "ripping."'

Twenty minutes later Austin Selwyn, unable to secure a taxi, tramped along Oxford Street towards his hotel. He had just reached the Circus when the malignant wind, hiding in ambush down Regent Street, rushed at him unawares and sent his hat roistering into the doorway of a store. With a frown, Selwyn stopped and stared at the truant.

'Confound the wretched thing!' he said.

But it is doubtful if he was thinking altogether of the hat.

(Continued on page 84.)

THE HUMOURS OF A TIME-TABLE.

By JOHN MANNOFIELD.

THERE are certain volumes whose most careful study leaves the reader with a very mean idea of his own mental capacity. The convalescent Douglas Jerrold, it will be remembered, was seized with dark apprehensions of impending idiocy because the opening lines of Browning's *Sordello* refused to yield him one rational idea. The awful thought came to Jerrold that during his long illness his mental faculties must have been wrecked. Perspiration sprang to his pores, and smiting his brow, he cried, 'Oh God! I am an idiot!' When mother and wife, whose vigilance he had evaded in thus tasting the illicit enjoyment of reading, arrived on the scene, the alarmed invalid thrust the newly arrived volume into their hands and demanded of them what *they* made of it. Anxiously he watched their expressions as they read, and when before long his wife declared, 'It's gibberish! I don't understand what the man means,' he sank down into his sofa again, greatly relieved. 'Thank God,' said he, 'I'm not an idiot after all!'

Browning's, however, is not the only work whose perusal has left unwary readers in doubt as to their own sanity. Another book of this humbling kind is that careful compilation, marvel of fullness and accuracy and of the printer's art, which has now served eighty years of travellers, *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*. Issued for the first time in October 1839—the year before *Sordello* came to set a standard of incomprehensibility—the maze of figures, the whimsical array of dots, bars, asterisks, daggers, and double-daggers, of this most bewildering though indispensable publication soon outstripped the limits of the ordinary understanding and led the average passenger gravely to suspect his reason. It was as announcing the triumphant discovery of an altogether un hoped-for solution that one of Anthony Trollope's novels declared, '*Bradshaw* was unable to conceal the fact that the earliest train to town next morning left at 8.45.'

It is only fair to add that, after over sixty years of increasing bulk and deepening obscurity, the publishers came about fifteen years ago to the traveller's help. In 1905 a newly arranged *Bradshaw* appeared, the quintessence of puzzlement became amazingly lucid, and the simplified guide of many hundred pages may now be consulted without generating a headache, the outbreak of defamatory adjectives, or the suspecting of one's personal sanity.

The modest beginnings of the famous time-tables took place at a time when this country was in a very different condition as regards 'ways and communications' from that which

now obtains. The evolution of transport from stage-coach to iron-rail was then in progress. The railways already laid were few and crudely built, engines were whimsical in shape and erratic in motion, trains went seldom and slow, the journeying was done in open wagons or in carriages designed on the pattern of the stage-coach which they had come to displace, and carrying the passengers' luggage in like manner upon the roof. It was at this period in the infancy of railway working that George Bradshaw saw his opportunity: the Manchester Quaker and engraver of maps issued what is now a bibliographical curiosity and treasure, the green-and-gold-bound guide to the railways of England. The title-page of the original issue tells the religious views of its originator by the form of dating: '10th mo. 19th, 1839.'

For a time after the inauguration of the first regular train service in this country, people who ventured to risk their lives by the new mode of conveyance were the objects of admiration for their courage or of contempt for their foolhardiness. The speed attained was usually about sixteen miles an hour; but even this rate was too fast for some, and caused them to feel giddy. At first there were no fixed signals; policemen with red and green flags directed the driver, and no trains were run by night. The first junction signal-box was called a lighthouse, and it was proposed that during thick weather the signalman should perform on a large drum! The carriages were lighted by lamps fixed outside, stage-coach fashion. A train in those days presented a much more festive appearance than it does in these sober, utilitarian times. The engine had much burnished brass about it; the coaches were brightly painted in purple, yellow, green, and blue; passengers, travelling on the roofs of the carriages, by their white duck trousers and blue coats added picturesqueness to the scene; while the guard, gorgeous in scarlet coat and silver buttons, sat on a sort of outside perch or rumble and fittingly terminated the gay procession.

But if journeys had not been short ones, the acute discomfort of pioneer railway travelling would have seriously endangered its popularity as a means of passenger transit. To have to sit on the roof meant that outside passengers must use gauze spectacles if they wished to preserve their sight to the end of the run. And the danger from sparks and ashes was tenfold worse when trains were passing through tunnels. Even the luggage, though carefully sheeted over, would catch fire; but the strong conservatism of the companies kept up the practice of loading it on the roof till about as

late as 1860. Altogether, it is not to be wondered at that inside passengers were willing to pay more for the protection of the closed coaches.

While first-class and second-class passengers could secure protection from smoke and sparks and weather, third-class passengers, who down to 1845 had no legal status at all, were put into open trucks, sometimes with seats, but as often without; and for this they were charged three-halfpence a mile. The 'third-class man' was really not desired by many companies at any price. He was conveyed with other unclean animals by cattle-trains; he was shunted about in his bufferless box for hours; and when at last he reached his destination, it was to see a notice that 'the company's servants are strictly ordered not to porter for wagon-passengers.' To the protesting occupants of these trucks, laid up in a siding for hours to let the mail go by, the guard would say, 'Ye mun. bide your time. Yours is only the nigger train.'

So grievous was their state that they excited the sympathetic heart of Mr Punch, who wrote in their defence:

Pity the sorrows of a third-class man,

Whose trembling limbs with snow are whiten'd
o'er,

Who for his fare has paid you all he can;

Cover him in, and let him freeze no more.

It is obvious that the builders of the earliest railways did not intend them for passenger so much as for goods traffic. Or, if they contemplated passengers at all, it was the 'first-class man,' the whole system, like its forerunner, being planned to provide for the well-to-do only, who could travel in their own private carriages placed upon the railway trucks. Of course, we must remember that few persons besides the wealthy, and men whose business it was, travelled at all; the poorer classes did not do so to any great extent. As passenger traffic increased, however, the general public became more and more exacting; keener competition compelled railway managers to add to the luxuriousness of travel for the 'third-class man,' who now forms quite seven-eighths of the whole passenger business of the country.

The Railway Act of 1845 provided that coaches with seats, roofs, sides, and lights be made for all. Some companies interpreted this Act more liberally than others, but few erred on the side of generosity. Most were afraid of diverting the better-paying passengers into the lowest class, with the result that the most miserable vehicles that could be made to meet the bare requirements of the Act were constructed and used for many years.

This obstructive and unenlightened policy toward the travelling public confronted Bradshaw even when attempting to compile his early time-tables. The publication seems to have caused a flutter among the directors, who were

averse to supplying the information he sought, holding that if the times of departure and arrival were given in this manner, they would be bound to run the trains punctually! But the sturdy Quaker accepted no rebuff. He made personal application to the various Boards, and if they refused him the information he desired, he took up shares in the undertakings, and then was able to demand the facts.

What Bradshaw aimed at was a monthly time-sheet for every line in England. Some companies, evidently to bother him, issued the changes in their train-running in the most erratic way; sometimes the sheet was delayed to the 5th or 6th of the month, and was subject to alteration perhaps in the middle, or even toward the close, of the period. By great efforts the railways were induced to consent to adjust their tables, once for all, at the beginning of each month. That concession gained, the rest was comparatively simple, and the *Railway Guide*, pioneer of a great host, began to grow in girth year by year, as the network of railways spread over the face of the land. In 1847 Bradshaw was able to produce a *Continental Guide and Travellers' Manual to the whole Continent of Europe*. The plan began to be imitated both at home and abroad. The familiar yellow-covered volume still holds the palm, however, and in its revised and simplified form is the first favourite of all whose travel takes them over our many lines. From being a source of mystification to the unskilled, the *Railway Guide* has been so reformed that it may now be said that 'the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.'

The earlier issues contained not only the current prices of railway shares—this was at the time of the great railway mania in the 'forties—but also a remarkable production known as *Thompson's Table*, showing the rate of travel per hour, a reckoner setting forth that a train running a quarter of a mile in fifteen minutes would traverse one whole mile in an hour, and that a train doing a quarter of a mile in four and a half seconds would run two hundred miles an hour! But the trains of those days made sad havoc of such mathematics, and on one line, where pieces of paper torn from a book were used as tickets—the present printing and stamping machines not being universally adopted till 1850—the station-master was wont to say to tardy passengers, 'Now then, hurry up a bit! The train has not long started, and if you look sharp you will catch her up.' A curious sidelight on the difficulties of Bradshaw's efforts to pin down the companies to definite statements is thrown by the Grand Junction Company's regulation that 'the trains will start as soon as ready, without reference to the times stated in the time-tables, the main object being to perform the whole journey as quickly as possible.'

But perhaps the most deliciously paternal notice of all was that issued in connection with Cook's first excursion to Liverpool. The train was timed to leave Leicester at five o'clock in

the morning, and intending excursionists were gravely informed by Bradshaw that 'parties must be *awake* at that early hour, or they will be disappointed.'

THE LUCK OF CAPTAIN FORTUNE.

By JOHNSTON SMITH.

I.

CAPTAIN CALEB FORTUNE of the *Inverness*, commodore of the famous old Ness Line of clippers, was happy in his name. As Captain Brindley of the *Wilderness* frequently expressed it, 'Old Fortune's the luckiest skipper that ever took a ship out of the Clyde, and since ever I knew him the only hint of misfortune he's had has been his daughter.' There was a bitterness in Captain Brindley's tongue, for Miss Fortune had indeed married young Ness, the owner's son and heir, much to Brindley's chagrin. It was a fact, however, that for upwards of fifty years Captain Fortune had sailed the salt seas without losing a ship or one of his ship's crew. But, for all that, he would never so much as admit any question of luck. 'There's nae such thing as luck,' he would say with dogmatic emphasis. 'Luck's juist an excuse to shield the incompetent, and no man gets jot or tittle mair in this world than he works for and achieves by his ain unaided efforts.'

It was a comforting theory to the old martinet, for it exactly epitomised his own steady career, and precluded, besides, any risk of contradiction. But he was yet to learn that there are more things in the voyage of life than are to be found in the pages of the *Nautical Almanac*, and that the expression 'luck,' either good or bad, as the case may be, explains most of them more conveniently than anything else.

II.

The *Inverness* had made a good run out to Rio, where she had discharged part of her general cargo before resailing for Callao. Working round Cape Horn, she had taken a bit of a dusting, but nothing to what Captain Fortune had found waiting for him there on many a trip before. Thereafter, favoured by friendly breezes, the old craft had made good progress northward.

Captain Fortune, however, as a true Scot, was not satisfied. He was, indeed, uneasy. The Celtic races have an extra premonitory sense, and the old man, who had Highland blood in his veins, walked his deck with a strange feeling that something untoward was in the wind, though he could not put a name to it.

Your scientists will construct elaborate and impressive formulæ to prove what happens to the unfathomable sea when the sun and the moon undertake in earnest to work out a new

and original effect; they will talk abstrusely of seismic forces running amok along a fault in the sea-bed. But Captain Fortune had certainly no formula ready for practical use when out of the horizon rose, as unexpectedly as the setting of a stage-scene, a huge wall of curling green water, which moved towards him with terrific and majestic force.

Captain Fortune, with a wild yell of unheard orders, sprang to the wheelhouse, and, with the steersman, swung the *Inverness* bow-on to the impending avalanche. Next moment the old ship shivered convulsively, smothered from stem to stern under a seething green cataract. Her stout masts snapped off short like sticks of celery, and, all tangled up with the wreckage of stays, spars, and halyards, but lightened of her top hamper, the *Inverness* struggled painfully upward again as slowly as an air-bubble in a jar of syrup. An eternity of time seemed to drag its leaden length as, tossed like a cork, pounded, engulfed, buffeted aloft again, and borne ever swiftly and relentlessly onward, Captain Fortune clung to the spokes of the fouled and useless wheel of the old craft.

Then, as suddenly, as capriciously, as the tidal wave had caught her up, it tossed her free again and passed on. Battered, shattered, water-logged, foundering, the poor *Inverness* found herself sliding down, down into an eddying wake that swirled and seethed along her counter.

Numbed and dazed, his indomitable spirit near broken, Captain Fortune clung to his wheelhouse door and wiped his dazed eyes with a sea-soddened sleeve—over the starboard rail rose a phantasmagoria of dripping palm-tree tops!

III.

It took Captain Fortune some minutes to believe the evidence of his senses, for he was a man prone to subject every problem to the practical test of common-sense, and it was beyond ordinary belief to realise that he was still alive or that the *Inverness* was lying high and dry on an even keel in the midst of an indubitable jungle of crushed, broken, and lacerated trees.

He advanced cautiously to the rail and peered overboard at the bed of muddy ooze and undergrowth upon which his ship rested, and then, bellowing loudly for Mr Baker, the mate, he proceeded forrard along his littered deck.

Out of the fo'c'sle hatch, at his skipper's hail, crawled the mate, his ginger head bound up with a blood-soaked handkerchief. At sight of him the captain halted, and, with a wide gesture to indicate the luxuriant growth in the midst of which they had found anchorage, said calmly, 'Mr Baker, the Lord kens where He has brought up the auld *Inverness*, but, anyway, it appears we're no foundered—yet. Call away your watch and have a' this clutter cleared off o' my decks.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' agreed Mr Baker dryly, 'if so be as there's a watch left aboard to call.' His gaze left the trees, now swaying gently above, and picking his way across the deck, he, too, peered overboard. Slowly he turned and regarded the skipper. 'We're aground right enough,' said he, with pointed emphasis.

Captain Fortune cocked his head—a sure sign he was recovering his lost doggedness. 'At present, Mr Baker,' said he, 'we're stuck fast, as you say; but'—

The mate stared at him open-mouthed. 'You're not going to say you ever expect the *Inverness* to float again?'

'And what for no?' demanded Captain Fortune aggressively. 'I've never lost a ship yet'—

'You've spoken that boast once too often, sir.'

Captain Fortune clenched his fist and shook it. 'Mr Baker,' said he, 'mind this: the *Inverness* is neither lost nor foundered yet, and while there's a plank o' her deck or a rib o' her left, I'm her skipper. Is that clear? Verra weel, then; carry on as I tell ye. Call the watch and get to work to red up this mess, for by the looks o' her at present she might be an orra tramp-steamer instead o' a Clyde clipper.'

With a click of the tongue and a look that might have denoted admiration, but didn't seem very like it, Mr Baker turned on his heel.

Of the crowd forrard the sea had taken its toll, and amongst the survivors there was some murmuring when the mate gave his orders. But the red-headed little man was as great a martinet as the skipper, and he saw to it that discipline and authority won.

IV.

On the fourth day after, Mr Baker, with two of the seamen, a compass, and a week's rations, climbed over the side and disappeared into the trackless undergrowth in an attempt to locate their position and to cable a report to the owners.

Captain Fortune, left aboard, continued the task of getting the *Inverness* into sea-trim again. The ship's carpenter was put to work to restep the masts by trimming the stumps and running ingenious derricks across the strongest trees; the sail-maker was set to refashion a kind of jury-rig out of the remnant of the canvas; and, in slings over the side, a

couple of hands were scraping and caulking the strained seams of the hull. It was all typical of Captain Fortune's character that, buffeted by fate, he knew not where, he was still inflexibly set upon leaving nothing to chance.

On the tenth day Mr Baker returned alone from San Jacinto, sixty miles away, where his companions had deserted and shipped home on a Cardiff-bound steamer.

'And,' reported Mr Baker feelingly, 'if it hadn't been for the look of the thing, I would have signed on for the trip myself.'

'Ay,' said Captain Fortune dryly, 'and what was it that brought ye back, then?'

Mr Baker shrugged his shoulders and laughed. 'I dunno,' said he simply, 'but I reckon it must have been curiosity.'

'Nae doot, Mr Baker,' observed the skipper; 'but it should hae been duty.'

However, the mate brought the skipper a reply cable from the owners, which read: 'Await full report from you. Instructions will follow later.'

So the captain wrote his report, detailing in precise, unimaginative language what he knew (and no more) of the phenomenon, and, more precisely still, the present position of the *Inverness*, the damage suffered, and the various steps he had set in motion to repair the disaster. Captain Fortune was no sort of descriptive writer, and he heaved a profound sigh of relief as he addressed and sealed the fateful report.

V.

By the time the owners' reply reached Captain Fortune, his ship's company had dwindled to the mate, the bo'sun, the carpenter, and four hands. Moreover, the owners' letter displeased him vastly, for in plain, business-like phrases they told him (what every one else would have known all along) that the *Inverness* was a total loss, and that they had claimed on the underwriters accordingly. The sting lay in the last words of their instruction.

'A total loss!' said the old man stubbornly. 'But how can she be a total loss if I'm still in command o' her?'

Mr Baker grinned. 'That's an easy one, captain. You're no longer in command, for they've asked you to abandon the ship'—

'For why?'

'Because,' said the mate with deadly lucidity, 'the *Inverness* is a total loss—or what the land-sharks would call a "constructive total loss." It would bankrupt a ship-breaker to look at her where she lies; and you know it, captain.'

'Oh, ay,' admitted Captain Fortune thoughtfully, 'I ken a' aboot that; but what becomes o' the ship an' cargo under thae extraordinar' circumstances?'

Mr Baker shot a shrewd glance at the skipper. He knew the old man's moods, and that his acute mind was never better informed than when he

pretended undue ignorance. So the mate trod delicately. 'The ship and the cargo, or whatever is saved of them, are then generally known as salvage, captain; and another thing,' he added meaningly, as he turned away, 'the man that tries to teach his grandmother to suck eggs is a sillier fool than Joe Baker wants to be reckoned.'

'Hoots, man!' said Captain Fortune genially, 'dinna misjudge yersel'. It's mebbe no sae bad as ye think. But come intil the cabin a minute; I want to talk the thing over wi' ye.'

In the cabin Captain Fortune elaborated the little plan he had already formulated.

'It's this way, Mr Baker,' said he. 'I've been skipper o' the *Inverness* so long that I'm no going to abandon her now, for no man, no matter what the owners say'—

'Then,' interrupted Mr Baker, 'they'll simply dismiss you, not to speak of me and the crew.'

The captain considered the point. 'They canna dae that,' said he; 'but if they retire me, I'll no object, for I'm due the retiring allowance this ten years, and I canna spend it here, anyway. But let that be as it may, Mr Baker, I've decided for to make thae underwriters an offer for the salvage of the hull and the cargo. What d'ye say to that?'

Mr Baker cleared his throat. 'How much is your offer?'

Captain Fortune hesitated. 'I'll go to £2500,' said he at last.

'It's a lot to you, captain, and a bagatelle to them. You'll lose your money.'

'How's that?' asked Captain Fortune innocently.

'Short of a miracle,' said Mr Baker earnestly, 'your money's gone, if they take your offer, and they may see the joke in it—even if it's a Scotch joke and hard to understand.'

'Mebbe ay an' mebbe no,' said Captain Fortune quietly. 'The Scots are often misjudged, and it's true they allow sentiment to sway them in money matters; but, anyway, when I've sunk my capital in the ship she'll be mine to dae wi' as I like, and as a practical proposition I can live in her. It's a kind o' a fatalistic idea, and ye may ca' it sheer perversity and stubbornness, but I mean to bide wi' the auld *Inverness* till her or me slips oor cable again.'

VI.

So Captain Fortune took his own determined way, and in due time bought the ship and her derelict cargo for £2500 from the underwriters—it was money for nothing to them, but privily they smiled and wondered. Every one thought old Fortune mad, and the owners wrote him a sympathetically worded letter of regret that he had decided to retire over the first mishap of his remarkable and valued career. The captain's daughter wrote privately to Mr Baker for his opinion of the skipper's sanity; and Mr Baker attributed his own unaccountable loyalty to an

abhorrence of change and a long-deferred desire to put his theories on fruit-growing to the test of practice in the only chance he had ever had to lead for a spell an uninterrupted shore-going life.

And so, for over a year, Captain Fortune was happy in his stubborn way, carrying on with a faith that might have been ridiculous had it not been pathetic, varying the routine of keeping the ship seaworthy with the cultivation of the land won from the forest about them. Once a month or so Mr Baker tasted the civilisation of San Jacinto, returning with stores, whisky, and tobacco wherewith to assist his philosophic contemplation of life in general and Captain Fortune in particular. But the skipper himself resolutely refused to desert his ship for a day or a night, for, in sooth, his was a faith that could move mountains.

And then, on the thirteenth day of the thirteenth month after their marooning, Captain Fortune's dour faith was justified. Nothing can explain it; no formula—except that of sheer, downright, unmitigated luck—can account for it; but, even so, it happened thus.

A tremor shook San Jacinto, the sea moved, swelling inboard—and San Jacinto was not. Then, rushing onward steadily as the tide over a mud-flat, the flood swept on to the barrier of the coastal range, whence, split in two, it fell back balked, in two wide swathes of rushing torrent. Of these, the southern swathe, tamed to the manner of a broad, swollen river, fell swirling about the old *Inverness*, and restored her, ready and seaworthy, to her lost element.

Two months later Captain Fortune brought her home again, and realised what his name spelled—a fortune for himself, his mate, and his crew.

Any evening in summer the inquirer after the truth of this tale may find Captain Fortune and his late mate playing bowls (even as did Drake) on the close-clipped lawn of the skipper's home at Rothsay. Captain Fortune's luck still holds—nothing else, in Mr Baker's opinion, will account for the disheartening regularity with which the skipper wins each game.

THE ROSE OF YOUTH.

KEEP the rose of youth in your heart
When your own sweet youth is past;
'Twill fling a fragrance around you
As long as your life will last.

Give it the breeze of your laughter,
The dew of your healing tears;
Let the sun of love shine on it
Thro' the burden of the years.

Keep the rose of youth in your heart—
The rose that has ne'er a thorn—
And rest will be yours at night,
And joy will be yours at morn.
M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MARION CRAWFORD IN ROME.

By ERIC S. ROBERTSON.

I.

DURING the last five years, librarians tell us, creators such as Robert Buchanan and Christie Murray have fallen out of account; Captain Shaw now pleases beyond Clark Russell; content with M'Kenna, people have dropped Besant. Yet readers still seek, through Marion Crawford's romances, the relief from life's worries that such volumes dispensed for the period of a Victorian generation. Crawford suits the war-weary mood. He cannot make us laugh, but he is good-humoured, at any rate. His sense for the dramatic in topography was of perennial value to him, leading writer and readers up and down Europe in pleasant parties of study, to come away from favoured localities with more sense of geography vitalised than of personalities created. The plot in each tale usually began well enough, but in the middle of his story the author was apt to betray, too easily, a disposition to let that plot go hang. Nevertheless, here was no pretence of digging deep, of putting the crooked straight, of writing in imitation of Meredithian forked lightning. Comfortable reading; sunny scenes; characters chiefly worthy and happy, and elementary in structure; sentences as lucid (though stopping short of style's distinction) as might suit even languid listeners on beds of sickness—such things we gladly received from Marion Crawford, and they still preserve for him a vogue. There never emerged, exactly, a Crawford cult. The novelist's father was distinguished as a sculptor of monuments, but the son—*circumspice*!—has no public monument anywhere on the earth round which he flitted. American by family strain, Marion Crawford has been looked upon coolly by the States as a strayed reveller. Rome for long received him hospitably, but has made no fuss about his memory. England never paid Crawford any personal compliment. The curious may search *Poole's Index of Periodical Literature*, and will be astonished to find how few are the magazine articles that have been written about Crawford. Nobody—in Italy, in America, or anywhere else—has attempted his biography. Sir Walter Raleigh's British book on *The Modern Novel* mentions him not; and just as silent is Pro-

fessor Cross's American treatise on the same theme—both of these works discussing Henry James and other transatlantic contemporaries. Half-educated, by snatches, at Cambridge, Karlsruhe, Heidelberg, Rome, this clever man rose up to write as a comparatively passionless cosmopolitan, his youth's heart-blood pledged to no soil, to no neighbours, to no nation. '*Glissez, mortels, n'appuyez pas,*' he learned to say, with Roy. And so, while retaining a reasonable share of interest in his works, the general world has not noted in Crawford the abiding genius to be loved. 'What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!'

II.

The winter of 1878-79 I spent in Rome, and there I met young Crawford familiarly. He was frank, handsome, distinctly lovable. A cheerier soul with whom to glide about the high-shouldered, shuddering streets of the one city where all seems over with the world (you cannot hope here as in Florence) it would be difficult to imagine. Marion's roving life—shared with a roving father—had dowered the youth as polyglot. The home of his adolescence, not far from Santa Maria Maggiore, was the casino of the celebrated Villa Negroni. The casino has disappeared. There, once, Vittoria Accoramboni dwelt in blazing beauty. There Thomas Crawford (pupil of Thorwaldsen) designed the statue of Liberty that now adorns the Capitol in Washington. The house and studio rested in an adumbration of cypresses and orange-trees, over which the evening bells of Santa Maria mingled their tones in aerial harmony. A high tower connected itself with the casino, and on the eve of St Peter's Day Marion and his sister (now Mrs Hugh Fraser) would climb this tower and hang on at the grating of a window, to watch the dream of starland for soaring, roaring rockets that arose from the Pincian Hill in prolonged display, till the children were left alone again with the planets, then crept down the stone steps, chilled and half-frightened.

Such was the centre of vision and memories of unhappy far-off things, and sometimes wistful wonderings about the What Next, that nourished the growing faculty of a novelist. Nothing on earth seemed to hold the affections of Marion

more than Santa Maria Maggiore—its pillared majesty, the gilded frets of its roof mellowed by the echoed choir-song of fourteen hundred centuries, its incomparable carillon, its popularity among the musical folk as the focus of all musical good in religious Rome. It was old Rome that the novelist loved—Rome of the Popes. He had said in *Ave*: 'The taking of Rome in 1870 was the death-blow of medievalism; and the passing away of King Victor Emmanuel and of Pius the Ninth was the end of romantic Italy.' Crawford would grin as he hailed for you a cabman who was a friend, and would whisper that this was one of the many monks ejected from Vallombrosa by Victor Emmanuel on a pension of tenpence a day, to eke out the pittance among horses or in gardens. He would grin no less in describing the 'Victor Emmanuel Library,' a collection of books robbed from the monasteries and carted to the Collegio Romano, where the porter was put in charge of the booty. A poor professional archæologist one morning bought himself half-a-pound of butter in the Piazza Navona, and the greasy wrapping of the parcel was discovered by the scholar to be an autograph letter of Christopher Columbus. The porter was selling parchments by the hundredweight, as wastepaper, and got drunk on the proceeds.

It was in the empty vast of Santa Maria Maggiore that the scholarly Scot, Dr Steele, introduced me to his friend Crawford, nearly as young as myself. Crawford at once reeled off stories of Santa Maria's chief singers. He jeered at the choir organ of St Peter's, so crazy an ancient instrument that during every service a mechanic was in attendance to patch up its bowels. He extolled, however, the singing in St John Lateran of Padre Giovanni, his dear monk-friend with a tenor voice 'soft as a summer's night and clear as a silver bell'—Padre Giovanni, who was later to perish by poison administered by a rival chorister. At the time of my meeting Marion Crawford in Santa Maria, the young man had passed through much instruction of the sort designed to produce opera-singers. His was, indeed, a familiar figure at every sort of reunion gathered together by British or American residents who held any title to being artistic. But Sgambati and Tosti were the companions of his most ambitious and practical hours. It happened that a good deal of musical camaraderie centred round the American Episcopal church. Its modern and costly organ was absolutely the only organ in Rome worthy of the century. Dr Garland, afterwards well known as a virtuoso at Halifax, governed that organ. The large choir had as its leaders a quartette. I was honoured by being asked to sing bass in this quartette. Crawford was our real star, with his tenor voice of striking range and fearless timbre—a sort of apostolic voice (I used to think), but one that occasionally became

lost to control. This mishap was unaccountable and rare; but when it did occur, the effect was just that of a runaway horse in the street. As the horse scorns the traces, so the voice scorned its key or any key. I never have heard any flaw like this in an otherwise admirable song-gift. The two ladies who joined us men in singing quartette anthems were an Irish lady, Miss Flaney, a contralto of the mellowest quality, and Miss Trollope, daughter of T. A. Trollope and niece of Anthony Trollope. The latter lady, whose character and presence were as lovely as her art in singing, was the darling of the English colony in Rome. Some readers of these lines will remember how Miss Trollope, brilliantly fitted to grace the career of any statesman, died within a few months of her marriage to the Honourable Charles Stuart Wortley, M.P. We of the quartette, as guerdon for extra attendances at anthem practices, were accorded private recitals and informal lectures on Bach's works, and Dr Garland's happy efforts in this direction held us devoted to him. One day I came away from a practice a little early, and in a dark passage between two doors bumped up against Dr Nevin, the clergyman, who was entering his church. At the moment we heard Crawford's voice run amok on its highest notes. Instinctively, and with youth's lack of charity, I muttered, 'Alas! there's that fool Crawford letting his voice gallop away with him!' 'Allow me,' replied the clergyman in the dark, 'to introduce you to Mr Crawford's mother.' It was indeed a tenebrous encounter. The lady, it is true, was only Crawford's step-mother. She invited me to tea. All turned out well.

III.

Suddenly the rumour swept through English-speaking Rome that Marion Crawford had abandoned the purpose of entering on an operatic career. Dr Da Cunha, a Portuguese medical man from Bombay, had arrived in Rome, and shadowed the horoscope of Crawford. No one understood how this grave, courteous, silent gentleman fascinated the budding artist. Amazement grew when it was announced that Dr Da Cunha was shortly returning to his medical work in Bombay—Crawford in his company, with a view to learning Sanskrit, of all things or languages. The inscrutable news proved authentic. Dr Steele arranged a dinner-party, at his house in Via Condotti, to bid God-speed to the adventurer on the night before he sailed for the East (I think, from Genoa). The merry meeting was a *partie carrée*—Da Cunha, Crawford, Steele, myself. Crawford was on the tiptoe of expectation. Da Cunha said little, but his Portuguese eyes of brown and teeth of pearl-white conspired in smiles as the ex-tenor expatiated on things occult and told our fortunes by palmistry. The doctor from St Andrews,

Steele, had taught one of his tradesmen to produce minced collops (rechristened *carne buttata*), and our feast included this Scottish dish, which the Bombay brother relished and praised. The result of the eastern voyage was as strange as the inception of that journey. Hardly had India been reached, when Sanskrit was thrown to the winds, Dr Da Cunha and his disciple parting company. Having got through his allowances from home friends, Marion took to journalism as suddenly as he had engaged to become an Oriental linguist. On the *Allahabad Indian Herald* he gained, with some hardship, a knowledge of the working side of a newspaper life. Then he tired. Cosmopolitans seldom feel the true heart-beat of any country. India was then palpitatingly awaiting the advent of wizard Kipling, to reveal many of her treasures. Alien to the governing race, ignorant of the customs and languages of the governed people, Crawford left India, almost as little in touch with it as when he first trod its shores. His one novel of India apotheosises an ordinary Simla jeweller of Persian extraction, and gives to him princely power in occult realms, and the rapturous love of a well-born Englishwoman. I lived for five years in India, after Crawford left it, and I found that both Anglo-Indians and native readers of books written in English regarded *Mr Isaacs* as a fantasy throwing no real light on any sort of society in the great dependency. The many admirers of Sir George Henschel's *Memories* have been told in that recent work how Crawford abandoned India in disgust, and turned up, penniless, among his friends in New York. Nobody knew what now to do with this god-like, attractive, spendthrift wanderer. Sir George was engaged by Crawford's aunt, Miss Julia Ward Howe, to test the prodigal's fitness for opera. Sir George carried out the necessary tests, which revealed an insurmountable defect. In one of his own novels Marion Crawford explains this defect as a discrepancy by which a man's left ear may sometimes hear things a shade higher or lower in pitch than the right ear does. Sir George Henschel says his verdict reduced Crawford to tears. Then up spoke the aspirant's uncle. 'Why don't you write down the little story you told me of that strange experience you had in India?' This was in January 1882. The sensation of the following Christmas, as things turned out, was *Mr Isaacs*.

A year or two later I agreed to edit the projected 'Great Writers' series. In arranging a list of my first twelve biographers, I bethought me to ask Marion Crawford to undertake *Hawthorne*. Crawford's reply revealed how quickly (after vicissitudes) this man of many talents had fallen into his proper work and fortune, like a wheel dropped into its exact function among the pieces of a watch. The business portion of the communication showed this author ready to join the 'Great Writers'

staff, provided his literary work was as well paid as his novel-writing was. Retaining his book-copyright, the manufacturer of pleasant tales was drawing from a combination of the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Blackwood's* the sum of £140 for each month's serial instalment of a novel.

IV.

As regards Rome, Crawford once uttered a severe literary judgment (*Sant' Ilario*): 'I do not hesitate to say that, without a single exception, every foreigner, poet or prose-writer, who has treated of these people has more or less grossly misunderstood them. . . . To understand Italians, a man must have been born and bred among them.' He who turns to Crawford's *Ave Roma* for an account of the Eternal City finds that most elaborate of the author's efforts a book to be classed neither as historical nor as political, neither as archaeological nor as artistic. It does not give as full a sense of the Roman days Crawford lived through as Story's *Roba di Roma* affords. Mr Story it is who best enables us to enjoy the ballad-singers, and *pifferari* in Novena, the cafés and the theatres, the sombre pomps of Lent, the festivals of artists, the songs of the Campagna, torchlight in the Catacombs, the palaces of the historic princes, the Ghetto, the surviving traces of the Saturnalia, the illuminations of St Peter's, the plays of Goldoni. The main design of *Ave* is sentimental. The author is an embodied *Carmen Sæculare*, a masquer, with a rose in his bosom. He is not bewildered by Rome. He writes: 'It is better to feel much in Rome than to try and know a little.' In *Ave* this dreamer takes much the same attitude of affectionate conservatism as we find in the Roman trilogy of *Saracinesca*, *Sant' Ilario*, and *Don Orsino*—that trilogy representing Rome from 1865 to 1870. 'Old Rome is dead, too, never to be old Rome again. The last breath has been breathed, the aged eyes are closed for ever, corruption has done its work, and the grand skeleton lies bleaching upon seven hills, half-covered with piecemeal stucco of a modern architectural body. The result is satisfactory to those who have brought it about, if not to the rest of the world. The sepulchre of old Rome is the new capital of united Italy.' 'The world might have been what it is without Alexander, without Charlemagne, without Napoleon, but not without Julius Caesar. . . . Alexander left chaos behind him, while Caesar left Europe.' Horace was idolised by Crawford, who ignored Juvenal, and declared about Virgil: 'Appealing to the tradition of a living race of nobles, he does not appeal to the modern man.' Born at Bagni di Lucca, in the pontificate of Pio Nono, our novelist ever regarded the Pope as rightfully a temporal sovereign. He cared little for the House of Savoy, and dismisses Garibaldi with the remark that 'he possessed little or no military science.' In the Rome of

his own time, Crawford is equally disdainful of American women (*With the Immortals*): "There were no American women in my day," said Francis, "but I have seen something of them since, without being able to understand them. They are not very like women." Characteristically, this author finds that, although Roman nobles are Roman by tradition, by blood (through admixture in marriage) they are almost cosmopolitan. Perhaps only Crawford, among foreign writers, has been allowed to stroll habitually into the domestic privacies of these noble families; and here he achieves solid descriptive documentation. For instance (*Sant' Ilario*): 'At a rough estimate the Montevarchi household comprised over a hundred persons, all living under the absolute and despotic authority of the head of the house. From his will and pleasure depended every act of every member.' The establishment was outwardly splendid, inwardly squalid. 'The princess never had a *scudo* in her pocket, had to obtain permission and money to purchase the smallest necessities, and if she wanted a cup of coffee or some bread and butter out of hours, it was charged to her daily account. Her husband's youngest brother, who had no money of his own, could not get even a lemonade in his father's house without his father's consent.'

V.

We may take it as likely that Crawford refers more or less to his own early career when he writes thus of the literary hero in *The Three Fates*: 'The young man's true talent lay in his ready power of assimilating unfamiliar knowledge by a process of intuition which escapes methodical learners,' and his 'solid acquirement was the power of using his own language.' Goethe has bidden us, in testing character, notice what a man pronounces ridiculous.

Crawford finds little that seems ridiculous. He has wealth of sympathy. He himself writes: 'The only way to judge of a man is to find out what has been the happiest hour in his life, and then judge of the circumstances which made up his momentary happiness.' Lastly, this passage may be quoted from the romancer's writings to help us in estimating Crawford's outlook on his art: 'The position of the professional artist and of the professional man of letters in modern European society is ill-defined. As a man who has been brought up in a palace would undoubtedly betray his breeding sooner or later if transported to live among a gang of thieves, so a man who has grown to years of discretion in the atmosphere of studios or in the queer company from which most literary men have sprung will inevitably, at one time or other, offend the susceptibilities of that portion of humanity which calls itself society. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. Among a set of people whose profession it is to do always, and in all things, precisely what their neighbours do, the man who makes his living by doing what other people cannot do must always be a marked figure.'

There was undoubtedly a touch of the 'harum-scarum' in Crawford's career—as in that of many an artist to whom the world has become indebted. But the eccentricities of such a man are soon forgotten. His pleasant stories and his engaging character merit the attention of some student who can write. If nothing more bulky should appear, it were at least to be hoped that in the 'American Men of Letters' series we might be given some account of a novelist whose active mind made of its existence one prolonged *wanderjahr*, and left an oasis of romance wherever it tarried and tested the soil, like the faculty of a water-diviner.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER VI.—A MORNING IN NOVEMBER.

I.

AUSTIN SELWYN rose from his bed and looked at Berners Street glistening in a sunlight that must have warmed the heart of Madame Carlotti herself. With a lazy pleasure in the process, he recalled the picture of Elise Durwent sitting in the dim shadows of the firelit room; he felt again the fragrance of her person as he leaned over her with the lighted match. On the canvas of his brain was thrown the rich colouring of the English girl, with the copper-hued luxury of hair and the eyes that seemed to steal some magic from the fire; and he saw again those warring lips, the crimson upper one chiding the passionate scarlet of its twin.

Idly, while enjoying the unusual dissipation

of a pre-breakfast cigarette, he tried to imagine the course of incident and heredity that had produced her strange personality. That there was a bitterness somewhere in her disposition was obvious; but it certainly could not have come from the mother, who was the soul of contentment. He found himself speculating on the peculiar quality of personality, that strange thing which makes an individual something apart from others of his kind, that gift which singles out a girl of ordinary appearance and leaves one of flawless beauty still wagging her pretty head in the front row of the chorus. From that point he began to speculate on the loneliness of personality, which so often robs its owner of the cheery companionship of commonplace people.

On the whole, he regretted that he was going to see her again so soon. Her pertness, which had seemed fairly clever the previous night, would probably descend to triteness in the morning; he could even see her endeavouring to keep up the same exchange of short sentences. Bah! It was like a duel with toothpicks. The stolid respectability of Berners Street lent its aid to the conviction that the morning would hold nothing but anti-climax.

And he was poet enough to prefer an unfinished sonnet to one with an inartistic ending.

II.

Austin Selwyn was twenty-six—an age which has something in common with almost every one of the seven celebrated by Shakespeare. Like most men in their twenties, he had the character of a chameleon, and adapted himself to his surroundings with almost uncanny facility. At college he had been an ardent member of a dozen cliques, even falling under the egotism of the men who dabbled in Spiritualism, but a clarity of thought and a strain of Dutch ancestry kept his feet on the earth when the rest of him showed signs of soaring.

Some moderate wit had said of him at college that he was himself only twice a day—when he got up in the morning and when he went to bed at night. This Stevensonian theory was not quite true, for a chameleon does not cease to be a chameleon because it changes its colour.

It was perhaps his susceptibility to the many vintages of existence that had impelled him to write, authors being more or less a natural result of the economic law of intake and output. As is the habit of most young writers, he wrote on various subjects, put enough material for a two-volume novel into a short story, and generally revelled in the prodigality of literary youth. He was prepared to be a social satirist, a chronicler of the Smart Set, a champion of the down-trodden masses, or a commercial essayist, according to the first public that showed appreciation of his work.

Although he had lived in Boston, that city which claims so close an affinity to ancient Athens (as a matter of fact, has it not been said that Athens is the Boston of Europe?), he was drawn to the great vortex of New York, that mighty capital of modernism which sucks the best brains of an entire continent. For some time he wrote beneath his own standard and with considerable success. Following the example of several successful New York authors, he plunged into a hectic portrayal of 'high' society, a set of people that makes one wonder as to the exact meaning of the adjective. For a short space he came under the influence of the studied Bohemianism of 'Greenwich Village,' and wrote deucedly clever things for the applause of the villagers, then sneered at American taste

because people in Arkansas did not like his work. Still retaining his love of Greenwichery, he next succumbed to the money lure of the motion-picture industry, which offered to buy the picture-rights of his stories, provided he would introduce into them the elements which go to make up successful American films.

With the prospect of a bank president's income before him, he succeeded in writing his share of that form of American literature which has a certain love interest, almost obscured by a nasty sexual diagnosis, an element of comedy relief, and, above all, a passionate adherence to the craze of the moment—a work that fades from the mind with the closing of the book, as the memory of the author's name vanishes almost before the last sound of the earth dropped upon his coffin.

He knew that there were sincere *literati* writing of the abiding things that do not die with the passing of a season, but the clamour of commercialism drowned their voices. As though they were stocks upon an exchange, he heard the cries: 'Brown's getting five thousand dollars a month writing serials for Hitch's;' 'Smith sold two novels on synopsis for thirty thousand dollars;' 'Green's signed up with Tagwicks for four years at two thousand dollars a month writing problem novels.' Into the maelstrom of 'Dollars, Dollars, Dollars' the sensitive brains of all America were drifting, throwing overboard ideals and aspirations in order to keep afloat in the swirling foam.

And then—the Fates stooped and touched his destiny with a star.

A New York publisher (one of that little group which has for its motto, 'Art for Art's sake,' not 'Art, for God's sake!') noticed him, and spoke of literature as an expression of the soul, a thing not of a season or a decade, but as ageless as a painting.

His ear caught the new song of attainment just as readily as it had received the chorus of 'Dollars.' He wrote a novel of New England life, full of faults, but vibrant with promise; and having gathered together quite a nice sum of money, he went to England, at the advice of the before-mentioned publisher, there and elsewhere in Europe to absorb the less oxygenic atmosphere of older civilisations, which still gives birth to the beginnings of things.

Twice he had visited Paris. The first time, with the instinct of the tourist, he had discovered the vileness of the place—a discovery fairly easy of accomplishment. The second time he had ignored the tourist-stimulated aspect of Paris life, and had allowed his senses to absorb the soul of the Capital of all the Latins, the laboratory of civilisation. And he who has done that is never the same man again. Germany had ministered to his reason, and Italy to his emotions; but he found his greatest interest in London, which offered to him an endless inspira-

tion of changing moods, of vagrant smells, and the effect of a stupendous drama of humanity.

Under the spell of Europe's ageless artistry and the rich-hued meadows of England's literary past he had grown humble. The song of 'Dollars' was less clamorous than the echo of the ocean in the heart of a sea-shell. When he wrote, which was seldom, he approached his paper-littered desk as an artist does his canvas. It was the medium by which he might gain a modest niche in the Hall of the Immortals—or, failing that, his soul at least would be enriched by the sincerity of his endeavour.

In that highly artistic frame of mind he suddenly secured the *entrée* into London Society. For some reason, as unaccountable as the reverse, a wave of popularity for Americans was breaking against the oak doors, and he was carried in on the crest. The result was not ennobling. The dormant instinct of satire leaped to life and the idealist became the jester.

But then he was twenty-six and most agreeably susceptible to haphazard influence. Being a Bostonian, he acquitted himself with creditable *savoir faire*; and being an American, his appreciation of the ridiculous saved him from the quagmire of snobbery, though he made many friends and dined regularly with august people, whose family trees were so rich in growth that they lived in perpetual gloom from the foliage.

Lady Durwent's dinner-party had been an expedition into the artistic fakery of London, and he would have dismissed the whole affair as a stimulating and amusing diversion from the ultra-aristocratic rut if the personality of Elise Durwent had not remained with him like a haunting melody.

He looked at his watch. 'By Jove!' he muttered; 'it's nine o'clock;' and hurriedly completing his ablutions, he dressed and descended to breakfast.

III.

Into the row of splendidly inert houses known as Chelmsford Gardens, Austin Selwyn turned his course. A couple of saddle-horses were standing outside No. 8, held by a groom of expressionless countenance. From No. 3 a butler emerged, looked at the morning, and retired. Elsewhere inaction reigned.

Ring the bell, Selwyn was admitted into the music-room of the previous night's scene. The portrait of a famous Elizabethan beauty looked at him with plump and saucy arrogance. In place of the crackling fire a new one was laid, all orderly and proper, like a set of new resolutions. The genial disorder of the chairs, moved at the whim of the Olympians, had all been put straight, and the whole room possessed an air of studied correctness, as though it were anxious to forget the previous evening's laxity with the least possible delay.

'Good-morning.'

Elise Durwent swept into the room with an impression of boundless vitality. She was dressed in a black riding-habit with a divided skirt, from beneath which a pair of glistening riding-boots shone with a Cossack touch. Her copper hair, which was arranged to lie rather low at the back, was guarded by a sailor-hat that enhanced to the full the finely formed features and arched eyebrows. There was an extraordinary sense of youthfulness about her—not the youthfulness of immaturity, but the stimulating quality of the spirit.

'I came here this morning,' began Selwyn vaguely, 'expecting'—

'Expecting a frumpy, red-haired girl with a black derby hat down to her nose.'

He bowed solemnly. 'Instead of which, I find—a Russian princess.'

'You are a dear. You can't imagine how much thought I expended on this hat.'

'It was worth it. You look absolutely'—

'Just a minute, Mr Selwyn. You are not going to tell me I look charming?'

'That was my intention.'

She sighed, with a pretty pretence at disappointment. 'That will cost me half-a-crown,' she said.

'I beg your'—

'Yes; I wagered my maid two-and-six to a "bob" that you wouldn't use that word.'

'It is really your fault that I did,' he said seriously.

She curtsied daintily. 'I make money on Englishmen and lose it on Americans,' she said. 'My maid and I have a regular scale of bets. I give ten to one that an Englishman will say in the first ten minutes that I look "topping;" five to one on "absolutely ripping;" and even money on "stunning" in the first hour.'

His face, which had been portraying an amusing mixture of perplexity and admiration, broke into a smile which encompassed all his features. 'Do all bets cease at the end of the first hour?' he asked.

'Yes, *ra-ther*. An Englishman never pays compliments then, because he is used to you. Isn't it awful seeing people getting used to you?'

'Do they ever?'

'Umph'm. The only chance of bagging one of the nobility as a husband is to limit interviews to half-an-hour and never wear the same clothes twice. Startle him! Keep him startled! Save your most daring gown for the night you're going to make him propose, then wear white until the wedding. An Englishman will fall in love with a woman in scarlet, but he likes to think he's marrying one who wears white. Costume, my dear Americano—costume does it. Hence the close alliance between the nobility and the chorus. But come along; we're snubbing the sunlight.'

With something like intoxication in his

blood, he followed his imperious, high-spirited companion from the house. He hurried forward to help her to mount, but she had her foot in the stirrup and had swung herself into the saddle before he could reach her side. With less ease, but with creditable horse-management, Selwyn mounted the chestnut and drew alongside the bay, who was cavorting airily, as if to taunt the larger horse with the superior charm of the creature that bestrode him.

'We'll be back, Smith, at twelve-thirty,' she called; and with the tossing of the horses' heads, resentful of the restraining reins, and the clattering of hoofs that struck sparks from the roadway, they made for the Park.

IV.

London is a stage that is always set. The youthful Dickens watching the murky Thames found the setting for his moments of horror, just as surely as cheery coach-houses, many of them but little changed to this day, bespoke the entrance of Wellers senior and junior. London gave to Wilde's exotic genius the scenes wherein his brilliantly futile characters played their wordy dramas; then, turning on the author, London's own vileness called to him. Thackeray the satirist needed no further inspiration than the nicely drawn distinction between Belgravia and Mayfair. Generous London refused nothing to the seeking mind. Nor is it more sparing to-day than it was in the past; it yields its inspiration to the gloom of Galsworthy, the pedagogic utterances of Mr Wells, the brilliant restlessness of Arnold Bennett, and the ever-delightful humour of *Punch*.

On this morning in November London was in a gracious mood, and Hyde Park, coloured with autumn's pensive melancholy, sparkled in the sunlight. Snowy bits of cloud raced across the sky, like sails against the blue of the ocean. November leaves, lying thick upon the grass, stirred into life, and for an hour imagined the fickle wind to be a harbinger of spring. Children, with laughter that knew no other cause than the exhilaration of the morning, played and romped, weaving dreams into their lives and their lives into dreams. Invalids in chairs leaned back upon their pillows and smiled. Something in the laughter of the children or the spirit of the wind had recalled their own careless moments of full-lived youth.

Paris, despite your Bois de Boulogne; New York, for all the beauties of your Central Park and Riverside Drive—what have you to compare with London's parks on a sun-intoxicated morning in November?

Reaching the tan-bark surface of Rotten Row, Selwyn and the English girl eased the reins and let the horses into a canter. With the motion of the strong-limbed chestnut the American felt a wave of exultation, and chuckled from no better cause than sheer enjoyment in the morning's

mood of emancipation. He glanced at Elise Durwent, and saw that her eyes were sparkling like diamonds, and that the self-conscious bay was shaking his head and cantering so lightly that he seemed to be borne on the wings of the wind. Selwyn wished that he were a sculptor that he might make her image in bronze: he would call it 'Recalcitrant Autumn.' He even felt that he could burst into poetry. He wished—

But then he was in the glorious twenties; and, after all, what has the gorged millionaire, rolling along in his beflowered, bewarmed, be-cushioned limousine, that can give one-tenth the pleasure of the grip on the withers of a spirited horse?

Sometimes they walked their beasts, and chatted on such subjects as young people choose when spirits are high and care is on a vacation. They were experiencing that keenest of pleasures—joy in the *present*. For centuries philosophers have sought to prove the musty theory that happiness is only in retrospect or anticipation. It is not true, although there is happiness in both of these; but complete enjoyment of the passing hour, with never a thought of the yesterday or the to-morrow, is one of the climaxes of life.

They watched London Society equestrianising for the admiration of the less washed, who were gazing from chairs and benches, trying to tell from their appearance which was a duke and which merely 'mister'—and usually guessing quite wrongly. Ladies of title, some of them riding so badly that their steeds were goaded into foam by the incessant pull of the curb bit, trotted past young ladies and gentlemen with note-books, who had been sent by an eager Press to record the activities of the truly great. Handsome women rode in the Row with their children mounted on wiry ponies (always a charming sight); and middle-aged, angular females, wearing the customary riding-hat which reduces beauty to plainness and plainness to caricature, rode melancholy quadrupeds, determined to do that which is done by those who are of consequence in the world.

But pleasures born of the passing hour, unlike those of the past or of anticipation, end with the striking of the clock. It seemed to Austin Selwyn that they had been riding only for the space of minutes, when Elise asked him the time.

'It is twenty minutes to one,' he said. 'I had no idea time had passed so quickly.'

'Nor I,' she answered. 'Just one more canter, and then we'll go.'

The eager horses chafed at their bits, and pleaded, after the manner of their kind, to be allowed one mad gallop with heaving flanks and snorting triumph at the end; but decorum forbade, and contenting themselves with the agreeable counterfeit, Selwyn and the girl reluctantly turned from the Park towards home.

The expressionless Smith was waiting for them, and looked at the two horses with that peculiar intolerance towards their riders which the very best groom in the world cannot refrain from showing.

'Won't you come in and take the chance of what there is for lunch?' she said as Selwyn helped her to dismount.

'N-no, thanks,' he said.

She pouted, or pretended to. 'Now, why?' she said as Smith mounted the chestnut, and touching his hat, walked the horses away.

'There is no reason,' he said, smiling, 'except—look here; will you come down-town and have dinner with me to-night?'

'You Americans are refreshing,' she said, burrowing the toe of her riding-boot with the point of the crop. 'As a matter of fact, I have to go to dinner to-night at Lady Chisworth's.'

'Then have a headache,' he persisted. 'Please,' as her lips proceeded to form a negative.

'Some one would see us, and Lady Chisworth would declare war.'

'Then let us dine in some obscure restaurant in Soho.'

'There's no such thing, old dear. Soho is always full of the best people dining incog. Almost the only place where you are free from your friends is Claridge's.'

'Well'—his nose crinkled at her remark—'then let us go to Claridge's. Miss Durwent, I know I'm too persistent, but it would be a wonderful ending to a bully day. You know

you'll be bored at Lady Chisworth's, and I shall be if you don't come.'

'Humph!' She stood on the first of the stone steps, her agile gracefulness lending itself to the picture of healthy, roseate youth. 'Where could we meet?'

'Let me call for you.'

'N-no. That wouldn't do.'

'Would your mother object?'

'Heavens, no!—but the servants would. You see, English morality is largely living up to your servants—and we only met last night.'

'But you will come?' He crossed his hands behind his back and swung the crop against his boots.

'Mr Selwyn,' she said, 'your books should be very interesting.'

'From now on they will be,' he said, 'if'—

'All right,' she interrupted him with something of the staccato mannerism of the evening before. 'I'll motor down in my little car, and we'll go to the Café Rouge.'

'Good—wherever that may be.'

'No one has discovered it yet but me,' she said. 'Then I shall have a headache at four, and meet you outside Oxford Circus Tube at seven.'

'You're a real sport, Miss Durwent.'

'Ah, monsieur'—she smiled with a roguishness that completely unsettled him for the remainder of the day—'have you no sympathy for my headache?'

(Continued on page 102.)

THE STORY OF A MANTIS.

By H. W. EVANS.

THERE are three kinds of mantis quite common in Palestine—one a slender little gray creature, which blows into one's tent like a bit of dried twig; a second, larger, and fatter, and speckled like the leaf of a milk-thistle; and the third, a still larger kind, about three inches long, of a pure light-green colour.

All three have the same curious habit of sitting up with their forelegs bent just in front of the mouth, in the attitude of a man at his devotions, which has earned for the insect the name of 'praying mantis.' A slight swaying movement from side to side, however, gives it, to my mind, an entirely different aspect—that of a boxer sparring; and the extraordinary swiftness of the knock-out blow which lays low a passing fly, and the rapidity with which the victim is eaten, are far from devotional and pacific.

My mantis was of the last kind. Strolling one evening in spring through an orange-grove, enjoying the scent of the blossoms and looking for butterflies, I spied her on the trunk of a tree, her six feet resting on the bark holding her upside-down—her favourite position, as I found

out during her five months' captivity. I caught her nimbly round the waist, receiving a bite and a scratch which drew blood, and carried her home in my handkerchief. She was a fine specimen, and highly resented imprisonment.

One feature always fascinated me. Balanced on a slender neck she had a perfect head, which she could move freely from side to side and up and down whilst looking for flies—an uncommon attribute in insects, whose head and thorax are so often completely or partially fused. With her powerful little jaws, large transparent eyes, and long waving antennæ, there was something diabolically human in the way she turned her flat pointed head round, watching for her prey.

A large cage was easily constructed by knocking the top and bottom out of a bully-beef case, and covering them in with mosquito netting. I stuck a branch of olive wood in the centre, and placed her inside. She stalked grandly towards the branch with a peculiar mincing gait, swinging her body backwards and forwards, and treading delicately like an ostrich, until she finally settled on a twig in her favourite position, and

took stock of her surroundings. I put in two flies, which buzzed about merrily, and then landed on the netting nearest the light, and walked about as they would upon a window-pane. After a few minutes' interested watching the mantis climbed up her perch, across the roof, and down the netting, whilst the flies buzzed again round the box. In a short time they settled once more on her side, and after a wash and brush up set off to explore. She watched them quietly. One walked right under her body, but, being out of striking distance, continued its journey unmolested. The other, travelling at a lower level, passed about an inch below her head. Like a flash the two great weapons lashed out, and there lay the fly, held as in a vice in one of her claws. Imagine an arm ending in a hand with one long index-finger, the elbow bent, and the hand flexed at the wrist so that the back of the wrist is just in front of the mouth. The inner surface of this last joint is serrated with a row of short, very sharp spines. When the mantis strikes it secures its prey in this joint, holding it like a nut in a pair of nut-crackers, and no amount of struggling can free it.

In about a minute the fly was eaten *in toto*, and shortly after the second shared its fate. The average time for fly consumption was forty-five seconds, and her capacity for this food I never discovered. After forty-eight one afternoon it was I that gave it up, not the mantis. It is warm work stalking flies round the Mess in Palestine in summer.

I tried her with other food. A grasshopper fell an easy prey, as it walked straight into the danger-zone, and in spite of its struggles was quickly despatched. In the matter of large game she was somewhat of an epicure. She would bite through the carapace at the junction of the head and the neck, and eat only the brain. Then the carcass was dropped.

I continued investigations concerning her diet. One afternoon about five o'clock, when a gentle breeze was blowing and the glorious soft evening had set in, so like a fine evening at home in June, but even more lovely in contrast to the burning heat of the day—the time when the old men bring out their beds to lie in the open, and the sick enjoy a few hours of cool and rest, just as they did in the time of Christ—I set off with a butterfly-net to forage in the fields behind the camp. Two common yellow butterflies were easily caught, and another grasshopper. Suddenly a whirl and a plop amongst the leaves of an olive-tree drew my attention to a fine big locust. A chase over two fields and he was added to the bag. Then a flash of blue and gold, and a *tryxalis* landed at my feet—another kind of locust with a long pointed head and sabre-like antennæ. He had a pair of beautiful gauzy wings, of a gentle shimmering blue, fading to a golden border. He resented being confined with the commoner sombre-coloured locust, but settled down quietly

in one corner of my box with the two butterflies. A little farther on was the spoor of a tortoise, two parallel lines of claw-marks, with a flat, smooth trail between. This ended in a clump of grass, and poking in the sand with the handle of the net soon brought him to light. I carried him home, and was interested to find that he shared with Peter, a tortoise I have known for many years in England, a predilection for yellow food, eating the petals of any yellow flower and the yellower parts of a cabbage or a lettuce before anything else.

In the next field were two dung-beetles rolling their ball of dung along, a fascinating progress to watch, one pushing and the other pulling, and, in spite of all obstacles put in their way, trekking straight for their lair. I left them hard at work, but captured a big lazy fellow who was dozing away beside them. Behind was a prickly hedge, on which a shrike had just impaled two beetles. I searched carefully, but did not find the nest. The shrike was on very friendly terms with a hoopoe who lived in a mulberry-tree close by, and I often saw them flash past in the evening. I impaled another beetle for him, but though the first two had disappeared next day, my contribution to the mess remained untouched.

A sudden flutter at my feet, and a lark soared away into the sky. I looked around carefully for the nest, and found a large, dark hole, surrounded by a fringe of nettles and grass. It was one of those caches (about five feet deep—a bricked-in cavity, of beehive shape and open at the top) in which the natives still store their grain. In the dim depths I saw something very like a grass-snake. I jumped down, and found a scribbling lark's egg, cold and addled, watched over by a solemn old toad. There was no nest, so I suppose the egg must have been carried in by some marauder. The snake had disappeared into a crack in the wall, but two devil's coach-horses were running a furious chariot-race round the hole.

The toad looked too ugly and venomous to carry away, so I just put him amongst the cool grass at the top of the hole to get a little fresh air. A few days later he had hopped back again, and was sitting as solemn and placid and ghoulish as ever.

Finally I found what I was looking for. I had seen several hornets flitting amongst the cactus-leaves a few days before, and had blazed their favourite resting-place, a curled-over leaf, under which two or three were always crouching. There was no sign of a nest either here or in the neighbourhood, but this time there were a good dozen of them to be seen. An exciting time followed for a few minutes, and I came away hurriedly with two in the corner of my net.

My walk home was uneventful. The frogs had started their chorus by the wells, a peculiar insistent metallic noise, like a thousand riveters

at work ; two little owls, which always came out at sunset and stayed up till nine in the morning, flitted past me amongst the sycamores ; and a noisy flock of bulbuls chattered to roost in the mulberry-trees. Just before I got back to camp, however, on the trunk of a lemon-tree I found another female mantis of the same kind, though not so big, as my first. I put the various insects safely away for the night, and the second mantis in the cage with the other. They made no friendly overtures, but retired to opposite ends of the box. They each had a couple of drowsy flies for supper, and I left them for the night.

Next morning my mantis was in her usual place looking for her breakfast, and on the bottom of the box, lying on her back, and partially devoured, lay the second. When the tragedy took place I do not know. It was probably at dawn, when they both started foraging for food, that they met, and the weaker went to the wall. Twice after the gruesome story was repeated. Perhaps my mantis was too fit for the intruders ; certainly the only battle I witnessed was a very short affair. Had it stopped short of cannibalism it would not have been so gruesome.

The butterflies were not part of her diet, and after a few hours' confinement were released. Both locusts were killed, and their brains picked out ; and the caterpillar shared their fate. The dung-beetle proved too hard a nut to crack, and was left to blunder round the box till I released him next day.

I was interested to see how the hornets would fare. Knowing that they are well enough armed to take care of themselves, and, by their markings, are unpalatable as food, I trained the mantis with a day's gorge and a day's starvation before the encounter. There was at once excitement in the air. The mantis drew herself up and prepared for battle. Her antennæ waved more vigorously than ever, and her little head moved swiftly to and fro as she watched them crawl towards her. She brought her feet nearer together, and so raised her body high up away from the net, on which she was standing.

The first hornet walked under her and nibbled a leg as he passed. She drew up her foot, but made no other sign. He curled his sting up towards her abdomen, but it was out of reach. The other, commencing a frontal attack, charged head on towards her front-paws. Like a flash they shot out, but, instead of seizing him, she caught him a stinging blow between the eyes and knocked him about eight inches away on to the bottom of the box. He was very quiet for a minute ; then, rubbing his head with his fore-legs, and giving a more ferocious twist to his antennæ, he came on again. Again he was knocked out, the mantis returning instantly on guard, and watching her other tormentor, who was again biting her legs and trying to sting.

For two hours I watched the battle. The mantis only struck when actually attacked, but never attempted to seize the hornets, which finally gave up the contest and crawled away amongst the olive-leaves. Next day I removed them, and gave her a good feed of flies.

A few days before this she had laid a large egg-case, fixed by a glutinous white cement on to a twig of the branch. I removed it, for I wanted to see the young before she ate them, as I guessed she would do, and in about a fortnight I had a merry brood of nearly a hundred tiny insects clambering round their box. They were fascinating little creatures, about a third of an inch long, exact replicas of their mother, frisky as lambs, and playful as the baby caterpillars of the puss-moth. I tried to feed them on a tiny green fly I found in the blight of an apricot-tree, but they would not take it. Finally I had to restore them to their mother's gentle care, which only three survived long enough to catch and eat a fly before they also were eaten.

For five months my mantis gave me endless interest and amusement, and she became well known. Flies were her constant and favourite food, and she grew more and more expert in catching them. Then one day I found her a mate. He was a dandy little fellow, sligher and somewhat smaller than she, and I rather trembled for his safety as I put him in the cage. She was eating a fly at the time, but stopped at once, dropped the half-devoured carcass, and went to greet him. They met on the netting at one side of the box, and looked at each other hard, waving their antennæ. Slowly he approached her, and gave her a gentle pat on the back of the head with his foot. She drew herself up, and signalled her disapproval of his conduct with her antennæ. He replied, and this time patted her on the back. Somewhat less outraged, she again drew away ; but he pursued her with his caresses, and I sighed with relief that the shrew was tamed at last.

Next morning he was dead. There was no sign of violence and no gaping skull, such as I was so accustomed to see. She never attempted to eat him, or anything else that day ; she seemed to be mourning his loss. For hours she sat with her forelegs raised in front of her, and with a gentle swaying movement from side to side, like a Mohammedan woman mourning by her husband's grave, she seemed for once to be fulfilling the rôle of a praying mantis. Occasionally she would move a foot ; her fly ration remained untouched.

Two mornings later I found her dead on her back, her life's work ended, and a huge egg-case fastened to the olive-branch. I took it gently away and fixed it on to her own old tree, where I hope all the eggs hatched out and the young grew up as lively and interesting as their mother.

MR PHIPPS OF 'THE OLD FIRM.'

PART II.

I.

I HAD slowed my restless madame for the sharp bit of uphill which would bring me almost to the house, and for sheer blitheness was speaking nonsense to her in French, she clattering nervously—I thought because she disliked the wind in the bushes—when, sudden as a flash, and for no cause that I could detect at the moment, old Sir Jacob's voice whipped into my brain.

'Are you that blackguard express from London that has hired all the horses?'

The question which I had not dignified to notice at the inn returned to me as something so weighty, so sinister, so full of import to myself, that straightway I pulled up, feeling sick in body and mind. Had I made a deadly slip by not guessing peril?

And now I knew what had roused the question. Right away on the road I had left I heard a faint, faint shouting; and between that and me a volley of hoof-beats; and—ay! on the turf to my left hand a drumming, getting louder with incredible swiftness—horses at a gallop.

'Those pack-animals are broke loose,' I said, cocking my pistols simultaneously and putting one in my breast. Holding the other, I grabbed the rein and endeavoured to discover the nature of the hedge on my right. It was dangerously high, and so, to the mare's amazement, I drove spurs into her and set her racing up the hill. Then, at the noise of crashing bushes ahead of us, I strove to wrench her in; and while she lashed and flung in wild frenzy, I heard the hedge behind us split in two places, and an instant after in a third.

'Jack is down and smashed with his lantern,' panted a rider; and, without pause, but his tone soaring to a yell, 'Name o' the king! Stand, Lord Sayer!'

At the hazard of firing my pistol into the sky, I brought both hands to the rein, hauled the mare part round, and goaded her at the hedge, not above four feet high here, but topped with stoutish bushes, just to be seen against the sky. We went into them, there hanging for an instant half-over, she scrambling madly, I thrown forward abuddle on her neck, and thinking, it is curious to recall, less of my plight than of my wallet and how lucky I was to have buried it, since there would have been no time for that from my first catching the alarm.

A heavy pistol went off in the road with a great, puffing blaze, the bullet chipping my elbow and getting me through my riding-boot fair in the knee. I snatched at the pistol in my

bosom, having by now lost the other, and fired back; and, this shot being returned at once, the mare gave a mighty heave, somersaulting me into the field below us, and so striking me as she fell herself as to knock the senses out of me.

II.

When I was conscious again I found that I was laid flat on the road, with several lanterns about me, and, I soon perceived, all my apparel disarrayed. My coat and tunic, boots and wig, were off; my shirt was ripped; and some one was yet busy with my stockings, which caused such torment to my knee that, had he not suddenly desisted, I should have swooned. As it was, he left me with the road seeming to billow like the sea and a horrid rushing in my brain.

I did not speak; but presently, feeling a trifle steadier, I listened very eagerly, for there was an angry discord among those around me which certainly meant nothing to my disadvantage.

'Your fellows were under my orders,' said a well-bred voice. 'Had he carried enough treason to damn himself ten times over, it were no excuse for them. Whereas now—— Look you!' He spoke in a new direction, and his words were high and menacing. 'Look you! my bullies. You shall remember breaking of my commands as long as you live, which will be till the next assize if his lordship dies. This is going to be jail for the lot of you to-morrow, you mutinous knaves.'

'So please your worship,' answered one, after a second of complete silence, 'the gentleman would ha' been away across country if Joe Hayward and me hadna' loosed our sneezers. We were trying for the horse.'

'His worship' reviled Joe Hayward and the speaker with a score of baleful epithets, renewing his promise of jail, and then, appearing to have turned his back on them, addressed the person to whom he had spoken before.

'I am put in a pretty mess, Mr Dawson, by you and your rascals. I did think I made plain what the Council directed—no harm to Lord Sayer, but to stop him on the coast and capture any boat crew that should row in to him. Pest! why did not they take him when they spotted him in London last week?'

The speaker's heel ground impatiently. 'I say again, the boat was moonshine. He was riding to see his wife, sir, not making for France. That should be clear even to *you*, seeing he lies at her gate with nought in his pocket but some jewels for her.'

'I believe he has cast away his papers,' was

the answer, obstinately made. 'And, come daylight, I will have my lads search every rut and cranny of this lane.'

'Come daylight, you will have your lads in prison—as true as I am a magistrate—for landing me with this murderous business.' His heel began to grind again. 'Hey, Brown! get you off also for a surgeon. Try Sandwich—back to the big road, then left. Whoa! Give me that flask again first.'

And then he came and bent over me so that, although my stupor was returning quickly, I recognised his face. He was Mr Francis Orlebars, of Greenwich, with whom I had been friendly in the old days. He caught the gleam of sense in my eyes, and forthwith dropped on his knee, raising my head.

'My dearest Sayer,' said he. 'In faith, I am sorry. I meant to take you myself, but your swerve from the straight road confounded the numskulls that were my patrol-parties and brought them ramping after you—nay, drink.' But I could not, and he stooped closer. 'Sayer, the knee is the worst?' he asked anxiously. 'You are not crushed—broke inside?'

The sweat was now running all over my face, and I heard his words but as sounds swaying up and down giddily. 'I know not,' I struggled to say, 'but—in case—carry me to my lady.'

I saw blackness sliding over me as a lid, and well I remember with what agony I tried, in the last blind moment of consciousness, to cry on Ruth to come to me.

III.

I won round again, my brow and mouth very aromatic from strong waters, in a large room bright with fire and candles. It was strange to me, but as I moved my head I got a little fragrance from the pillow of the bed whereon I lay, which was the sweetest fragrance in the world. And in wonder I thanked Heaven for this joy in my trouble, that Ruth deemed me not too much of a shifty plotter and a stranger to be laid on her own bed, which I could have sworn she would have. I looked for her, yet saw only a maid-servant at the end of the chamber, and Orlebars, who, noting me stir, motioned out the woman and stepped across to me.

'Your wife is coming,' he said, after a question as to how I felt, 'and soon the surgeons will be here, I trust. I have bound your knee and arm, and looked to the rest of you. You are all bruised, but I believe the knee is the only breakage.'

I lifted my left hand, the other arm being gone stiff, and we made a long grip of it while I thanked him.

'I shall take my people to the village yonder,' said he; 'for I am too sick of this affair to intrude on you and my lady. But you are under my

arrest, and I must have your pledge that you will not contrive to—forgive the word, Sayer—to escape.'

I hesitated. Should I barter every remnant hope of freedom, perchance of life, for a few unwatched hours? Yes; I had no other choice.

'I pledge myself,' I said, wondrously relieved at his going. Then, aware how ungenerous he must consider me that I did not press him to stay, I added sincerely, 'You have proven kind indeed, Orlebars.'

He stared down at me, twisting the end of his peruke, and wearing the pleasant expression of old acquaintance. 'We found no treason on you,' he said, 'so think not of danger to your neck, which might easily have been, despite your peerage. I fear, from rumour, it may be the Tower, though. Yet I fain would leave you cheery.' He debated within himself. 'Sayer, let me have your plighted word on another matter. Came you to England for none other purpose than to visit my lady? Tell me that, and I will see if I can end the process.'

I was tempted hard. To remove his very suspicion for the night—he appearing to know nothing of my work in London—would be of extreme use to me. In sooth, I was tempted. Howbeit, I shook my head.

'Betwixt you and me,' I answered, 'there was something else.'

He frowned uneasily, and then, with a sigh and a smile, 'So be it. Every man for his own king.' He touched my hand. 'Good-bye; your wife is come.'

He drew aside, and, making his bow towards the door, walked thither. I heard him speaking on the threshold, and presently the door was shut and Ruth came quietly down the room. With not a glance at me, whose heart started to leap again so that it seemed my whole body shook, she stopped and remained side-face to me, looking at the curtain over the window as one in profoundest meditation, her hands striving a little with one another. She was pale, but otherwise little different from the day I first saw her—a very naiad in her slim youthfulness and beauty—for the desolate years which had brought my age to forty-one had brought her to but six-and-twenty.

She deliberated, her hands ceasing after a while to strive, and becoming clasped, rigid as stone hands, I thought. Then suddenly she cast them apart, with a long breath like a sob, as if she regretfully abandoned something; which made my perplexity complete, until she turned—and then I saw in her face that by a miracle it was the Prince of Orange and his party that were gone by the board with her.

My rapture at that instant was such as I had never imagined could be; but, my conscience telling me it was selfish withal, she

being plainly in grave distress for me, I made to raise myself, to show her I was not near dead yet. Thus far, with my swoonings and with my mind planning industriously and none too clear, I had most the while been numb, as it were, to bodily pain. Now, having lifted my shoulders an inch, I dropped back, crying out loud, ready to believe that swords were passing through me.

She ran forward, picking up a cup from a chest, and would have urged me to drink, but her lips were quivering rapidly.

'I am all right, sweetheart,' I whispered. Whereupon she put the cup away. Then, leaning over and setting her hands on either side of me, she came down low, with supreme care not to press me, and rested her lips on mine, holding them there for long intervals, between which she would hold back her head a space, with a moan, her blue eyes as dark as night and aswim with tears, and seeming to entreat me to read her soul.

I got my well arm around her, calling her by all the dear names which she had not let me speak in these late years; and anon she swayed over in it and sank beside me; and her sobs, which had begun to shake her, changed to a steady weeping against my cheek. I suppose I wept myself, for it was with but a quivering voice that I applied myself to soothing her—no easy matter.

'Dick! Dick!' was all she would murmur for a while—'Dick!' And then would be flows of

words, scarcely to be heard, yet beyond my power to stop. 'I was your cruel wife—the cruellest wife that ever has been. . . . King James was your friend. . . . I should have remembered that and forgot poor Cousin Luke. . . . I think some demon took my mind, for I never but loved thee, my own. . . . Oh, Dick, when I took this house that was filched from you, it was not solely for want of a roof, but to save something for you and me. . . . They offered me Sayerston, or Sayer House. I were best have chosen from those, but I could endure none except this. . . . You had not lived here, so I believed you would not haunt it. . . . But you did, my heart! . . . Think you I slept those nights when you had ridden to your ship?

'My dearest, I meant to be hard and hard and pitiless till at last you should bend and wear orange. I knew you loved me. Ay, I knew you would not seek another woman. . . . Oh, cruel! cruel I was! . . . I dreamed so pleasedly of your bending, of my game won. . . . And then, when they came with you to-night!' She broke into frenzied sobs, shuddering piteously. 'To-night I believed that God had rended me for never thinking how—how death could stop my game! Dick! Dick! you will not die!'

'Die! Not from this bit of winging, sweetheart.' And at length I managed to comfort her, that paroxysm proving the last of her weeping.

(Continued on page 106.)

THE SWEDISH NIGHTINGALE.

By JAMES A. MANSON.

I.

'TWAS on a summer's afternoon, A wee afore the sun gaed down,' in the year 1829, that folk passing the Widows' Home, in a thronged street in Stockholm, were thrilled by a beautiful bird-like song. The maid of Miss Lundberg, a dancer at the Royal Opera House, was so enchanted that she had the good sense to inquire, and learned that the melody proceeded from a little girl sitting at a window singing to her cat. She told her mistress of the incident, and Miss Lundberg begged the mother to bring the bairn and let her hear her. And so it was done.

'This child is a genius,' Miss Lundberg protested; 'she should be trained for the stage.' But the mother objected to the theatre. 'Well,' remonstrated the dancer, 'at least have her taught singing.'

It then appeared that the little girl, aged nine, was named Jenny Lind (her baptismal names of Johanna Maria she never used). Her gift was natural. She trilled in bird-notes, for

the music came. As she said herself when much older, 'I sang with every step I took, and with every jump my feet made.'

Her granny, Fru Tengmark, first noticed her talent when the child was about four. Jenny had just returned to Stockholm from the country, when she heard the bugles of a military band play a bright and lively air. Thinking herself alone, she stole to the piano on which her step-sister Amelia used to strum, and played the tune. 'Amelia!' cried granny; whereupon Jenny, as if caught in wrong-doing, hid behind the piano. Granny, receiving no answer, entered the room and discovered the culprit. 'Was that you?' the old woman asked, as she drew the child from her hiding-place. Jenny owned her guilt, and granny presently informed her mother, adding, 'Mark my words! That child will bring you help some day.'

Fru Tengmark's prophecy was fulfilled both in letter and in spirit. Although Mrs Lind was hard to get on with, and Jenny at last had to leave her because she thought they would agree better apart, she supplied her parents' wants, and

provided them with a haven of rest and comfort for their declining years.

II.

Jenny had a will of her own, and great force of character. She owed nothing to appearance, describing herself as a small, broad-nosed, ugly, awkward, shy girl; but as she grew up she developed some splendid qualities. One was abiding faith in God; another was firmness of purpose; a third was unbounded love for the poor, the outcast, and the ailing.

Although nearly her whole life was spent in busy cities, she had a rooted distaste for crowds, and an equally intense love of nature. All her days she cherished wild-flowers, revelled in the song of birds, rejoiced in sky and cloud and sea. 'I have a hole in my heart even for ze leetle mouse,' she once declared—which, considering her sex, was sufficiently remarkable. Folk-songs, folklore, folk-stories, and folk-dances had for her a ceaseless charm. When she sang at a 'musical evening' given by the Dowager Queen of Sweden in 1850, Her Majesty asked her to accept a costly bracelet. With tears in her eyes, Jenny entreated to be allowed to entertain without other fee than a bunch of forget-me-nots in a vase on the table. The queen yielded, and, as an eye-witness recorded, Jenny seemed happier with the flowers than with the diamonds.

Questioned as to the school in which she had studied, or the master to whom she was most indebted, she answered, 'My ideal was and is so high that no mortal was to be found who could satisfy my demands. I sing according to no man's system, only after that of the birds, so far as I am able, for their Teacher was the only One Who responds to my requirements for truth, clearness, and expression.'

Of course, Jenny did not mean to imply that she had had no training at all, for her mother was wise enough to act on Miss Lundberg's advice and take her to Croelius, the singing-master at the Royal Theatre, who in turn led her to Count Puke, the director. 'How old is she?' the latter asked; and on learning that she was nine, he said, 'Nine! This is not a nursery!' 'Ah, if you won't hear her,' replied Croelius, 'I must teach her myself, and she will astonish you yet.' Then the count relented, and Jenny sang, and moved him to tears; and in the end she was bound for a number of years to the Royal Theatre, which undertook in return to feed, clothe, board, and educate her.

This decision was not come to, however, without serious misgiving, because Mrs Lind (like Jenny herself in later life) had a profound horror of the stage and all its surroundings. Yet, strange to say, Jenny Lind attained to such success that many critics averred that, had she not been the finest singer of the day, she might have become

the foremost actress. This was due to her extraordinary power of identifying herself with the character she was personating, whereby she actually *was*, and did not merely pretend to be, the person. She told Mrs Nassau Senior she hardly ever thought of the effect she was producing on the audience, for if ever such a thought did cross her mind it ruined her acting. When she acted, she entered fully into all the emotions of the part she was sustaining. If she could not do this, as had happened on rare occasions, she assured Arthur Stanley, afterwards the well-known Dean of Westminster, 'she felt she was acting, and telling lies, and then entirely failed.' At the same time, she was so anxious not to destroy her individuality, lest with it all that was good in her might perish, that she made it a rule 'never to represent such passions as would awaken bad feelings.'

Readers of the admirable *Memoir of Madame Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt*, by Mr W. S. Rockstro and the late Canon Scott Holland, will discover it easy to penetrate the secret of her attitude to the stage. Lady Taylor, wife of Sir Henry Taylor, the poet, met her one evening by the seaside, gazing at a glorious sunset, while a Lutheran Bible lay open in her lap. They fell into talk. 'Oh, Madame Goldschmidt, why did you leave the stage at the very height of your success?' 'When, every day, it made me think less of *this*,' answered the singer, as she touched the Book of books, 'and nothing at all of *that*,' as she pointed to the gorgeous panorama in the clouds, 'what else could I do?'

But such sentiments needed time and experience to ripen into all-compelling conviction, and little Jenny proved an apt pupil at the theatre school. Always diligent, she rapidly became a proficient dancer, and her walk and carriage were perfect. In spite of an injury to her left hand, which she hurt whilst striking a flint on tinder to get a light, she mastered the piano, and played the accompaniments to her Swedish songs with singular delicacy and refinement. She took a special pride in sewing, an art she constantly cultivated. 'Madame's stitches never come out,' commented her maid in emphatic eulogy.

Almost from her earliest connection with the Royal Theatre, the manager began to cast Jenny for child parts, and so precocious was she that she speedily came to be regarded as a regular member of the company. Between the school and frequent appearances on the boards, several years had elapsed before she was heard in opera. But on 7th March 1838 she made her début as Agatha in *Der Freischütz*. In a rehearsal she sang and acted with such fervour as to electrify Madame Erikson, her teacher, who sat mute with astonishment. Jenny had looked for a word or two at least, if not for applause. 'Am I incapable and stupid?' she wondered.

Then she saw tears welling up in Madame Erikson's eyes. 'My child,' the latter faltered, 'I have nothing to teach you; do as nature bids you.'

In her *début* she won a triumph, and went to bed that night a new creature, certain that her gift was from Heaven, and that she was charged with the high responsibility of making proper use of it. This sense of divine possession never forsook her. Mrs Stanley, wife of the Bishop of Norwich, with whom she stayed in 1847, testified that 'every morning when she got up she felt that her voice was a gift from God, and that, perhaps, that very day might be the last of its use.'

Though she had gained a brilliant position in Stockholm—she was appointed Court singer when little more than nineteen—Jenny's dazzling advance led her to suspect that she knew more than her teachers could tell her, and she resolved to consult a foreign coach. With this object she went to Paris in 1841 to see Manuel Garcia, one of the most skilful teachers of voice production. His opinion appalled her. 'Miss,' he pronounced, 'you have no voice left.' This blunt judgment she could not accept as final; but she was aware that it contained an element of truth, and that her trip to Paris had been justified.

Garcia, anxious to relieve her feelings, said that if she did not sing a single note for the next six weeks, and spoke as seldom as she could, in order to give her voice complete rest, she might call on him at the end of the period of abstinence. On her return he was so far satisfied with the improved condition of her voice that he agreed to teach her, provided she unlearned all she had been taught on wrong lines and began her training over again. For nearly a year the lessons continued, until, aided by her indomitable will and adamant faith in the divine origin of her gift, she was enabled to resume her career. Rather she was starting afresh, for she soon became a world's wonder. Mendelssohn, who wrote some of the soprano airs in *Elijah* with her voice ringing in his ears, avowed, 'She is as great an artist as ever lived, and the greatest I have known.' Thus she who had begun as the Child of the Drama became, in course of time, the acknowledged Queen of Oratorio.

III.

Notwithstanding her rare accomplishments, however, she was a singular mixture of self-confidence and self-distrust. She was sometimes difficult to manage in business matters. A creature of mood and impulse, she had to be saved from doing, on the spur of the moment, things which were neither to her own interest nor to the benefit of her art and that of the multitude of music-lovers. She was once on the point of signing a contract for eight years as

prima-donna to the Royal Theatre, Stockholm, for the paltry salary of £420 a year. In effect the agreement would prevent her from touring in the various European capitals, whose inhabitants were eager to hear her, and might even jeopardise her future. But she obstinately refused to listen to any advice. One day a friend met a consul-general well posted in musical affairs, and lamented to him the step Jenny was about to take. 'Surely she must know best,' said the wily consul. 'In spite of her wonderful successes here, she feels she could not repeat them abroad, and so decides to remain at home.' In this shrewd point of view the friend saw salvation. He hurried to Jenny, told her what competent amateurs were saying, and, before the interview was over, saw her tear up the contract.

Compare this with her nervousness after the curtain had fallen on her brilliant singing as *Velka* in Meyerbeer's opera of that name, which was produced in Vienna on 18th February 1847. A friend found her in her dressing-room inconsolable at her imagined failure. At that moment the composer himself knocked at the door. 'Forgive me,' cried Jenny as he entered, 'for singing so badly and spoiling your opera.' 'Indeed you sang divinely,' Meyerbeer answered. 'It was splendid, and I have come to thank you.' But she would not be comforted; she had made up her mind she had not reached her self-appointed standard, and it must either be that or nothing.

Her diffidence was genuine, not assumed. She loved to listen to the nightingales at Burnham or Wimbledon along with her friends the Grotes. On one fine evening a bird suddenly stopped his song on ascertaining he was not alone. 'He has seen us,' quoth Jenny. 'That is just like me. Had I caught any one intruding on my solitude, I should have done the very same. Those who have likened me to a nightingale are not far wrong, for I have a great deal of the nightingale in me.'

Everybody agreed that her voice had quite a remarkable quality. Arthur Stanley, who had no technical knowledge of music, told her once that her singing, in itself, produced no effect on him, but that there was something extraordinary in her voice. Others were, however, more impressionable than the coming dean. Hans Christian Andersen says that, during one of his visits to Berlin, he received a visit from a man who was a true poet, but upon whom poverty had laid a heavy hand. Wishing to give him a treat, Andersen invited him to hear Jenny. 'I have heard her already,' he answered. 'Not being able to pay for a place, I inquired whether I could not be employed on the stage as a "super" in *Norma*, and was permitted to serve. Dressed as a Roman soldier, I was stationed near her, and heard her better than any one else. How she sang! How she acted!

I could not stand it, and fairly blubbered. They were mad at that, and the manager would not suffer me to appear again.'

In Edinburgh she once sang in aid of Dr Guthrie's Ragged Schools. 'I then heard her for the first time,' the doctor wrote long afterwards, 'and never heard—and, unless I hear her again, never shall hear—anything like it. She sang "Auld Robin Gray," and old men near me, with heads as bare as a peeled turnip, were greeting [crying] like bairns.'

IV.

Her charities were endless. She did good by stealth, and blushed to find it fame. One of her guardians who managed her bounties in Stockholm kept all her letters, and these, at his death, were found in a parcel labelled, 'The Mirror of a Noble Soul.' Monsieur Bournonville related a pathetic episode for the truth of which he vouched. While Jenny was singing in Copenhagen in 1843, a friend of his, Mozart Petersen, lay sick unto death; but, ill as he was, the talk of her marvellous singing had reached him. Petersen's young wife expressed her sorrow that her poor husband should miss hearing the famous singer. The case happened to reach Jenny's ears, and she visited the couple one Sunday and sang to the patient. The enraptured pair, hearts full of gratitude, called her 'the Angel,' unconsciously echoing Sir Walter Scott's tribute to woman:

When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!

What her magic voice earned in money for hospitals, infirmaries, and scholarships in music will never be known. She gave a concert on behalf of the Consumption Hospital at Brompton on 31st July 1848, which produced £1776, 15s. A new wing of the building having been erected, Douglas Jerrold proposed that it should be called 'The Nightingale's Wing.' The proceeds of concerts which she held for philanthropic objects during a period of some nine weeks (4th December 1848 to 2nd February 1849) amounted to £8740.

Her purse was always open to the poor and the distressed. Often she left her house, apparently to make a call, but really to trace out cases of hardship with the intention of affording relief. To friends who cautioned her that she might readily be imposed upon, she answered, 'If I help ten, and one is worthy, I shall be satisfied.'

Whilst singing at a concert Madame Solari unfortunately broke a blood-vessel, and her life was despaired of. As a last resource she was ordered to the south of France, but lack of means seemed to render this impossible. Then Jenny heard of her troubles, and called. 'I have come to scold you,' she began, 'for not telling me before, and for thinking of going away without seeing me. You will need money.

Take this, and never forget, wherever you are, that friends have only one purse. God bless you!' So saying, she handed the sufferer two £100 notes.

When Jenny Lind was in New York she received a letter from a Swede asking the favour of an interview. She could not recall him from his name, but granted his request. When he entered her room she identified him at once as an old schoolfellow, and learned that he was now a cabinet-maker, living in Brooklyn with his wife and family. Next day she drove to see them, repeating the visit on the following day. On the second occasion the man was not at home, but she left a letter for him, begging to be allowed to give his children a memento of their father's youthful friendship with Jenny Lind, and enclosing a cheque for £2000!

Robert Schumann's songs she interpreted to perfection, entering into the spirit of them with a completeness that had seemed really unattainable. She had a particular fondness for his '*Sonnenschein*,' and when the composer told her that her singing of it made him feel it warm on his back, she retorted, 'But Who was it that caused that sun to shine?' This was, in fact, the last song on which her memory lingered. As she lay dying at Malvern (where she passed into the Land of Eternal Song on 2nd November 1887), her daughter undid the shutters one morning and admitted a glimpse of the newly risen sun. Jenny Lind's lips were seen to form the opening bars of her favourite melody, and ear of man or woman heard her on earth no more.

SHADOW LAND.

ONE, two, three, and four, five, six,
Slowly and gently the big clock ticks;
Time each little downy head
Lay on a pillow safe in bed.
Now is the time that the fairies swing
To and fro within their ring;
Big owls hoot with eyes so bright—
To-whoo, to-whoo, floats through the night;
Froggies sing and glow-worms flit,
Lighting up the swamp a bit.
Now the little goblins dance,
And the White Foam Horses prance;
Soldiers of an age long fled
All return when you're in bed.
Crews of Drake and Nelson too,
Come to have a peep at you;
'Cross the nursery, rushing on,
Charge the steeds of Wellington;
While he, riding at their head,
Gallops gaily by your bed.
All these things from goblin lands
Grasp ye with your childish hands.
Hold them well, then, while you may;
You have but short time to play.
And, ere many years are past,
You must sadly say at last,
To the myths you love so well,
Friends of Childhood Days—Farewell.

CONSTANCE M. TROY.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE RETURN.

By OTTO ROTHFELD, F.R.G.S., I.C.S., Author of *Indian Dust*, *Life and its Puppets*, &c.

PART I.

I.

HE sat, half-crouching, in the corner-seat, with his eyes fixed upon the hedges and the telegraph-posts that glided past, as he had sat all through the night, ever since the train left the noisy, crowded, flaring Grant Road Station in Bombay. Now, in the cooler dawning that followed the restless night in the stuffy third-class carriage, the stations began to bear names that sounded vaguely familiar, with a sort of distant touch of home and an accustomed turn of tongue. Surat, and half-an-hour's stoppage; Ankleswar, where the locomotive took water; the long railway bridge across the sacred Narbada; Broach, with its ancient walls rising straight from the river, and the masts and sails clustered thickly in its port; Palej and Miyagam; and the large station of Baroda—these were names that spoke to him, in a dim, unimagined way, of things which he once knew, of a land that at last was his very own. As the morning hours again grew hot and parched, and the sun beat down fiercely upon the iron rails and stone ballast of the permanent way, till the very air seemed to tremble and the white glare of the dusty roads became like a flaming sword, he saw before him from his corner the park-lands of Gujarat, the mango-trees heavy with fruit, the hedges of cactus and thin green euphorbia hung with dried trailing creepers, and the deep sunken lanes that led from village to village. The carts that moved on these roads were long and high, with great creaking wooden wheels and heavy axles, and were drawn by large white bullocks of the Gujarat breed, taller to the withers than most men, with long dewlaps and fat humps and high-twisting horns. There were brass bells hung to the collars round the beasts' necks, and the sound of their soft clashing tinkles seemed to recall the past, as if once, long ago, he had known these very bullocks and driven them back across the fields to the village gate and his mud-walled hut. He stirred a little in his seat and looked quickly round the compartment. But the others, busy with their chattering and eating, seemed to be somehow distant, men and women whom he did not know. He unrolled the corner of his turban and took out a country-made cigarette—a pinch of tobacco twisted in a green jungle

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leaf—and turned again to his window. When the train stopped at another station, he could hear the familiar creak of the wheel at the well, as the bullocks pulled up the leathern bag of water to the drinking-trough at the surface.

'How, brother'—he turned to the man beside him—'this must be Kaira district, isn't it?' The provincial dialect sounded a little strange, a little laboured, on his lips. His neighbour stared at him curiously.

'Surely, brother,' he replied. 'This is Kaira district. The last station we stopped at was Anand. Next we come to Mehmedabad. After that will come Ahmedabad district. Truly, a wonderful thing is the fire-carriage.' Then, after another look, he went on in the easy give-and-take of the third-class passenger. 'And where do you come from, brother? You would seem to be from the Chunwal, yet you speak Gujarati as if it did not come easily to your lips. Have you journeyed from far?'

But the man had turned again to his window, and granted an unwilling answer over his shoulder. 'I come from far away. From there, over there, have I come,' waving his hand vaguely to the south, in the direction of the ocean, as he spoke. Then he hunched himself yet more together, as if resolved to speak no further.

The other shrugged his shoulders, half-offended; then, catching the eye of the girl who sat opposite, a pretty Benia girl with full pouting lips and plump arms and neck, her first-born in her lap, on a trip away from her husband to visit relatives in northern Gujarat, he curled his moustache and smiled. With a pretty girl to watch and a daring eye to meet, it's a poor sort of man that would worry about a surly fellow on a railway journey.

II.

The man, quietly crouched in the corner, still looked out dully upon the moving sun-browned landscape. His was a worn, tired, patient face, the face of one who had passed through a purgatory of blazing passions to the slow, unconscious repose of mere fatigue. The straggling hairs that peeped below his loosely wound turban of coarse cotton, the moustache, and the unshaven stubble on his chin and cheeks were coarse and grizzled. The mouth hung loose, showing brown worn teeth

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and gaps in the pallid gums. The wrinkles on his brow and fallen cheeks spoke of ill-health and listlessness, corrosive of earlier force and virility. He might have been robust once, it seemed, with a ready flash of emotion and a zest in life, in the mere activity of living; he was but a spent thing now, jetsam of the drifts and the breakers.

They were in Ahmedabad now, in the mean sordid station that is the entrance to the capital of Gujarat. He watched, unthinking, in a daze of undistinguished sense-impressions, the jostling crowds that hurried and pushed and shouted along the narrow platform. Bearded Marwan labourers with iron-bound cudgels forced their way through, followed by their stalwart women in torn and filthy accordion-pleated skirts, shawls pulled over the face, infants clutching at the bared, deep breasts. Thin-lipped merchants, in fine muslin loin-clothes and smooth made-up turbans of green and gold, edged carefully through the throng, repeating Stock Exchange quotations and offering mill-shares of 'forward' cotton. Bohorah women, closely veiled in dingy sheets from head to foot, stumbled along in clinging groups, a fringe of green or purple silk petticoat just visible over the flabby ankles and shuffling slippers. Parsi and Eurasian ticket-collectors jostled the people, men and women, rudely aside, and policemen and customs officers opened bundles on the platform or ran gauging-rods into bags and baskets.

Through the dim monotone of sensation, one recurring image shaped itself to his sluggish mind. He saw as in a vision a young man, a Koli of the Chunwal Kolis, a dashing, fighting, cateran race, in the first bloom of youth and manliness, swaggering gaily through the walled village of his early years. Facing him came another, one whom he hated, dark and grim, the features now blurred and lost in the mists of time. Words he remembered, sharp and bitter; a curse; a blow—and the rest was only a faded smudge of dulling pain. But clear to him was the image of the young man, gaily swaggering; and he knew that the figure was himself.

'Buy some sweets, cooked by Brahmin hands, old gentleman?' whined the voice of a girl vender at his elbow.

'Old gentleman!' He came back from his vision to the flow of present sensation. It was to him, then, that she was speaking. 'Old—old! Am I, then, old?' he asked himself. His fingers felt dubiously in a weak way round his chin. 'That young, straight figure—was it ever mine? Old! Of course I am old—now.'

He shook his head and spoke to the girl in the curious laboured tones that seemed to be habitual. 'I want no sweets, my daughter. Go to others who are younger or richer. Go, and God send you sell your wares well.'

III.

The third-class carriage was full again, mostly with new-comers who had taken places as others

left at Ahmedabad station. For the most part they were of Kathiawar—Rajputs and Kathis and Kolis—travelling to their homes in those plains and salt-marshes which run westward to the old seaway from the rich loams and fertile tillage of real Gujarat. The sing-song of their western intonation came soft and soothingly to his ear.

When the train started, they steamed slowly beside cactus-hedges and ruined mausoleums till they passed the level-crossing on the broad cantonment road, and rattled noisily across the long railway-bridge that spans the sandy bed of the Sabarmati River. From the carriage window could be seen, below on the left, files of camels and pack-oxen, and men and women walking laboriously on the heated, heavy track, or cooling their feet and drinking at the narrow stream of water that trickled slowly under the sun's hot rays down the great width of sand during the summer months. Underneath the bridge at the shallow water's edge naked boys stood with outstretched fingers to catch the copper coins flung by the pious as an offering to the kindly river. On the other bank, at the brow of the slope, surrounded by broken ground and stunted acacias, rose a high brick wall, with the roofs of buildings showing above the enclosure.

As it came into sight there was a murmur of excited talk in the carriage.

'See, brother,' said the Mussulman butcher, pulling his neighbour's sleeve; 'that is the Government Central Jail. That is where Government sends those who commit crimes.'

'Ay, it is an evil place,' exclaimed another, a Rajput *squireen* from the west. 'A servant of mine was sent there for some mistake about a cow. It is an evil place, and there is much flogging therein.'

'Is that where women are sent, too?' asked an old lady, leaning over to catch a better glimpse. 'What a place for a woman! Better to be a widow than to suffer within those walls.'

'Quite right, mother,' cried the fat butcher who had first spoken. 'It were even better to have a roving husband. It's worse sleeping in jail.'

The old woman bridled and prepared for the verbal combat that her soul loved. 'Is that even so?' said she. 'Well, of a surety thy wife should know. But perchance she keeps such a watchful eye on thee that thou canst not rove far.'

The others laughed and clapped. But, in his corner, the traveller neither heard nor spoke. His eyes fixed themselves on the blank brick walls, till they faded out of sight. He seemed almost to shrink physically as he looked, and his eyes were the eyes of a beaten dog.

IV.

Still the train rolled on, while the aspect of the country changed and the trees grew less and less, and rough broken land stretched mile after mile by the side of the railway-line. At the

fourth stop the man rose, picked up his stick and bundle from the floor, and got down upon the sunny platform of the country station. As he gave up his ticket and passed through the gate, a road stretched its white length straight before him. He stood upon the entrance-stop and looked upon the parched land, over which the heat vibrated in waves, while the great brown plain seemed to reach, barren and limitless, to the rising and the setting of the sun.

'The road to Avlash, please?' He turned to the ticket-collector, who was also station-master and telegraph-clerk. Living in small brick quarters beside the station office, this official spent his time in scheming for a transfer to a bigger town and a less torrid climate.

'To Avlash?' he replied, astonished. 'What do you want in Avlash? It is only a little village of forty houses, and the women have to go two miles across the fields to fetch water. Avlash! Why, God be merciful, they eat dust there in place of grain, and even the dogs go mad! Have you relations at Avlash? If so, win merit in the eye of God, and remove them to your own place.'

'I have business at Avlash,' said the old man. 'I must go there. And I do not remember the way.'

'You do not remember the way?' replied the station-master. 'Most men who have been there would fain forget it, as I would only too gladly forget all this accursed country and its drought and its mosquitoes and its dust-storms. Krishna forgot this place when he honoured Dwarka. And when were you at Avlash last? I do not know your face.'

'It's twenty years now since I saw it last,' replied the other. 'Twenty years—and since then I have seen other skies. I have seen forests, and seas, and strange flowers, and stranger birds. But why talk of what is past? Direct me, if you would be so kind, and let me again behold Avlash.'

'Well, well!' answered the station-master, 'if you must go, there is no help for it. It is six miles from here. Take the broad road first till you get to the culvert across the dry nullah where the water pours twelve feet deep in the rains, and then follow the cart-track that goes off to the east till you come to the village. But drink some water first. You are an old man, and seem weak. You will be thirsty enough on the road.'

The other thanked him, drank, and turned to go.

'Is Avlash your own home, perchance?' the station-master cried after him.

'It was my own home once,' he replied, and waved his hand. 'It is to be my home again.' Then steadily he set his feet to the high-road.

V.

'Now, I wonder who that was,' said the station-master to his wife, as she waited on him at the midday meal. 'He seemed old, and yet

not altogether old—rather worn out and fatigued. And his tongue had the right note and twang, and with it all an odd sort of falter, as in one who is used to speak other language. And he was a Chunwal Koli, I feel sure, but he seemed as if he had strayed into a country with which he had long lost touch. A curious man! I wonder who he was.'

'Likely he has been across the waters on a voyage,' suggested the wife.

'A voyage? It would have had to be a long one,' said the husband. 'Nor has he the look of a sailor.'

'Why not the black waters?' she retorted. 'The black waters over which Government sends robbers and murderers?'

The station-master stared at her with enlightenment shining in his eye. 'You are right,' he cried, 'mother of my son. That is what he must have been. One returned from transportation, I do believe. Well, well, poor man! he has suffered. But I must talk this over at once with the *jamadar* of police. Won't he be surprised when he hears I have detected a convict!'

VI.

In the meantime Dayal Rajha, Koli and ex-convict, strode steadily along the road. The summer heat struck his face like a buffet and a furnace; his breath seemed to catch at his throat in a gasp. Even through the thick country shoes that he wore he could feel the road at each step burning and blistering the soles of his feet. The crown of his head seemed baking under the coarse cotton turban, and his eyes felt as if reddened with fire. In the distance the mirages of the wilderness mocked him with hazy expanses of water and the shadowy forms of umbrageous trees. Before him lay only the dust of the long, blank road, and at its side the gaping cracks and shrivelled thickets of a barren land. A growing, burning thirst gripped him by the throat like a living thing. He moved his feet mechanically, almost unconscious of action, in the dull monotony of effort. At times his eyes half closed; some trick of subconscious self would bring him the memory of great tropical palms and green coco-nuts, and the rustle of moisture-laden breezes through the spice-trees and the long slow swell of an idle ocean. He opened his eyes to the realities of the home from which he had been deported, long years ago, in the young strength of manhood, the home to which, by years of good conduct and patient perseverance, he had striven to gain a last return.

He came at length to the culvert to which he had been directed, and turned off upon the rougher tracks of the country-road. The brown earth came as a relief after the white glare of macadam. For a few minutes he sat down, his bundle at his side, and tried to rest. He could see a chameleon panting on a twig at the wayside, the evasive colours at its throat heaving

rhythmically at each breath. But Avlash was near now, the end of his long journey, and he was restless under the need of attainment. He rose again speedily, balancing the bundle on his head, and went on, as if refreshed by expectation, upon the last stage of his way.

It was past noon when he reached the village, and saw, with a catch of his breath, the walled gateway, where he remembered long hours spent as a boy, seated beside the village watchmen on the stone platform of the porch, while they yarned of bygone raids and cattle-liftings. He paused where the road dipped downwards over the stone threshold, and looked upon the village street. Before him were the mud-walls of clustered verandas, the corner-stones, the colourless dust and refuse of the little village. Where projecting eaves cast a faint line of shadow, stray dogs lay sleeping, with mangy coats and scarred heads and sides. Steeping in the stupor of the hot hours of the day, the place seemed soundless, and the very pigeons in the village dovecot were asleep. It might have been the habitation of a dream. The stillness lay upon him like an oppression, and it was with a struggle against impending fear that he moved slowly towards the houses of his kinsmen.

VII.

As he turned past the tumble-down quarters of the village sweepers, poor wretches who were as scavengers and messengers for the community, one roused himself with a yawn from his siesta, and sat up unclothed at the low door of his hut.

'*Arè, kon hai?*' he cried. 'Who are you, stranger? Whom do you want, and whence have you come at this hour?'

Dayal Rajha stood and looked towards the sweeper. He saw only a youngster, one who must have come after his time.

'I am looking for friends,' he answered. 'I know the village. I will find the house myself.'

'No, no,' replied the sweeper. 'That will not do. I have never seen your face in all the years that I have served the village; and if you have friends, why are they not here to meet you? Why have they not spoken of your coming? And, if your errand be good, why should you steal quietly into the village at the midday hour, when all are asleep?'

Dayal made a movement of weak irritation, but brought an apologetic note to his answer. 'I came by the morning train,' he said, 'and I walked over at once. My friends do not know that I am coming, and it is years since I was last at Avlash. I left it long before you could remember. But I know the place and the house, and I mean no harm.'

The sweeper shook his head dubiously. 'I think you had better come with me to the village headman,' he replied. 'Let him hear your business, and then I have nothing more to do with it. What trouble that you should

have come at this hour! It is too hot to move, anyway, and the headman won't be pleased to be roused from his slumbers. He has a young wife, too. If I am beaten it will be your fault.'

Dayal Rajha squatted down on the road, unrolled his turban, and took out a four-anna piece from its folds. The sweeper followed the gesture and went on in a kindlier tone.

'At least tell me whom you are going to visit. Perhaps, if I hear the name, it will be all right, and I can let you go.'

'I go to the house of Dayal Rajha,' answered the other slowly after a moment's hesitation.

'Dayal Rajha?' said the sweeper. 'But there is no Dayal Rajha in the village. What do you mean? There is Dayal Jaya, and there is Dayal Mansing, but there is no Dayal Rajha, and never has been. This does not look well for you, old man.'

'I did not say there was a Dayal Rajha here,' the other replied patiently; 'but I said I was going to his house; and his house there must be. What should have come to his house? He left Avlash twenty years ago, that is true; but he had his house and his wife and his infant son.'

The sweeper scratched his head and thought. After a while he spoke again. 'You cannot be thinking of Jetra Dayal, can you? There is a young man of that name, a Koli, who is about twenty-one years of age, and was married last year. His father went to the bad and murdered a man, and was transported across the black waters. He must be dead many years ago.'

The old man had winced as the sweeper spoke, and it was with difficulty that he replied. 'Ay, surely it is of Jetra Dayal that I speak. It is to him that I wish to go, and it is his house that I seek.'

'Very well,' said the sweeper, 'if you want Jetra Dayal, that is all right. But his house lies not in the direction you are going, but here—this lane to the left. It is the fourth house on the right-hand side when you have turned round the temple of Radha. It used to be the house of Purtab Guman, but Jetra lives there now with his mother and his brother and sister. Go that way and you will find it.'

VIII.

The convict rose in bewilderment, and turned, as if mazed, in the direction he was told to go. He had already reached the temple before the things he had heard began to shape themselves more or less clearly to his reflection.

His son was now grown up and married—that was the first hard fact he had to grasp. He had thought of him mainly as of a puling infant at his mother's breast. At times, as he pondered in his island prison, he had understood that his son must be growing into a talking child, a lusty boy, a cheerful youth—unless, of course, he were dead; but he never thought of him as dead. Yet this understanding had never really

touched him or displaced the remembered picture. Here he had a something that was altogether new; and he felt with a sort of awe that he would not recognise his child, and that the boy could not know his father.

And then there was the fact about the house. Why should they have moved to another house, and—he remembered the street well enough—a larger and a better house? A widow and an infant left alone—they could not have saved money; it was enough, and more than enough, that they had not famished. He had feared for them, dependent upon the charity of villagers, kinsmen—kindly enough, he felt sure, for he knew the custom—but, after all, the sparing charity of poor men. But now he found them in a fine, large house. What could it mean?

Then with a rush the last fact gripped him and overwhelmed the others with its wonderment and its pain. Jetra had 'a brother and a sister.' But he had left his young wife, the pretty smiling girl whom he had loved so much and who had lain so softly upon his arm, whose every touch had been an endearment, her every smile a caress—he had left her with her first-born only three months old in her arms. Had she forgotten him? Had she been unable to resist? Given herself to another? Borne another man's children?

He thrust the thought from his mind at once. His pretty girl, his sweet young wife—she must be waiting for him still. He had come back to her now; he had need of her.

(Continued on page 120.)

PARROT STORIES.

By ELLA MACMAHON.

'PARROT; good talker!'

Speech is one of man's greatest gifts. Without it interchange of thought and ideas might not be impossible, but it would certainly be hampered. The power of speech makes all the difference between the companionship of man and man, and of man and the lower animals. Nevertheless, the dog has been called the friend of man, but no one has ever described the parrot as such; yet the dog is dumb, and the parrot talks. The table-talk of parrots would fill a volume—indeed, many volumes; but it does not need a volume to prove that, although the parrot has achieved speech, he cannot lay claim to the noble name of friend. 'Good talker!' The phrase is paradoxical; but is not the parrot himself a paradox? Still, he has companionable qualities.

As entertaining companions, parrots are easily first among the lower creation, monkeys not excepted. To explain precisely how this is, is not easy; but it may be that it arises from the combination of an almost uncanny perspicacity with a mordant and ironic humour, to which the element of complete unexpectedness puts the crowning touch. Moreover, parrots say what, as a rule, human beings only think.

For example, a lady was showing off a parrot to a guest. 'He is a very clever bird,' she said enthusiastically, 'and talks beautifully.'

'You're a liar,' said the parrot.

Again, some people had a parrot; they also had a butler. The butler developed a great affection for the parrot. The latter was taken ill one day, and continued to be sickly for some time. The butler, much distressed, begged to be allowed to take the beloved bird down to the housekeeper's room, where he could nurse him the better. He got leave to do so. In due course the patient recovered, and was restored to his usual place

upstairs. After his return his favourite remark to his owners was, 'Let the devils ring again.'

Another parrot, owned by a family whose house was situated close to a cab-stand, indulged his love of mimicry and malice in whistling piercingly for a cab, so that the occupants of the neighbouring houses were daily subjected to the spectacle of a burly and blasphemous cabby dancing with impotent fury on the doorstep, while on his perch in the window the parrot rocked to and fro in ecstatic shrieks of mocking laughter.

But if malice and mockery are characteristic of the parrot's talk, appositeness is assuredly also. So marked is the latter that it is often hard to believe that the bird can have no real apprehension of the meaning of the words it utters, or of those uttered by human beings.

A parrot known to the writer, and belonging to a famous astronomer, was being taught to say 'Jupiter and Venus,' but he would persist in saying 'Jupiter and Lady——,' naming the wife of his owner! This bird's powers of mimicry were abundant, and a favourite pastime of his was to call the dogs in the voices and accents of their respective owners. When the misguided animals came racing in response from the uttermost parts of the house, eagerly hoping to be taken for a walk, the parrot would laugh jeeringly at their discomfiture. So perfect was his mimicry that the dogs were invariably deceived by it.

Another parrot among those of the present writer's acquaintance exemplifies the same qualities in the following incident. The owner of this bird was busy in her garden one day, when she espied the wife of a local magnate advancing with stately step up the drive, intent upon paying a call. The lady of the house, who was bored by the interruption, and had no particular desire to see the approaching visitor, darted indoors and gave the order, 'Not at home.'

She then returned to the garden, and from behind a screen of bushes overheard the following.

'Is Mrs B. at home?'

'Not at home, madam.'

A third voice, rudely and loudly, '*Rats!*'

The parrot had been brought out on to the doorstep to enjoy the air and the sunshine, and his presence on the scene had been overlooked.

The aptness of the ensuing illustration almost beggars belief. A man made a bet with a friend that he would teach the latter's parrot to say the word 'hullo' in one lesson. Accordingly he sat down beside the bird's cage and repeated the word 'hullo,' 'hullo,' 'hullo,' without pausing, for nearly ten minutes, the parrot meantime remaining apparently quite unheeding, and so motionless as to suggest sleep—altogether a singularly unpromising pupil. Nothing daunted, the teacher, after a brief pause to take breath, began once more, 'Hullo, hullo.' Rousing himself with ostentatious effort, Polly fixed his instructor with a cold and glittering eye, and exclaimed, 'Number engaged.'

A doctor was asked during a professional visit how long he thought the patient might live. On his replying to the question, his pronouncement was crushingly capped by a parrot in the house, 'You know nothing whatever about it.'

Readers of Mary Wilkins's New England stories may remember one in which the heroine's parrot puts the finishing touch, and at the same time displays appositeness and malice in ready combination. The story is that of a school-teacher in a remote village, alone in the world and past her first youth, whose dreary life is suddenly transfigured by the belief that the new and attractive minister has fallen in love with her—owing to circumstances a pardonable assumption. But all too soon she is snatched out of her fool's paradise. The close, a pathetic little scene, shows her utterly broken down, sobbing her heart out in cruel disillusion, while

her parrot screams with gleeful candour, 'That was a damned cracker, Maria.'

But for malice aforethought of studied and almost Teutonic devilry the following episode could hardly be beaten. Some friends of the writer possessed a parrot of whom they were very fond. They had had her from the time she was quite a young bird, and had taught her to speak, and to speak very nicely. She was gentle and good-tempered, but rather shy, and invariably relapsed into silence in the presence of strangers and visitors. On a certain summer day her owners gave a garden-party. The day was gorgeously fine, and a large assemblage responded to the invitation. Tea was in the dining-room, where in one of the widely open windows overlooking the lawn Polly's cage stood. Almost every person who came in to tea greeted the bird and tried to elicit a word from her. No use; she remained immovably silent, and regarded one and all with an expression inscrutable and remote. Late in the afternoon, when the guests were all out on the lawn, the hostess was brought word that the rector of the parish had arrived, and was in the drawing-room. Hurrying into the house, the hostess welcomed her spiritual pastor, and led him to the tea-room, empty now save for the parrot. The rector was a dignitary of the Victorian era, pious, pompous, and severely proper in word and deportment, likewise somewhat difficult to talk to. Hospitably intent, the hostess ploughed her way laboriously through such consecrated items of small-talk as she hoped might be acceptable to his reverend sensibilities. Despite her efforts, however, the flow of chat was sluggish, and all too soon came the fatal pause and embarrassing silence. She was suddenly and awfully delivered out of this conversational impasse by a loud voice which exclaimed confidentially in uncouth but cheerful accents, 'It's ruddy warm to-day!'

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER VII.—THE CAFÉ ROUGE.

I.

MONSIEUR ANTON BEAUCHAMP was the proprietor of the Café Rouge in London. Monsieur Anton Beauchamp was once proprietor of the Café Bleu in Paris.

For many years he had cast envious eyes on London. Did not always his guests, those strange blonde people with the clothes like blankets, pay his prices without question? Did they not drink bad wine and never add the bill? *Pardi!* If he could have only English as patrons, madame and himself could purchase that wine-shop in the Boul' Mich', and never worry again.

For years the thought of London haunted Anton, and then one day, in a superb moment of decision, he announced his intention of journeying thither. A large entourage followed him to the Gare du Nord, and, with much the same feelings as those of an explorer leaving for the North Pole, he bade a dramatic farewell, and almost missed his train by running back to give a final embrace to Madame Beauchamp.

With no undue mishap he reached London the same night, and next day he lunched at a famous London restaurant. At night he dined at a fashionable establishment in Shaftesbury Avenue. In both places he received ordinary food served without distinction, reckoned up

the bill, and found that in each case *l'addition* was correct—and rushed madly back to Paris, where he sold the Café Bleu, packed up his belongings, and explained matters to his wife, doing all three things simultaneously.

'The dinner,' he exclaimed in a fever of excitement, 'is served—so! As a funeral. I order what I like, and the waiter he stands there *comme un gendarme*, as if it is my name I give. "Any vegetables?" demands he. *Mon Dieu!* As if vegetables they are no more to him than so much—so much umbrellas. I say, "*Garçon, la carte des vins!*" and, quite correct, he hands it me with so many wines he has not got, just as in Paris, but—*que penses-tu?*—he permits me to order what wine I choose, so—by myself. *C'est terrible!* I give him three pennies and say, "*Garçon, for such stupidity you should pay the whole bill.*"'

Monsieur Beauchamp was a man of shrewdness. He knew he could not compete with the established solidity of the Trocadero, the Ritz, the Piccadilly, or the garishness of Frascati's, so he purchased and remodelled an unobtrusive building in an unobtrusive street between Shaftesbury Avenue and Oxford Street, but clear of Soho and its adherents. He decorated the place in a rich red, and arranged some *cabinets particuliers* upstairs, where, by the screening of a curtain, Madame the Wife and Monsieur the Lover could dine without molestation of vulgar eyes.

Monsieur Beauchamp felt himself a benefactor, a missionary. He argued that the only reason Londoners were not as flirtatious as Parisians was lack of opportunity. He, the proprietor of the Café Rouge, would bring light to the inhabitants of the foggy city. To assist in this philanthropic work he brought with him an excellent cook, who had killed a dyspeptic Cabinet Minister by tempting him with dishes intended only for robust digestions, and three young and ambitious waiters; while madame engaged what unskilled labour was required.

Unobtrusively they opened for business, for he knew that publicity would spoil his chance of success. (Once convince a Londoner that he is one of a select few who know a restaurant, and he will stand an hour waiting for a table.) The first customer to enter received such attention that he brought his family the next night. Monsieur Beauchamp issued orders that he should be snubbed. *Parbleu!* was the Café Rouge for families?

Gradually the justification of Monsieur Beauchamp's policy became evident. Ladies of the Chorus brought their admirers there, and to the former Monsieur Beauchamp paid particular courtesy. Long study of feminine psychology had taught him that, whereas a woman may change her lover, she will not change her favourite café. Therefore, though the man may pay the bill, the woman is the one to please. Artists from Chelsea would come as well to the Café Rouge, celebrating the sale of a picture,

and drinking plentifully to the confounding of all art critics. Also, the *cabinets particuliers* were the scene of some exceedingly expensive and recherché dinners—and almost no one added the bill. When any one did, Monsieur Beauchamp was mortified, and invariably dismissed the same waiter on the spot—thereby gaining for himself and France a reputation for sterling integrity.

'*Ma foi!* London may be gray,' thought Monsieur Beauchamp, 'but she pays well.'

II.

One November evening Monsieur Anton Beauchamp's critical eye noted the entrance of a dark-haired young man in well-fitting evening clothes, and with him a young lady whose deep-green cloak and white fur round the shoulders set off to perfection her radiant colouring and well-poised figure. Monsieur Beauchamp did not hesitate. After all, he was an artist, and subject to inspiration like other men of genius; so, hurrying downstairs, he waved the waiter aside, and greeted them with a bow which almost amounted to virtuosity.

'*Bon soir, monsieur et madame.*' He cast an anxious glance about the café, which was two-thirds filled. 'This tabil will do!—*Ah, mais non!*' He grew indignant at the very thought. '*Pardon, monsieur*, that one is very nice—*par ici.*—*Non, non!* *Ah*—perhaps you would like a *cabinet particulier?*'

The siren tone of voice and the gesture of his hands indicated the seraphic pleasure to be obtained only in one of those secluded spots.

The American turned inquiringly to the girl.

'When I was here before,' she said, 'I was at a table just upstairs to the right. Have you one there, Monsieur Beauchamp?'

Nom d'une pipe! She knew him. And she was beautiful, this English lady. As he personally escorted them upstairs, with the importance of a Lord Chamberlain at a Court function, Monsieur Beauchamp speculated on the flirtatious potentialities of the young woman. If she were only clever enough to be fickle, what a source of profit she might be to the Café Rouge! And was she not in appearance much like Mademoiselle Valérie, for whom a member of the Chamber of Deputies had blown out the brains of Monsieur P—— de l'Académie Française?

With the assistance of a waiter, he ushered them to a table almost hidden by a pillar, where a crimson-shaded light sent a soft glow that was guaranteed to make the most of a woman's eyes. Monsieur Beauchamp with his own hands brought them the menu card, while the waiter stood expectantly, crouched for an immediate start as soon as he received the signal. A small waitress appeared with the butter and rolls, and made her way underneath the arms of the proprietor and the waiter like a tug running round two ocean liners. Monsieur Beauchamp could recommend

the *Barquettes Norvégienne*—No? Madame did not so desire? Of course not. He frowned terrifically at the waiter, who glared ferociously at the diminutive waitress. *Morbleu!* What imbecile suggested *Barquettes Norvégienne*? Monsieur Beauchamp mentioned other dishes as an overture to the meal, waxing increasingly wrathful towards the waiter on each veto. Ah! Monsieur desired *Consommé Anton*. The proprietor's face beamed and his arms were outstretched towards heaven. That this gentleman should order *Consommé Anton*, the soup of which he alone knew the secret, and which had been named after himself! Truly, the life of a restaurateur was not without compensations. He turned on the waiter—but that worthy had darted away to execute the order.

III.

The soup appeared. Monsieur Beauchamp stood by with the attitude of an artist watching the hanging of his first painting in the Academy.

'You might let me see the wine list,' said Selwyn.

Monsieur Beauchamp struck an attitude of horror. Had it come to this in the Café Rouge, that a patron must *ask* for the wine list? Brandishing his arms, he rushed from the table, almost colliding with the little waitress, flew downstairs to the very farthest table near the door, seized a wine card, and puffing generously, arrived with the trophy at the table, much as Rothschild's messenger must have reached London with the news that the British were winning at Waterloo. Having then succeeded in making the American order a red wine when he wanted white, Monsieur Beauchamp withdrew in a state of histrionic self-satisfaction.

With a smile of relief Selwyn looked across

the table at the girl. Even in the soft glow of the lamp, which made for flattery, it seemed to him that the vivacity of the morning had disappeared, and in its place was the petulance of the previous evening. Her eyes, which seemed when they were riding to have caught something of the alchemy of the skies, were steady and lighter in shade. Again he noticed the suggestion of discontent about the mouth, and the upper lip looked thin and lacking in colour.

'It is your turn to-night to be pensive,' she said.

'I was thinking,' he answered, 'that it is hardly twenty-four hours since we met, and yet I have as many impressions of you as an ordinary woman would give in six months. For instance, last night when you entered the room'—

'But, Mr Selwyn, any girl knows enough to arrive late when there is no woman within twenty years of her age in the room. The effect is certain.'

There was no humour in her voice, but just a tone of weary, world-wise knowledge. A look of displeasure clouded his face.

'Surely,' he said, 'with your qualities and appearance, you don't need such an elaborate technique.'

'In a world where there is so little that is genuine, why should I debar myself from the pleasure of being a humbug?'

'Come, come,' he said, smiling, 'you are not going to join the ranks of England's detractors?'

She shrugged her shoulders. 'I'm certainly not going to become a professional critic like Stackton Dunclekey, who hasn't even the excuse that he's an Irishman; or Lucia Carlotti, who hardly ever leaves London because her dinners cost her nothing. But I reserve the right of personal resentment.'

(Continued on page 115.)

'A TOWN BORN LUCKY.'

SUCH was Rudyard Kipling's apt comment concerning Medicine Hat, Alberta—the city with the curious name which the Prince of Wales, during his recent tour of Canada, found of such unique and compelling interest. In these days of coal rationing, a city which, although situated almost directly above a vast bed of coal, yet burns none, even in the coldest winter, certainly appeals to one's interest and curiosity. The reason for this seeming anomaly is that Medicine Hat, in addition to coal, possesses an apparently unlimited supply of natural gas, which alone is used for heating and cooking. For lighting, there is the choice of either gas or electric light, electricity being generated at a central power-station by means of the gas, and distributed throughout the city. The entire cost of cooking, heating, and lighting, in the case of a private house of medium size, is between

£5 and £10 per annum. The coal meanwhile is held in reserve against the day when the supply of natural gas becomes exhausted.

The city's vast natural gasometer is found at a depth of somewhat over 1000 feet below the surface, and gas is obtained by the simple process of drilling to tap the supply. Numerous gas 'wells' bored at strategic points satisfy all industrial, domestic, and municipal requirements. The daily consumption is in the neighbourhood of 3,000,000 cubic feet, but the great natural pressure of between 500 and 600 pounds per square inch shows no sign of falling off in spite of this consumption. The natural gas consists almost solely of methane, and its heating-power is some 50 per cent. greater than that of ordinary coal-gas. It is sold for domestic purposes at a trifle over sixpence per thousand cubic feet (think of it, ye British householders!),

and to manufacturers at from one-halfpenny to twopence halfpenny per thousand cubic feet. For use in gas-engines the charge is a halfpenny per thousand cubic feet, the power produced costing the manufacturer about eight shillings and sixpence per horse-power per year. This is, without exception, the cheapest power in the world. By way of comparison, it may be remarked that the mammoth plants operated by the Niagara Falls cannot supply power to the largest consumer for less than about thirty-eight shillings per horse-power per year, or nearly five times the cost at Medicine Hat.

Competent experts have stated that in their opinion the flow of natural gas will outlast the present century. Whether this estimate proves to be correct or not, the future of the city's manufacturing industries is rendered secure owing to the presence of a coal-mine within half a mile of the town which has an estimated content of 77,000,000 tons of coal. The owners of this coal are under contract to deliver coal to manufacturers at a cost of approximately six shillings per ton. This is what the citizens term 'natural gas insurance.' For the double purpose of supplying electric energy and of filtering and pumping water from the South Saskatchewan River, which flows through the city, Medicine Hat has constructed, at a cost of some £100,000, a power plant which is not only unique, but strictly up-to-the-minute. It is a sort of 'stokers' paradise.' Boilers there are in plenty, but no coal or ashes. Natural gas is burned in giant Bunsen-burners under the boilers for the generation of steam to operate Parsons steam-turbines, which in their turn drive dynamos for the production of electric energy. This is supplied to manufacturers at from one-halfpenny to twopence halfpenny per kilowatt hour.

With such solid backing in the way of natural resources, it is not to be wondered at that the growth of Medicine Hat has been extremely rapid. When the writer first visited it twenty years ago, the inhabitants were mainly Indians. Since then the tepee of the Indian has given

place to the imposing stone and brick blocks of a thriving western city. The British manufacturer would be well advised to investigate the inducements which this unique city holds out. Situated on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, at the point of junction with the Crow's Nest Branch, it is approximately midway between Winnipeg and Vancouver, and obviously affords transportation facilities of the best. Its power is the cheapest in the world; the supply of good water from the South Saskatchewan River is unlimited; its position in the centre of a vast area of prairie land affords room for endless expansion. Surely these form a tempting combination. At any rate, the American manufacturer has thought so. He is not slow to grasp opportunities, and has been established in Medicine Hat for some years. Apart altogether from the general needs of Canada for manufactured articles of every description, there is reason to believe that a great market will shortly open up close to the very doors of Medicine Hat. A short distance west of the city lie the huge tracts of irrigated land owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Southern Alberta Land Company, and admirably adapted for mixed farming. The area owned by the former company consists of over a million acres; that owned by the latter company amounts to some 400,000 acres. The irrigation of these tracts has involved an outlay of millions of dollars, and settlement upon them should be rapid now that the war is a thing of the past, and should furnish a great market for farming implements.

It has been said that everything is unique about Medicine Hat, even its name! The origin of the term is somewhat obscure, but, according to one legend, this locality was the scene of a fierce battle between two Indian tribes, during which the 'medicine man' of one tribe fell into the river. Many braves lost their lives in an attempt to rescue his hat—an object of great veneration, apparently. Hence arose, it is said, the name of the city.

MR PHIPPS OF 'THE OLD FIRM.'

PART III.

I.

FOR a quarter of an hour Ruth rested by me in the same posture, speaking not much, yet her very breathing telling of happiness and tender compassion. And such was my own happiness that no shadow fell on it from what I could not but heed—namely, that a great pain was growing between my chest and back, and the room was misty, with now and again faces of those I knew floating about it—the king's, Middleton's, Melfort's. 'The whole Court of St Germain soon,' I said aloud.

Ruth started up; her hand, feeling cold as ice, touched my forehead. She slipped from me, standing very frightened.

'Dick, you are so fevered! Why do not the surgeons come? What can I do? Shall I send for Mr Orlebars?'

Whereupon my brain cleared like magic, and an intense dismay seized me as I thought on my helpless state, and on what, helpless or not, I had to do—which affair I had in my recent ecstasy quite forgot. I essayed again, and desperately, to rise, but the agony beat me at once.

'Ruth,' I said, 'I must get to horse for an

hour. I will come back—I promised Orlebars—but I must get to horse. You will lend me one? Dear, lift me.'

She took my hand, smiling, yet her tears like to show afresh. 'You are all fevered, sweetheart. You know you cannot sit a horse, nor do you want to. You will lie still and let me have care of you'—

'A horse,' I said, 'and a servant—a trusty man to hold me in the saddle. Was my coat brought in? Dearest, have you a servant that will be true to me for your sake?'

'Nay, rest you, my love,' she answered, fondling my hand in entreaty; and from her woeful, terrified look I saw she thought my mind wandering.

'Ruth,' I said, and clasped one of her slender wrists reassuringly, 'listen. My old pate is clear as clear, but there is something I must do at once if I would keep it safe, and the heads of others safe. They discovered no letters on me, but that was because I hid a pack in the hedge—a mighty dangerous pack'—

'Ah-h! you beat them,' she exclaimed, with relief at my sensible condition, and with also a lurking note of admiration in her voice. 'You heard them in time!'

'Ay, I heard them,' said I, very determined to let it go at that; 'but they will find the packet when they search in daylight; they will see the fresh-dug soil. I must fetch it now, and I must get to the sloop from France to send it across, and to warn three of my friends that will land from her and go to London that certain houses are like to be watched now I am caught. So you see, my heart, I dare not tarry; and I must have your aid, if you will be so merciful to my friends and me. Lift me, dear one; lift me.'

'No, no, no,' she answered, moving her head sorrowfully, and softly stroking my brow. 'How were it possible? Oh, Dick, they have broke your leg, and you are hurt a dozen ways. You know you cannot stir, and would die on a horse did one set you there.'

'Lift,' I pleaded.

She gave a quick sign, and began to pass her hands under me; and presently, having raised me a trifle, so that my face was against her dear breast, she paused and kissed my head. And then she raised me a trifle more, whereat I gasped and gurgled, and protested not as she laid me back.

'Mr Phipps! Mr Phipps!' I muttered. I gazed in misery at her. 'Ruth, Mr Phipps is spun—discredited—clean doomed!'

I stiffened my jaw, and pictured what a rare to-do there was going to be, ending with the scaffold for some of the smaller men I had netted, and, I half-expected, for myself, as a noteworthy example. Well, I wished it so, if the little fellows were to suffer through me. At any rate, I should have my Ruth for a few days here at Shepherdsholme.

II.

A mist was now between her and me, and faces were appearing and drifting and vanishing, but this time queer and horrid ones more like to masks than human features, save that there was old Sir Jacob with his rich-coloured kerchief. . . . I felt a cup at my mouth, and drank deep, and soon I saw Ruth distinctly and the chamber bright lit once more.

'I have Colbran,' she was saying; 'he that was my grandfather's horse-jockey and is the faithfulest old man that can be. He shall go for your letters, and—and'— She paused, and, the drained cup in her hand, made that same gesture which she had made when just come to the room—that gesture of abandoning—but smiling down on me now, though a shade wistfully. 'And he shall deliver them to the ship, if that must be, and do all your bidding.'

'My sweet, generous heart!' I said, and for a while could speak no word more, what with thinking how much it must cost her to place herself thus against her party, and with rallying my wits to examine the hope which her offer awaked in me.

It was no empty hope. A faithful man might well do all that I had purposed. If he were brave and crafty to boot, the odds were really in favour of his succeeding.

I caught Ruth's hand that bore the cup. 'Yes, yes,' I said, 'lend me your Colbran. Dear, you are giving men their lives to-night. Bring Colbran quickly to speak with me.' Then, as she would have sped away, I held her. 'It will be a perilous errand,' I said. 'There may be fellows even now searching in the lane where the letters are, and others seeking the sloop. Is Colbran more than faithful? Is he subtle, stout-hearted? The sort to fool a questioner, to risk a pistol-ball? I shall be easier for knowing that.'

'I can trust no other man in this,' she answered. 'Indeed he is very worthy of trust—but'— The fingers of her free hand stole to the back of mine and there played softly. Her face grew thoughtful, troubled. 'But he is old and maybe something failed in spirit—and he is not cunning. Ah me, I wish'—

'Nay, dear, I am most content,' said I.

'But not I.' She gently took my hand from her and laid away the cup, doing this simple thing with pensiveness. And then she looked up, her lips apart with excitement, and her eyes shining. 'I myself will go. I will have a pillion-saddle behind Colbran.'

'Never!' I cried vehemently. 'You shall not be mixed up with this.'

With a smile, and with a sign of the hand that she would not listen to me, she threw back the lid of one of her chests, and brought therefrom a long brown cloak having a hood.

'For thee I will be mixed with it,' she said.

'Not for me; not for the king; no! not for

any one,' I answered. Forgetful, I tried to start up, then lay groaning from the attempt, she coming and soothing me wonderfully. 'Hark you, my life,' I said, gazing up at her. 'I tell you there may be searchings and spyings outside; and nowadays the country is pretty mad against us, and the men that winged me to-night are madder than the rest, deeming I cheated them of the letters. They might question you roughly, touch you roughly—damn them! might even fire on you if you stopped not when bidden, despite that Orlebars has threatened their necks for shooting me. . . . If you were killed for me!' That thought was past bearing. 'Ruth!' I shrieked. 'Ruth! hold me. Make me feel you are alive! I believe they have slain you!'

'Sweetheart, you are so ill and distraught,' said she with utter pity when she had calmed me. 'There is nought to fear. I shall stop if called on. Wherefore not, pray? I shall be but going to a surgeon—to several surgeons, if need be, going myself to beseech them haste to you with all speed.'

'Mistress Phipps!' I said, and was aware of my lips wavering into a smile. 'But you shall not go, Mistress Phipps.'

'Yes, and quickly,' replied she, 'lest the surgeons come ere I leave, and so my excuse be the weaker.—Tell me, Dick, I may go.'

I rocked my head in refusal; but, as she had said, I was ill, and my mental strength was running almost as low as my bodily. I fought against her will, but in a minute or two she had me conquered. Whereat she kissed me with a little pretence of glee, and stood back to put her cloak about her shoulders.

'Where are the letters?'

'In a leathern wallet that is in the fork of two big roots of the "Gospel Oak." The two greatest roots, I should say. It is under an inch of earth.'

'I must take it—whither?'

'Know you a patch of beach named "Thane's Strand"?'

'Why, verily! And a swift road to it.'

'A sloop will be off there at nine and wait for me until midnight, her rowboat within hail of the shore'—Something came to me, giving me such consternation that for the first time I realised how intense my hope had been that the matter would be finished satisfactorily. 'Dear!' I cried, 'what hour is it?'

And as she went to a table that was glittering with her scent-phials and nick-nacks, amid which, I guessed, her time-keeper lay, I had a conviction that many hours were passed since I was waylaid.

'A quarter after ten,' said she, and took some toy from amongst the others, which she held to her throat on returning to my side. It was the string of rubies that had been in my pocket. Seeing my eyes on them, she kissed them very simply. 'I will wear them so soon as I am returned,' she said. She leaned across me, and opening a panel at the head of the bed, secreted them behind it.

'Do not go,' I urged, stretching my hand to her. 'I shall lose my reason of fear for you when you are gone. Nay, I cannot endure you to go!'

'I shall be here again under two hours, dear one—and all made safe.'

I felt tears rolling along my cheeks. 'I could not face those two hours,' I muttered.

'Except they meant lives, honour—so much!' said she softly. 'Did not they mean all that to you, I could not face them, turning my coat so. But I deem I must.—The boat will be within cry?'

'Always, unless the sea is become very rough. Then it would pull landward each hour, close on eleven, close on twelve—twelve'—a drowsy faintness commenced to steal over me—'twelve,' I said again, and added ramblingly (Ruth has told me since), 'The sloop is used to waiting for me, who was a wretch to keep her long in dangerous waters. But I *had* to see Ruth!'

My eyes were shut by now. Though I heard Ruth murmur endearments, I was fast slipping beyond sound of her voice, when an appealing question from her rallied me.

'When I am come to the beach—what then? What then, Dick?'

For some instants I regarded her silently, ordering my thoughts, which, after a painful effort to begin with, I did satisfactorily. 'Look seaward,' I said, 'and cry as loud as you can, "No more fishing to-night!" Whereat some one will ask, "How many?" and you shall say—and you were better write these to remember—"six—three—nine—two."'

"No more fishing to-night;" "six—three—nine—two," she repeated, and then nodded.

'At that they should put in. But if they hang at sea, not able to account for your voice, or for Colbran's, did he call, say at once that you are from Mr Phipps, and that will bring them.'

'And to what man shall I give the letters?'

'Ask for Mr Walters or Mr Athorpe; and say also that the "Two Keys" by Temple Bar, and Mr Tarron's house by Moorfields—ay, and the Cat and Broom Inn at Southwark—are now certainly watched.'

She went swiftly to her table, and sweeping aside some of her trinkets, began to write, saying the words aloud that I might correct her.

'If young Peter Middleton—Middleton's mad-headed cousin—be in the boat,' I said when she was finished, 'he will wish to organise a dash to rescue me. Straitly forbid him. It would be a fatal sally—and my word is pledged to Orlebars.'

I saw her eyes become like stars. 'A litter!' she said. 'They could bear you to the beach on a litter.'

'Nay, my heart, I yield not in this,' I answered. 'Promise to forbid young Peter.' And, though with reluctance, she affirmed that she would.

And then, crossing to me and kissing my lips, and afterwards kissing my eyelids and saying

that thus she would make me doze until the surgeons came—feigning the while to be light-hearted, yet at the last her voice caught with little sobs—she bade me good-bye and passed in haste from the chamber.

III.

For a time I strained my ears to detect the hoof-beats of her horse. I heard nothing, however; and presently I lay thinking of little save the pain between my breast and back, which was much severer, and my breathing, which was hard to accomplish and would not satisfy my lungs. Then followed a period of more ease, wherein I was taken with wonder, as well I might be, at the way events had gone. In fear of Ruth I had buried my letters, and so saved them from those whom, in my self-conceit, I felt no fear of. Two hours ago I should have held myself demented to allow her to lay but a finger on the wallet; now she was warden of my letters and my friends, and I had made her this with no remembrance of my many years' mistrust, with no hesitation except as touching her safety.

I imagined her out on the night-road, old Colbran the only man to guard her, and my enemies lurking thick around. I set my hand over my eyes and prayed long that she might come through unharmed. Then, a deal happier, I sank into a sort of languor, believing that soon I should doze as Ruth had said.

But instead, my pain started afresh and my head throbbed, and after a space the walls of the room seemed to puff in and out like tapestries blown by the wind, and the old mistiness was about me. I half-realised that one of Ruth's women was come into the room, asking if I

required aught, and that shortly there entered another, saying that a surgeon was passed in at the gates; but I scarce heeded them, for they were less actual to me than the faces which were drifting before me again—both St Germain and barbaric faces now.

These began to shout upon me that I was a fool beyond matching; that Ruth had wheedled me, and was gone to betray me.

I moaned at the hideousness of what she had done to me. But then I recalled her eyes, dark blue and bidding me read her soul; and in a mighty rage against the lying faces I struck and struck at them. I found my arm held by a man, and I was not so delirious but I guessed he was the surgeon; and straightway a dread seized me that I might rave of Ruth's errand in his hearing.

I was endeavouring to master myself, when a pang in my knee drove all consciousness from me. Thereafter I remember nothing—save a vague discovery that some angel beloved by me, with the fresh waft of the outer night clinging to her, was close to my pillow—nothing, until I awoke as from a great sleep, and, seeing daylight, and my Ruth sitting by me, whispered (my voice having no power) that verily I thanked God she was got back safely last night.

Whereupon, starting up with a soft, exceeding joyful cry, she looked at me as if hardly able to believe I had spoken; and then, whispering also, she said that the letters were safe, that she had brought them without mishap to Mr Athorpe at 'Thane's Strand,' but I must neither talk nor listen to her more until she fetched a surgeon, who was even now below-stairs—for two whole weeks were gone by since the night she did this.

(Continued on page 113.)

VELOCITIES.

By H. J. MARTYN.

LIGHT and electricity, which move at the rate of from 186,000 to 190,000 miles per second, have no rival in any velocity known to us; and since experiments have shown that light is probably itself an electrical phenomenon, they can scarcely be regarded as rivalling each other.

Our earth in its revolution around the sun does something like eighteen miles every second of time; whilst the whole solar system, in its race to some such goal in space as the star Vega, according to Herschel does eleven miles in a second, and according to later authorities from twelve to fifteen.

The sun has his own movements, and the so-called spots which he indicates have been resolved into up-rushes and down-rushes, with movements amounting to 320 miles a second.

There are stars which are said to race around their orbits at the rate of 400 miles in a second. Arcturus, which we can see so clearly, is declared

to get over 300 miles in a second, and Groombridge (1830) 200 miles in the same brief period of time.

Halley's comet approached our earth, in the August of 1909, at the rate of 500 miles a minute, being accelerated to 2000 miles a minute and more as it increasingly felt the attractive force of the sun. A meteor seen by Mr W. E. Besley from Clapham Common came to our earth at a speed of twenty-two and a half miles per second.

Earthquakes can certainly travel at the rate of 150 miles a minute, this being the registered time guaranteed by Professor Milne for the earthquake announced on 26th July 1908 in the daily press.

The progress of glaciers, even under favouring circumstances, is not more than thirty-five feet in a day or about three miles in a year.

Sound passing through air at the freezing-

point of water reaches 1089·42 feet per second, and increases 2 feet per second with every rise of 1° C. in temperature. Its speed through water is more than four times as great.

Waves of ocean in a full gale scarcely get beyond thirty-five or forty miles an hour, whilst the waves used by Marconi are the waves of light, heat, and electricity, which go beyond 186,000 miles a second.

The wind is strong when it dashes forward at a speed of from twenty-four to thirty-seven miles an hour; from thirty-seven to fifty-five miles in the hour it creates a gale, and from thence to seventy-five miles a hurricane. When the Tay Bridge was destroyed in December 1879, 100 miles an hour was registered. During Mawson's Antarctic Expedition the wind was occasionally found to exceed 200 miles an hour.

Man's walking cannot get much beyond six miles an hour, which, however, was what Joseph Calib of Dumbarton achieved, without a break, in the distance between Dumbarton and Glasgow on 2nd January 1820. Man's running can take him a mile in less than five minutes, and scarcely more than fourteen miles an hour. A race-horse can reach thirty-two miles in that time, and appears to greatest advantage in such short distances as the Derby, which Lemberg won in 1910 in two minutes and thirty-five and one-fifth seconds.

The gray wolf does twenty miles an hour easily, and the fox when hunted has run two miles at a speed of twenty-six miles an hour.

Professor Spallanzani gives the maximum flight of the swallow at 290 feet per second. In Berlin, Professor Voss found the maximum speed of pigeons 100 feet per second. The flying trials organised by the *Petit Journal* gave the highest speed they attained as sixty-eight feet per second. The swallow has champions who claim that their bird has done 129 miles in an hour.

We have all seen with what rapidity fish can dart in pool and river, and the shark has an evil reputation in his haste to overtake anything whereon he scents the dying or the dead. Predatory fishes can, indeed, reach the speed of a torpedo-boat, and porpoises have been seen at play whilst keeping pace with a steamer running at fourteen knots.

In railway speed the Lake Shore Flyer did 100 miles an hour; the Twentieth Century Express from New York to Chicago covered 481 miles in 460 minutes. The Great Western has done from Paddington to Plymouth, which is 246 miles, in 275 minutes. Our railways have, however, never maintained their utmost speed, the Government having rightly given warning checks to the racing propensity.

Motors meanwhile have entered the race. In May of 1906 the police told the Chesterfield magistrates that the car they challenged was 'flying' at the rate of three miles a minute. In 1909 a car driven by Mr Nazzaro ran 120 miles an hour. Greater speed has since been obtained.

We are not likely to forget that the *Mauretania* and the *Lusitania* crossed the Atlantic in less than five days, and made such records the standard time for the future. A far more wonderful record has been made—an aeroplane has flown over the broad Atlantic, and has been followed by the R 34, which flew to America in 108 hours, and came back to us over a distance of 3000 miles in two days and fifteen hours, being an average of fifty miles an hour.

Man, who is the centre and source of these marvels, carries about with him some interesting velocities. The blood propelled by the human heart travels in him at the rate of seven miles an hour. The nerve-wave, without which he could have neither sensation nor perception, reaches in him about 200 feet per second, an estimate which Draper considers too low. Waves of light reach his eye at from 450 to 750 million millions per second, whilst the Cathode rays are ceaselessly assailing him and everything in space at a speed of from 50 to 100,000 miles in a second; some of them, indeed, reach half the speed of light. Man has but to fire his rifle for the bullet to fly at the rate of a few thousand feet in a second. Experiments demonstrate to him that the molecule of hydrogen has a velocity of over a mile in the second, and that in a mass of hydrogen each particle is moving at the rate of seventy miles in a minute.

Gas atoms move at the rate of seven miles in one second, and electrons at the rate of 10,000 miles in one second.

THE SLEUTHS OF THE SILENT CITY.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

FROM the burn-edge the moor swept upward to the west in a vast undulation of heather, broken here and there by deeply washed waterways and still peat pools, shining blood-red in the light of the setting sun. Far on the skyline above reared a chaos of ruined buildings, turret upon turret and buttress upon buttress, standing

out grim and desolate against the evening glow; and, for all the grandeur of the scene, there was something depressing in the sight of that dead city. A city it surely was, for the ruins dotted here and there, some large, some small, covered many miles of land, yet there was no sign of human habitation, no imprint of human feet on the roads that led to and from this place. The roads themselves had become deep watercourses,

jagged and fissured, winding between the city walls; and beneath the crumbling roofs ferns sprang, and vast entanglements of briar barred the entrances. Here and there an old oak door still swung on its hinges, whining and moaning in the breeze; while the wind howled and sobbed about the crumbling pinnacles.

Fifty years ago this place had throbbed with the sounds of the miners' pick and drill, rows of shining buckets had stood by the thresholds to sweeten, and bright-faced moorland children had gambolled about the rutty roadways; then, with the discovery of surface lead in Italy, this mine, like others all along the range, had been shut down in a single day, lost henceforth to all human interest amidst its lonely setting.

Wild nature is not slow in taking up what man abandons, and to-day, for all its silence, the deserted city of the moor was apulse with life. In the underground flues and culverts there flourished a generation of mountain-foxes, and thence, secure from man, they raided the lowland flocks with disastrous regularity. The half-wild mountain-sheep found shelter beneath the walls, while in the dripping blackness of the underground corridors the otters were able to travel at ease from the burn, and they too reared their young amidst the security of the city ruins.

II.

Night was near at hand, and now, from a chink between the great stone slabs of the washing-floor, in the very centre of the mine, there emerged a long, brown, sinuous beast that hopped in a series of hunched-up bounds into the middle of the level quadrangle. There he sat bolt-upright, apparently admiring the sunset, motionless as the ruins about him, and for all the world a part of his surroundings, save for his creamy-white front. For two minutes he remained thus, listening for some sound which would guide him in his hunting, while his shadow fell long and distorted across the flags. He could hear many sounds too high pitched for the human ear to catch—the squeaking of tiny rodents a hundred yards away, the chirping of the bats among the ruins; but suddenly there was a sound which overwhelmed all else and set the very air thundering in his ears. Yet he never stirred.

It was the noise of wings, of tens of thousands of beating wings, and for a minute or so the light was veritably blotted out as pack after pack of starlings descended, swooping and screaming, among the disordered piles. They came in vast clouds, flooding the whole city, filling the air with multitudinous sound, till the pinnacles were black with them. It was to be noticed that these birds, returning late to roost, all came from the east, so that the black silhouette of the ruins against the sunset had served to guide them hither.

The stoat or ermine sat stock-still and listened to it all; then, like the closing of a door, the

shrieks and cat-calls ceased, the beating of wings stopped suddenly; and, as the mighty feathered army disappeared with one accord into a thousand nooks and crannies, the silence of night came on.

The stoat moved and uttered a clucking sound, at which another animal exactly like himself appeared from the chink in the great stone slabs, and behind her came another and another—little fellows these, not more than five inches in length, but miniature bounding tigers, quick as their parents, and born with an inherent desire to kill.

There were six young stoats in all, the pack, with the parents, numbering eight; and now, led by their father—the first to appear—they bounded off in the direction of the furnace-house (the largest of the buildings), where the main body of the starling horde had settled to roost. Every few yards one of the adult stoats would sit up and listen, whereupon the youngsters would instantly do the same. Exactly like the dead thistle-stumps they looked, and their white fronts, far from rendering them conspicuous in the gathering gloom, broke the outline of their bodies, so that the keenest eye could never have told 'that dead thistle is a stoat.'

Several times they darted left or right, guided by some sound in the heather, and ere they had gone two hundred yards four of the youngsters were carrying something. One stumbled along with a titlark, the wings of which hampered him sorely; another dragged a huge worm as long as himself; a third struggled with a sprawling frog; and the fourth held a minute shrew. The one with the bird kept falling behind, at which his mother herded and jostled him with angry clucking sounds; and so, in due course, they reached the courtyard of the ruined furnace-house.

By this time the two remaining youngsters were carrying between them a discarded viper-skin, fighting and quarrelling as to its rightful possessor—each holding an end, so that the middle kept hitching up on pebbles and ling-tips, causing them endless annoyance; and the six would doubtless have started their night's hunting thus encumbered had not their mother interfered. She must have said to them, 'You can't hunt while you are carrying things. Come here, and I will show you what to do.'

Under a moss-covered boulder she scratched a hollow; then into the hollow she made each kit poke his or her possession, loosely raking silver sand over the spoil. There was a good deal of reluctance and ill-feeling about it, especially when it came to burying the snake-skin, but evidently their mother's assurance that 'we will come back later' served temporarily to settle matters.

III.

The stoats now set to work to hunt the ruined walls, darting hither and thither between the crumbled masonry. Every instant a head darted from a cranny, instantly to draw back, now high

up, now low down, now here, now there; and had it been daylight a watcher would never have believed that there were only eight stoats working the building. Eighty, more likely, for they were everywhere at once; and, oh, the sounds of murder that filled the night! Squark! squark! Cree! cree! Half-a-dozen starlings were dying at the same time; from every part of the building there came a scuffling and cries for help.

How many starlings the stoats killed in the course of the next hour I do not care to think—probably a barrow-load—enough to keep them in food for a month, for they were killing all the time. It may have been good training for the young stoats in the pathway of destruction, which is the stoat's lifelong pathway, but it was an infernal waste of good starling. The two old stoats struck lightning death in every nook and corner, snatching, worrying, leaving the dead birds where they lay; but the youngsters displayed a hankering, on having made a kill, to drag the victim about with them, and thus sorely hampered they would have made little progress had not their mother constantly interfered.

At the end of the hour feathers and trampled corpses were littered everywhere, and now each of the stoats snatched up the last bird he or she had killed, and out into the silvery moonlight they went. They had thoroughly satisfied their hunger, but not their desire to kill, as back they went to the cache under the mossy stone. In the mother the habit of storing away for a rainy day was highly developed, but the rainy day never came, with the result that they had bulging caches all up and down the city.

Now, arriving at the stone, they found a hedgehog in possession of it, grunting contentedly as he consumed their store, and when they burst in upon him like a pack of angry hounds he simply twitched into a ball, presenting a bayonet-point in all directions of attack. The youngsters were all in for pulling him to bits, but, having tried it, they drew back with beads of blood on their muzzles, and thereafter they would know what hedgehogs were. To besiege him was useless, for well the old stoats knew that he would remain curled up thus all night or for so long as the smell of stoat remained about, so there was nothing for it but to swallow their anger and humiliation and try to forget it all.

IV.

Through the rusty iron gates of the court the male stoat led the way, sitting bolt-upright again among the ling listening for some suggestive sound. This time it came from the rushy swamp—once a mighty dam—below, the pitter-pat of moving feet, as though a ghostly army were paddling in the mud. Away the stoats went in that direction, swiftly and silently like the hunting hounds of death, till at the edge of the swamp they again paused to listen.

On every side of them the sound was going

on—'pitter-pat-patter-pit-pat.' The small stoats raised their heads and looked this way and that, but nothing could they see. It was vague and mysterious, faint, yet of sufficient volume to shake the earth—the sound of numerous snipe beating the peat with their feet to bring insects to the surface. The delicious scent of snipe filled the air; but straight ahead, in the centre of the dry peat-bed, stood a huge white something that held the eyes of all the stoats. They peered at it from one point, then another. They moved to the leeward side to get the scent, and the wind told them that that big, gray, motionless thing was bird. In truth, it was a great black-backed gull, almost the size of an albatross, which, having fed, was dozing peacefully with his head up-wind.

Had it been daylight the stoats would have moved away, but at night they stopped at nothing. Silently now they closed upon the gull, and fell upon him from every quarter with never the rustling of a twig.

With an ear-splitting, terrified croak the black-back rose, thrashing the rushes with his mighty wings. Then from every clump and tuft, from every peat-bed and shimmering pool, there darted a whistling wisp of life, to cleave the air with beating wings and murmurings of alarm. In an instant the night was filled with sound, and other gulls rose heavily from the swamp below. The black-back attacked succeeded in flapping upwards two yards or more. But with him he took the two adult stoats; while one of the youngsters fell at a height of four feet from the ground, to alight, squirming and clucking angrily, upon the spiked rush-tops.

For fifty yards the great bird flew, carrying the two tenacious stoats with him, ere he fell to make a desperate stand. Other gulls came screaming overhead, anxious to lend a hand, but afraid of the dark; and so, slashing his mighty wings, the great gull died without so much as seeing the little vampires that bore him down.

The youngsters reappeared, and the whole family settled to the feast, after which they curled up together in a ball of sleeping innocence under one great wing of the fallen bird. They had left the home den for good now, to live wandering, nomadic lives, sleeping where inclination took them, hunting day or night as fancy dictated, and leaving ever a train of trampled death behind them.

V.

Just before daybreak a blue mountain-hare limped watchfully across the foot of the swamp, and the sweet morning breeze bore his body-scent to the stoats. In an instant they were up, sneaking one after the other in his direction, till the hare, warned in some mysterious way, promptly crossed the burn, then recrossed higher up, thus breaking his line of scent as he made off at full speed.

The stoats struck the line and followed it, bounding from tuft to tuft and running bunched together, giving tongue like a pack of fiendish little hounds. And when the hare heard that sound his ears twitched back in awful horror, his bounds began to lose their vigour, and with the paralysis of terror dawning upon him he crouched to listen—oh fatal move!

Unerringly the ermines followed the trail, bounding back and forth across the burn, following every twist and turn, and so up the sandy track from the lead-mine and under the gate towards the open moor. Here the male stoat paused to listen a moment, then plunged on; but a sound behind told him that another pack of miniature sleuth-hounds had struck the trail they had struck, and were following in the rear.

The hare ahead, weak and prostrated with terror, still crouched motionless, when suddenly across the gray expanse of dawn there came the shrill whistling of a shepherd. Up went the blue hare's ears, pitter-pat went his paws on the plastic peat, and straight across the moor he sped towards that sound.

Man was a deadly foe, to be sure, but none so deadly as the foe behind him now, and who could say but that one enemy might be played off against the other in this hour of desperate odds?

The shepherd saw the hare coming, but this man knew the creatures of the wild, and when he noticed how wearily the animal made its way, dragging one limb after the other as though possessed of a sleeping-sickness, he called his dog to heel, for he knew what was amiss. Thirty feet from him the hare crouched in a rut; then over the heather there came that ghastly death-sound, and, looking up, the shepherd saw the pack of stoats, bristling and furious, heading towards him. For a moment he questioned whether it would be safe to molest them—for the stoats of that moor had a bad name—but his heart was with the hare, and his dog clinched the matter.

That dog, a rough-haired mongrel in whose soft eyes were wisdom and tenderness, hated all stoats since in her puppyhood one had bitten her, and waged unrelenting war upon their kind. With a yelp of eagerness she rushed to meet the pack; while the man, clubbing his stick, followed up to lend a hand.

It was not a pretty sight while it lasted. The stoats never swerved, but came on straight towards the dog, and in an instant there was a whirling, struggling heap, from which the dog emerged triumphant. Three young stoats lay dead; the man killed a fourth with his stick; but this was a fight to the finish, and unwaveringly the survivors of the pack flew in and closed again.

The man looked up and uttered a startled oath, for now he saw a second pack of stoats

prancing towards him and his dog with cries of fury. Too late to back out of it now, so man and dog stood side by side as many a time before, and fought in silent earnest.

Not until nine stoats were killed did the rest desist, to bound off into the heather. Both man and dog were bitten, but now the dog wagged her tail and the man chuckled triumphantly, for over the ridge they saw, for a moment silhouetted against the sky, the erect ears of a hare as he loped off to safety.

VI.

The shepherd left the dead stoats where they lay, and told his dog to mount guard. A little while later he returned with a bundle of steel traps, and set them all about the heather, for he knew the stoats would come back for their dead, as stoats and weasels always do.

Of the family we have followed only the adult male and female now survived, and in an hour or so they came back to search for their little ones. As the female bounded up there was a 'clink,' and a little spume of silver sand rose into the air beneath her. She uttered a chattering snarl, but there was no escaping from the iron jaws that held her by the hindlegs, and as her mate turned to see what was amiss, there was a second clash of hidden jaws, and he, too, fell.

Furiously they fought and snarled, but all to no purpose; and presently from the sky above there floated a sound—a wild 'keer-keer!' The stoats looked up and saw, and understood. They watched with shining eyes as though they beheld the sword of Damocles. There, below the gossamer clouds, floated a mighty gull. Round and round it soared, pivoting over them; then another came, and still another, their wings flashing gold and vermilion as steadily they plunged to earth, there to slash the little murderers limb from limb, while from the crumbling city walls a thousand pairs of eyes looked on approvingly.

FORTITUDE.

FROM out the darkness steals a voice
That breathlessly commands:
O fainting spirit, make your choice;
Fate lies within your hands.

You may not falter in this hour,
Nor count the risk, 'tis plain;
For destiny is in your power,
Although the price be pain.

The sword may cleave, but not destroy
The tissues of the soul,
And from its depths will surge a joy
To make your spirit whole.

From out the darkness steals a voice:
What though the price be pain?
O valiant spirit, make your choice
Your destiny to gain.

HELEN DE ZGLINITZKI.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

DREAMS AND DREAMLAND.

By R. F. DIXON.

I.

A PROMINENT Canadian statesman of advanced age is reported as having said recently that the man who never dreamed never knew what he missed. As a lifelong dreamer myself, who for at least fifty years have never consciously passed one dreamless night, I can fully endorse this statement. Even bad dreams are better than none at all, for there is a solid balance of gain in the delightful sense of relief in waking up from them. The blank unconsciousness of dreamless sleep which some profess to enjoy has no attractions for me. To go to bed and forthwith relapse into utter oblivion seems to me rather a dreary proposition, as compared with the thrilling adventures of dreamland. Sleep has been called 'the image of death.' To the dreamer it is anything but this. It is the entrance into a new and enchanted land, in which anything may happen, and in which he lives with a verve, an intensity, and a largeness absent from his waking hours. Indeed, if the late F. W. Myers, the exponent of the 'subliminal self,' is to be believed, it is only when a man is asleep, and when that part of his consciousness which constitutes about three-fourths of the whole sum of his faculties comes into action, that he is really awake.

Of all dreams, good, bad, and indifferent, the most curious and interesting are those which are continually repeating themselves. I am an Anglican parson of about forty years' standing, with an experience of parish work on both sides of the Atlantic, in city, town, and village. During these busy years I have accumulated a stock of these recurring dreams, which, I suppose, will continue to haunt my slumbers to the end of my mundane pilgrimage.

A very common one is that I have suddenly become conscious of the fact that I have neglected to feed my horse for several days. The poor animal has been standing all this time in the stall without food or drink. I rush out to the stable, but invariably wake before I get there. This, I have been assured by a brother-parson, from his own personal experience, is not an uncommon dream.

A still more frequent dream is that I am at the reading-desk in church, in full canonicals, about to begin the service; the voluntary has ceased, the congregation is expectant, but for the

life of me I cannot find the exact place to begin. Search as eagerly and frantically as I can, I turn up every place but the right one. At last I notice that the congregation is slowly melting away. I redouble my efforts, and then, as the tension becomes almost unbearable, I awake to the delightful reaction of discovering 'it was all a dream.' I often find myself, again, in the still more disagreeable predicament of standing duly vested at the altar, about to begin a celebration of the Holy Communion, and being unable to find one of the elements. Not infrequently I get into the pulpit, and suddenly realise the fact that I have made no preparation whatever, and haven't even chosen a text. But in this case I am generally equal to the occasion. I select a text at random, and plunge into what seems quite an eloquent discourse, but, to my consternation, I notice the congregation silently slipping out by ones and twos. I put more and more 'pep' into my sermon, but to no purpose. The mortifying, not to say exasperating, exodus continues, till I am on the point of adopting some desperate expedient to stop the leakage. I pour forth floods of frenzied eloquence, and just as I reach the 'height of my argument' I awake.

In another recurring dream, which is less frequent than it used to be some years ago, I find that I have suddenly returned home to England unannounced, and that I am about to present myself to my parents, now long departed. I am always aware in this dream of a sort of double personality or consciousness. Having reason to believe that my sudden and unexpected return will not be wholly approved by my parents, and with my boyish awe of my father before my eyes, I find myself rehearsing certain excuses: 'I am a man well over sixty, with grandchildren of my own, and an ordained clergyman of the Church of England of many years' standing,' &c. I fortify myself with the reflection that it would be absurd to rate me like a stripling in his teens, and yet all to no purpose—my dread of the approaching interview will continue to roll back upon me. But that interview never takes place. A short time ago I had a dream of this kind which very vividly illustrated this double personality or consciousness, or whatever you may call it. I had made one of my sudden and unexpected visits to the Old Country, and had

found my parents absent for the day from the old home. To put in the time I sauntered down into the neighbouring village, and called on an old couple (long ago deceased) well known to me in my youth, who asked me to tea. After tea, I strolled with the old gentleman to a piece of rising ground which commanded a good view of my father's residence, where I was born and brought up. I discussed the 'flight of time' in the vein of a man of considerably over three-score, and the passing of so many mutual acquaintances and friends. While moralising on old times and the changes we both had witnessed, I quoted those beautiful lines of Wordsworth's:

'My eyes are filled with foolish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
As in those days I heard.
So fares it still in our decay;
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what time takes away
Than what it leaves behind.'

And all the while, boy-like, I was revolving excuses in my mind against the dreaded interview with my father, which, however, as always, was averted by my waking up. These recurring dreams never come to extremities. Another curious recurring dream is that I have left my parish without giving any notice to my parishioners, and I suddenly become conscious of the fact when I have put about a thousand miles between myself and them—to be exact, about the distance between King's County, Nova Scotia, and, say, the Western Peninsula of Ontario.

A strange thing about these recurring dreams is that, in spite of a subconscious memory of having dreamed them before, they seem to increase in vividness and reality. One finds one's self saying to one's self, 'Well, I've often fooled myself before, but this time it's the real thing. This cannot be a dream.' And the impression persists for an appreciable time after awaking, till the blessed reaction and relief comes.

These dreams are, no doubt, in the majority of cases subliminal memories of real occurrences, lost beyond recovery in my waking hours. During my long ownership of a horse I have doubtless once or twice, or perhaps oftener, forgotten to feed it, rub it down, or bed it up for the night. It is quite possible that on some occasion I may have forgotten one of the elements at a celebration of the Holy Communion. Every parson, it goes without saying, has found himself in the pulpit utterly unprepared, with the horrible consciousness that, while he has to say something, he has nothing to say. And I have no doubt that in my wide and varied experience as an officiant in hundreds of Anglican places of worship, from Lincoln Cathedral to a backwoods Ontario school-house, I have occasionally 'got stuck' in trying to find my place in some unfamiliar or mutilated book. Indeed, as I write these words certain dim memories begin to stir, of my being greatly

perplexed and somewhat flustered while officiating in a strange church, by trying to find my way about in a very elaborately illuminated prayer-book, into which certain *secretæ* and copious foot-notes had been interpolated.

All these recurring dreams, with some exceptions to be noticed later, are no doubt the reawakening memories of long-forgotten episodes or moods. But the wonderful thing is that the awakened subliminal self can take these shreds and patches of memory and transform them into elaborate scenes newly staged, so as to be quite unrecognisable. I often have the flying dream, which, I am told, is very common, but which surely cannot be a memory; as also one of riding on a bicycle, which I have never done or attempted to do in my life.

II.

Again, there is dreamland with its well-defined, well-remembered features. Two dream-roads I often travel, one of them partly Canadian and partly English, in which things are rather bewilderingly mixed up, and whereon I pass the scenes of my childhood and early youth, and those of yesterday, and along the sides of which stand modern wooden Canadian houses and old English thatched cottages within a few yards of each other. This road I often travel, and its familiar features never change. Then there is the road wholly Canadian, and of the western Ontario type—mathematically straight, flanked by typical Ontario homesteads and rectangular fields with their 'snake' fences, and backed up with the continuous line of big timber separating the farms—one of those known as 'Concession Roads.' I seem to have travelled these roads hundreds of times, and they always lead to the same place. The first ends at a town of apparently a few thousand inhabitants, close to the border of Scotland, from which it is separated only by a very narrow arm of the sea. The surrounding country recalls the neighbourhood of the Solway Firth, very familiar to me in my youth, but largely forgotten in my waking hours. The second road takes me to a typical Ontario country-town, which, resembling as it does all the small towns I have ever seen in Canada and New England, and yet identical with no particular one, is probably a composite memory of the hundreds of such places I have visited during my forty-six years' residence on the western side of the Atlantic. You approach it through the usual residential section of detached houses, standing in their own grounds, and fronted by elm or maple trees, pass a church, enter the business district with its rectangular 'blocks' of shops and offices, and descend to a river spanned by a wooden bridge, which I have never yet crossed, and, I fear, never shall cross.

There are certain houses, again, the residences of old friends now long since departed, which I visit from time to time. But these dream-houses,

though vaguely reminiscent of once-familiar buildings, are always very different from the originals as remembered in my waking hours. One in particular I recall which I have visited in the spirit at irregular intervals for many years, and which I dreamed of only a few weeks ago, the residence of an Ontario farmer, a fellow Cumbrian, where I lived for several months, and where I had my first taste of Canadian farm-life. The actual house is (or was) the typical old-fashioned Ontario frame-building, standing close to the 'Concession Road' (to be precise, the 7th of McGillivray), plain and unpretentious almost to ugliness, in the midst of an extensive 'clearing,' as bare of trees as an egg of hair. The dream-house stands nearly half a mile from the road, on the edge of a thickly grown forest, and is an old, one-storey, patched-up, rather dilapidated and rambling building, and one, as in the other case, associated with familiar (if vague) personal recollections. Our dreams are evidently a medley of fugitive memories pieced together apparently at

random, but—that is the strange thing about them—coherently pieced together, with nothing fantastic or inherently impossible or even improbable about them.

As I grow older and my memory gets more and more into water-tight compartments, I find it increasingly difficult to remember my dreams. I wake up with the consciousness of having had numerous vivid dreams, but utterly powerless to recall them. My normal waking memory halts tantalisingly on the brink. I sense, but cannot visualise, them. Hours afterwards during the day fragments of these dreams sometimes come to me. This, I have been told, is a common experience.

Voluminous and diversified as my dreams have been, I cannot at this moment, I must confess, recollect any one that was ever of any direct practical use to me. Nevertheless, I hold firmly to the conviction, already expressed, that they have made my life here, now drawing to a close, more enjoyable and better worth living.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER VII.—continued.

IV.

THEY were interrupted by a waiter, who removed the soup-plates with studied dexterity, and substituted *Tronçon de turbotin Duglère; pommes vapeur*, the dish which had delivered the fatal blow against the Cabinet Minister's digestive armour.

'Perhaps I am too personal,' resumed Selwyn after the completion of this task, 'but last night one of the impressions I took away with me was your critical attitude towards your surroundings. Then this morning you were so completely'—

'Charming?'

'—bewitching,' he said, smiling, 'that I thought myself an idiot for the previous night's opinion. But then this evening'—

'Mr Selwyn, you are not going to tell me I'm disappointing, and we just finished with the soup?'

More than her words, the forced rapidity with which she spoke nettled him. With bad taste perhaps, but still with well-meant sincerity, he was trying to elucidate the personality which had gripped him; while she, though seemingly having no objection to serving as a study for analysis, was constantly thrusting her deflecting sentences in his path. To him words were as clay to the sculptor. When he conversed he liked to choose his theme, then, by adroit use of language, bring his artistry to bear on the subject, accentuating a line here, introducing a note of subtlety elsewhere, amplifying, smoothing, finishing with the veneer of words the

construction of his mind. Another quality in her that troubled him was the apparent rigidity of her thoughts. Not once did she give the impression that she was nursing an idea in the lap of her mentality, but always that she had arrived at a conclusion by an instantaneous process, which would not permit of retraction or expansion. As though by suggestion he could reduce her phrasing to a *tempo* less quick, his own voice slowed to a drawl.

'Miss Durwent,' he said, 'you are unique among the English girls I have met. I should think that contentment, almost reduced to placidity, is one of their outstanding characteristics.'

'That is because you are a man, and with a stranger we have our company manners on. England is full of bitter, resentful women, but they don't cry about it. That's one result of our playing games like boys. We learn not to whine.'

'I suppose the activities of your suffragettes are a sign of this unrest.'

'Yes—though they don't know what is really the trouble. I do not think women should run the country, but I do feel that we should have something to say about our ordinary day-to-day lives. Man-made laws are stupid enough, but a man-made society is intolerable. Just a very little wine, please.'

For a moment there was silence; then she continued: 'Oh, I suppose if it were all sifted down I should find that it is largely egotism on my part.'

He waited, not wanting to alter her course by any injudicious comment.

'Mr Selwyn,' she said abruptly, 'do you feel that there is a Higher Purpose working through life?'

'Y-yes,' he said, rather startled, 'I think there is.'

'Sometimes I do,' she went on; 'then, again, I think we're here on this earth for no purpose at all. It often strikes me that Some One up above started humanity with a great idea, but lost interest in us.'

'I think,' he said slowly, 'that every man has an instinctive feeling sometime in his life that he is a small part of a great plan that is working somehow towards the light.'

'Yes. It's a comfortable thought. It's what makes good Christians enjoy their dinner without worrying too much about the poor.'

He made no answer, though he was not one who often let an epigram go by without a counter-thrust; but he could see that the girl was struggling towards a sincerity of expression much as a frightened horse crosses a bridge which spans a roaring waterfall, ready to bolt at the first thing that affrights it.

'Mr Selwyn,' she said—and for the first time her words had something of a lilt and less incision—'do you think women are living the life intended for them?'

'Why not?' he fenced.

'Well, it seems to me that when any living creature is placed in the world it is given certain powers to use. You saw this morning how our horses wanted to race, and couldn't understand our holding them back. A mosquito bites because that's apparently its job in the world, and it doesn't know anything else. I was once told that if animals do not use some faculty they possess, in time Nature takes it away from them.'

'You are quite a student of natural history, Miss Durwent.'

'No—but every now and then mother unearths a man who teaches us something, like last night.'

He acknowledged the compliment with a slight inclination of his head. The waiter leant expectantly beside him.

'To descend from the metaphysical to the purely physical,' he said, glancing in some perplexity at the terrific nomenclature of Monsieur Beauchamp's dishes, 'do you think we might take a chance on this *Poulet reine aux primeurs; salade lorette*? I gather that it has something to do with chicken.'

'It's rather artful of Monsieur Beauchamp to word it so we poor English can get that much, isn't it?'

'Yes. He apparently acts on the principle that a little learning is a common thing.'

v.

As Selwyn gave the necessary order to the waiter, a noisy hubbub of laughter from an adjoining *cabinet particulier* almost drowned

his words. There was one woman's voice that was rasping and sustained with an abandon of vulgarity released by the potency of champagne.

Elise Durwent looked across the table at her companion. 'Are you bored with all my talk?' she said. 'You Americans aren't nearly so candid about such things as Englishmen.'

'On the contrary, Miss Durwent, I am deeply interested. Only, I am a little puzzled as to how you connect the usual functions of animals with woman's place in the world.'

With an air of abstraction she drew some pattern on the table-cloth with the prongs of a fork. 'I don't know,' she said dreamily, 'that I can apply the argument correctly, but—Mr Selwyn, when I was a child playing about with my little brother "Boy-blue"—that was a pet name I had for him—I was just as happy to be a girl as he was to be a boy. I think that is true of all children. But ask any woman which she would rather be, a man or a woman, and unless she is trying to make you fall in love with her she will say the former. That is not as it should be, but it's true. Yet, if we are part of your great plan working towards the light, we're entitled to the same share in life as you—more, if anything, because we perpetuate life and have more in common with all that it holds than men have. There, that is a long speech for me.'

'Please don't stop.'

There was a howl in a man's voice from the noisy *cabinet particulier*, followed by a laugh from the same woman as before, which set the teeth on edge.

'That woman in there,' she went on, 'will partly show what I mean. In the beginning we were both given certain qualities. She has lost her modesty through disuse; I'm losing my womanliness and power of sympathy for the same reason. She's more candid about it, that's all. When Dick and I were youngsters I dreamed of life as Casim Baba's cave full of undiscovered treasures that would be endless. Now I look back upon those days as the only really happy ones I shall ever have.'

'You are—how old?'

'Twenty-three.'

'You will grow less cynical as you grow older,' he said, from the altitude of twenty-six.

'I agree,' she said. 'As, unlike the Japanese, we haven't the moral courage of suicide, I shall get used to the idea of being an Englishman's wife; of living in a calm routine of sport, bridge, week-ends, and small-talk—entertaining people who bore you, and in turn helping to bore those who entertain you. In time I'll forget that I was born, as most women are, with a fine perception of life's subtleties, and settle down to living year in and year out with no change except that each season you're less attractive and more petty. After a while I shall even get to like the calm level of being an Englishman's wife, and if I see any girl thinking as I do now,

I'll know what a little fool she is. That's what happens to us—we get used to things. Those of us who don't either get a divorce, or go to the devil, or just live out our little farce. It is a real tragedy of English life that women are losing through disuse the qualities that were given them. That is why an American like you comes here and says we do not edit ourselves cleverly.'

The rapid succession of sentences came to an end, and the colour which had mounted to her cheeks slowly subsided.

VI.

'I feel,' he said, 'that I can only vaguely understand what you mean. But is it not possible that you are looking at it too much from the standpoint of an individualist?'

'Women are all individualists,' she broke in; 'or they are until society breaks their spirit. This lumping of people into generations and tuning your son's brain to the same pitch as his medieval ancestors' doesn't interest women—that's man's performance. The great thing about a woman is her own life, isn't it? And the great event in a woman's life is when she has a child—because it's *hers*. This class and family stuff comes from men, because their names are perpetuated, not ours. There is no snobbery equal to men's; it is more noticeable with women, because it isn't instinctive with them, and they have to talk to show it.'

'Then,' said Selwyn, 'in addition to an Irish Rebellion, we may look for one from English women?'

'Yes. I don't know when, but it will come.'

He produced a cigarette-case. 'Would you care for a cigarette now?' he asked.

'No, thanks. But you smoke.'

'Poor England!' he said in pretended seriousness, tapping the table with the end of the cigarette, 'with two revolutions on her hands, and neither party knowing what it wants.'

'We may not know what we want,' she said, 'but, as an Irishman said the other day, "We won't be satisfied till we get it." If the rebellion of our women doesn't come, I prophesy that in a couple of thousand years, when the supermen inhabit the earth, they will find a sort of land mermaid with an expressionless face, perpetually going through the motion of dealing cards or drinking tea. Then some old fogey will spend ten years in research, and pronounce her an excellent example of the extinct race "*Femina Anglica*."'

'As one of the tyrants who wishes you well,' said Selwyn, after a laugh in which she joined, 'may I be permitted to know what women want—or think they want?'

'Mr Selwyn, revolutions never come from people who think. That is why they are so terrible. The unhappiness of so many English-women comes from the life which does not demand or permit the use of half the powers they possess. Nor does it satisfy half their longings. Such a condition produces either stagnation or revolution. Our ultimatum is—give us a life which demands all our resources and permits women unlimited opportunity for self-development.'

'And if the men cannot do this?'

'The women will have to take charge.'

'And when does the ultimatum expire?'

She shrugged her shoulders.

'When will the next great earthquake be?'

(Continued on page 133.)

THE FIRST DAYS OF AN EARLY VOLUNTEER.

By A F. S.

'COME quickly, gentlemen, or you'll no can get fell in.'

Such were my instructions from a Scottish sergeant when, during the first year of the war, I, like many others of the older men, began to essay the noble art of self-defence by becoming a Volunteer. Need I say that I, too, am a Scot, and that the *locus* of all my trials and troubles was in Scotland? The troubles began early—with the first trial. Until then I had always flattered myself that I could walk. I now found that walking was out of date. I had to march; and, after being insulted by being asked if I had the ordinary complement of (a) feet, (b) toes, with a considerable expenditure of time and some patience on the part of the deputy instructor, I learned to march, 'Left, right; left, right. Mark time!' if not correctly, yet at least so as

to escape the special notice of my mentors. The same may be said about the rudiments of drill. At the commencement of the formation of fours—an awful rite—I found myself, after instruction, very like my poet-friend who in his verse 'Form Fours' says:

Of course, if you don't think deeply, you do it without a hitch;
You have only to know your right from your left,
and remember which is which;
But as soon as you try to be careful, you get in
a deuce of a plight,
With a pace to the right with the left foot, and
one to the rear with the right.

With the result that this happened:

In my dreams the sergeant, the Kaiser, and
Kipling mix my feet;
Saying, 'East is left, and Right is Might, and
never the twain shall meet!'

In my nightmare squad *all* files are odd, and their fours are horribly queer; With a pace to the left with the front foot, and one to the right with the rear.

But after a time things became a little easier.

The same might be said for formations. At first, 'On the right' (or 'On the left') 'form squad!' and 'Right turn!' and 'Left turn!'—all of which seemed more or less the same to us, and we acted 'as sich'—resulted in horrid cleavages; but eventually, with a certain maidenly modesty and hesitancy on the part of the unfortunate right or left hand man, who felt the eyes of Europe were upon him, and frank terror in the faces of those in the centre, all came right as a trivet, and there was peace.

But we had many things to learn at once! Our native politeness, which desired humbly to apologise for things done wrong, was subdued at once by the bellow, 'No civeelities from the ranks!' and a horrified silence ensued. Similarly, discipline was maintained under the gentle reproof, 'I said, "Slope arrums!" I never told you to open and climb up an umbrella!' Nor did we even faintly smile when addressed somewhat in this wise (as one of our squad alleged) by one of our mentors—or tormentors: 'The chief beauty, gentlemen, of this movement is its vulnerability. You will obsess your minds, therefore, of all mundane thoughts and fix them incontinently upon

this movement;' for he liked long words, and, like Mr Rugg, 'was considered to possess a remarkably good address.' If we smiled, he withered us up with a look. If we panted at the 'Stand easy!' he glared. If we did anything wrong—and we generally did—he howled. So, thanks to him, we learned the beginnings of drill and discipline, for which we are now very grateful.

Then the movement grew and grew, and introduced us to lethal weapons and awful things such as haversacks and straps. The writer, being what the Scots call a 'handleless loon,' was soon in the toils of the said straps, and at first managed to make himself and his two neighbours in rank perfect Laocoöns. There were humours about the straps and the belts, however—for instance, when one was first fitted into both and marched round the drill-hall, and, suddenly, the belt of the Daniel Lambert of the corps burst with a report like thunder, and the buckle, after flying through space, fell with the noise of shrapnel!

I forbear to talk of musketry and the joys of rifle-cleaning (for there is a joy in getting oily, as every child can tell), as my paper would get too long, and we should be in real organised Volunteer work—which was very serious and excellent work—before we knew where we were. I only want to put before you the early beginnings of the movement, and to laugh with you over our earnestness, inefficiency, and goodwill.

MR PHIPPS OF 'THE OLD FIRM.'

PART IV.

ANOTHER three weeks gone, and Ruth and I were in her dining-room one afternoon that was very cold and black outside, but cosy for us by the big fire. For the ease of my leg I was on a couch, yet fully dressed, in a new suit and peruke which she had bought for me at Dover in place of poor Mr Phipps's, spoilt in the lane. And she was playing at brewing tiny bowls of China tea, and chatting gaily to keep up both our spirits, for the hour was anxious for us. Orlebars, who had shown himself throughout a most sincere friend, finding me nearly well enough to be removed, had ridden to London some days before to make his report to the authorities, and with the intent of urging everything he could in my favour. From which much clemency, or none, might result. He had promised to be back this afternoon.

'And withal he suspects of the letters,' said Ruth, smiling into her tea-bowl. 'I know it by the teasing look he gives me. Those men have told him of me and Colbran afoot at "Gospel Oak"—groping for a stone in Tommy's hoof!—and of our riding in from the coast. I wonder what he doth think of me!' She moved her head in mock apprehension. 'I am glad he is not so outspoken as Peter Middleton.'

'Peter Middleton!' I exclaimed. 'Was he

at the beach? I never asked you. Why, what had Peter to say?'

'At the very first?' She spoke in a fashion that puzzled me, and her smile changed, becoming brimful of mirth, yet most inscrutable.

'Yes,' I said. 'All young Peter's sayings amuse me.'

'At the very first'—She gazed down, her cheek colouring fast, and her voice shy, though vibrating with laughter. 'At the very first—he said I was so pretty a slip I were best cross to France with him.'

'He did!' I shouted in violent anger.

'But on my telling him I deemed Lord Sayer would object, he being my husband'—She broke into ringing laughter. 'Dick, his was the most plaintive, desperate apology ever made. Oh, I could but pardon him! . . . Anon, though he was for rescuing you, he was not difficult to dissuade, being in no wise eager to meet you face to face.'

Then I laughed also; and gossiping thus lightly, we continued until the trot of Orlebars's horse sounded in the grounds.

Ruth grew white immediately. Perchance I did the same. She left her chair, coming to sit on the couch and taking my hand.

'If he has influenced them to do nothing further! If—Dick!'

That was her constant dream. But I shook my head.

'It will be either committal to the Tower or the worst—to stand trial for my head.'

'They durst not!' she said fiercely as a child. 'They durst not! Lord Sayer to the scaffold! Nay, they will be afraid. You are too big, Dick. You are too big!'

'Not so big but they will dare, if they have the evidence. Yet I think indeed that you have spun them there.' I held her hand against my cheek, against my lips. 'Oh, what matter, sweetheart! I have won more than I can lose on this venture. For these few weeks I have gained you, that my life was only grief without.'

'For these few weeks?' said she, sinking her head down to that hand so that her lips were very near me. 'For always. . . Did you sometimes marvel that my name was Ruth? Verily did I. But now, my heart, I say her words, "*Whither thou goest I will go.*" . . . If you are left free, take me where you list. If you are put in the Tower, I will lodge by the wall. If—if it is death for you, Dick, I think it shall be death for me'—

'Nay, sweetheart!' cried I, aghast. 'Child, what are you saying?'

I turned my face to her, and we were chin to chin. Her blue eyes, darker than I had ever known them, mournful and steady, would not waver for mine.

'Yes,' said she. 'I shall pray to be forgiven, and then'—

'No!' I said hoarsely, gripping her to me. 'No! I bid you. Would you make my last days torment? Would you part us for ages in the afterwards by such a sin?'

'Dick! Dick!' she entreated helplessly, with her arms around my neck.

'No!'

And thus we were until Orlebars tapped on our door. Then, clasping my hand still, she sprang up, and stood very erect to see him enter.

From a London Newsletter dated July 15, 1697.

'A talk is that the Lord Viscount Sayer, being released Thursday was se'nnight from the Tower, is already crossed over to France with his lady, whose going thither is a great amazement to all, she being thought mighty hostile to the St Germain party.'

THE END.

QUEENSLAND'S BLUE LAKE: EACHAM.

IN Queensland, a pretty lake nestles on one of the highest points of the mountains in the hinterland of the rising seaport town of Cairns, at an elevation of 2500 feet. It occupies the crater of an extinct volcano, and is named Eacham. About one and a half miles long by one mile wide, with a depth of about 300 feet, it contains an endless supply of beautiful fresh-water. To the aborigines the lake was always 'taboo,' and it is so still. Although they will hunt wallabies, paddymelons, and other marsupials by daylight in its vicinity, they will never camp near it of a night, fearing the 'Devil Devil' that lives in it, as they say. Possibly this is a tradition handed down from the time when it was an active volcano.

The lake is generally understood to have only small fish in it; and the only water-fowl I saw there were two pigmy geese. Strange to say, I did not see any water-lilies or weeds of any kind in the water—nothing but one placid, clear, blue expanse. At first I thought the intense blue was the reflection of the sky; but later in the day, when the sky became overcast with clouds, the water remained blue.

My two companions and guides were, like myself, true Queenslanders, devoted to our native wilds. I shall never forget the romantic drive we had over a rough bush track, in some places not wide enough for two vehicles to pass, with the sun completely veiled by the

canopy of immense tropical trees, palms, lawyer vines with talons on them like an eagle's, ferns and orchids in thousands clinging to the trees, and long festoons of moss. All was silent in the depths of this jungle except for the twitter of beautiful birds and the occasional note of the whip-bird, which resembles a whistle and the crack of a coach-whip. For four miles we proceeded at a walking-pace, jolting over the roots of trees amidst the weird surroundings of what had been, only a few years back, a dangerous spot for the pioneers owing to the treachery of the aborigines. Now it is safer than the back-streets of many a city I know.

Presently a bright gleam of daylight appeared, and our driver pulled up on the verge of Lake Eacham. We were now gazing down on one of nature's masterpieces. The intense yet varying shades of the tropical green jungle ran over the lip of this old crater for about fifty feet, right down to the water's edge, and made the frame of a natural picture such as human effort could never approach. So far as I knew, we were the only human beings within four miles of the spot. We all felt that a swim would be refreshing; so, after securely tying up our horses to the limbs of a fine silky oak, we promptly undressed and dived into what was generally considered a bottomless lake. After swimming out about a hundred yards I noticed that the water changed from cold to lukewarm alternately,

and concluded that too much of this was not congenial to one's peace of mind. My younger friends had also noticed this peculiarity, but were free from any fear of cramp. By the time they had swum back I had dressed and got the fire going, with the billy swung for tea. As my countrymen stepped out of the water I could not help admiring their athletic figures. This was about two years before the war commenced. Now, alas! both have given their lives for the old flag we all love; Lieutenant H. Cannan lies at Gallipoli, and Lieutenant Colville Muir somewhere in France.

The State has reserved the frontage of this pretty place for a public park, and no doubt it will some day be a rallying-centre for tourists, particularly as a railway seventy-five miles long runs from Cairns to within four miles of the lake. Scientific readers may be interested to know that this lake has no apparent intake of water, except what runs

down the side during the wet or rainy season, at which time it never shows a rise of more than four feet in its level; at other times it remains stationary. Strange to say, the sources of three large rivers are traced to the neighbourhood of this lake, yet Eacham has no apparent overflow. The surrounding country for miles and miles is composed of a rich chocolate volcanic soil, in some places going down seventy feet, and at the present day the district is a network of dairy and maize farms. In effecting this there have been destroyed by fire thousands upon thousands of such fine trees as silky oak, walnut, bean-tree, maple, and elm, not to mention other choice kinds of timber used for furniture. This destruction is still going on; and in reply to my inquiries a lumberman informed me that, with silky oak at nine shillings per hundred feet, it did not pay to go to the expense of hauling the timber to the railway.

THE RETURN.

PART II.

I.

DAYAL RAJHA counted the houses on the right-hand side from the temple, and stopped at the fourth. The door was open, and he looked in. On the walls of the front hall were nailed bright German lithographs of Krishna and the milkmaids in the forest, Lakshman stringing his bow, and other figures from the Puranic legends. A man's coat and turban hung from one of the red-lacquered pegs. On a heap of country-made quilts in a corner a little girl of six or seven lay naked, fast asleep, one hand upon her face. Beyond, he could see the dark central room with its large clay pots for grain, and beyond that again a kitchen with a door open upon a sunny garden at the back. As the door on which he leant gave a creak, the girl-child opened her eyes with a smile. But when she saw a stranger, she scrambled up and ran within, crying loudly for her mother.

'Mamma, mamma, there is some one here in the house,' he could hear her calling as she ran.

In a minute or two a woman appeared, her eyes a little heavy with sleep, pulling her mantle hastily over her disordered hair. She sat down on her hams at the inner door of the hall and made a sharp gesture with her head. 'Who are you? What do you want?' she asked with a brusque indifference. 'Do you want Jetra?'

He stared at her silently, slow to comprehend. She was a woman passing middle age, the parting on her head broadened by coming baldness, with crow's-feet at the corners of her eyes and two

deep wrinkles between the eyebrows. Her lips closed firmly over her teeth, and the lines at her mouth were strongly marked. The flesh at her throat had fallen in a little, and there were hollows between the neck and the jaw. The waist had lost its shape, and the breasts, half-revealed by the narrow bodice, were of a loose and flabby fullness. For the rest, an agreeable enough figure of a middle-aged woman; a good housewife, one would say at a guess, with not a little of a managing temper; one who had seen the world and remained sound in limb and in mind. There was a friendly humanity in her look, though her lips and well-squared chin spoke of will and determination.

Dayal looked at her curiously, and wondered if this could be the wife he had left. It came as a shock, this revelation of her age and altered temper—this settled, tried, and strengthened woman who had grown upon the blooming girl from whom he had been torn. Yet surely she could be no other; of that he was soon aware. She had spoken of Jetra familiarly as of a son, and she bore herself as the mistress of the house. And when he looked intently, he seemed to make out the same gently curving line of nose, the large brown eyes, the general build and habit of body.

'You have got a good house here,' he said, feeling clumsily for some way to break upon his subject. This middle-aged woman sitting quietly and firmly before him made things not so easy as he had imagined. He had pictured himself supporting a weak girl, fainting in his arms with joy. He knew now there would be no fainting; and he feared, with a sudden fear,

that there might be no joy either. 'Quite a good house you have. You are surely fortunate.'

'Well, I suppose you do not come waking folks from their sleep to tell them about their house or furniture,' the woman answered with a smile. 'Come on, out with it; say what you have got to say, and then you can go. I'm not old enough yet to sit gossiping with strange men, especially when they have not the usual strangers' courtesy to call me "sister." What do you want, good man?'

Dayal stood silent for a moment. Then, with a voice that was harsh with emotion, he said to her, 'Don't you know me at all? Don't you see why you cannot be called "sister" by me?'

The woman looked up and her eyes met his. A sudden astonishment came to her features as she half rose from the ground. 'Say that again,' she commanded. 'I want to hear your voice again.'

He repeated his phrase in strained tones, and he muttered other words, meaningless sounds, words without sense. His arms opened weakly in a nerveless gesture. She rose altogether now and came a step towards him.

'Why, if it isn't—yes, I do believe it's Jetra's father!' she cried in a tone of bewilderment. 'Well, well, how things do happen! So here you are at last, and a nice long time you have kept me waiting without even a letter or a message, and me to look out for myself and feed the child and keep the house going. Well, of all the— However, as you *are* here, you had better sit down now. We cannot have you going off again at once. Better come into the next room. Here, sit down here. Can you not hear what I am saying? Have you had anything to eat yet?'

II.

The man sat down as if bemused, obeying, for all he knew, without volition. It was all so different from what he had expected, as though in a collapsing world he had suddenly fallen upon another birth in a transformed constellation. Who, then, was this? This quiet woman, who ordered him about so sedately in a sort of cheerful indifference? He might have been prepared for anything, for tears or smiles or rage or repentance, anything except just this easy security, this undisturbed and coldly kind tranquillity.

In broken sentences, with odd hesitation and pauses, he told her that he had returned the previous morning from the Andamans on release, that he had taken the night-mail from Bombay, had arrived at the station that morning, and had walked over to Avlash at once. No, he had not eaten yet. He did not want anything to eat. He wanted to understand things—who were the children, for instance?

'Now, for Heaven's sake, don't begin to worry your poor tired head,' she interrupted. 'You just remain quite quietly here, and don't think of anything except a good rest, and I will have a stew

and some nice warm bread ready for you in half-an-hour. After you have eaten and are refreshed, you can talk as much as you like. In fact, you will have to, for there are a great many things you have to explain to me; and I doubt Jetra will not be any too easily satisfied.' Then she turned to a boy of ten who had come in with the little girl and stood holding on to his mother's petticoat. 'Run along, sonny, and go to the field and tell Jetra he is to come here at once. There is a man here whom I want him to meet.'

Then she went into the kitchen, and he could hear her moving pots and pans, and blowing the fire, and getting ready a hasty meal. And he had remembrance of earlier days and another kitchen with a young girl hovering eagerly to her husband's welcome. The little girl kept running in and out between her mother and the room in which he sat, and would squat in front of him and gaze at him, wondering, with round eyes. He smiled at her, and she smiled back, till she came to sit beside him, and touched his coat and sleeve, and at last with a gurgle of pleasure got fairly on his lap and went to sleep against his breast. And the convict swung her gently backwards and forwards in the crook of his arms and watched the closed eyes in a sort of happy daze. His wife found them like that when she brought in the dishes.

'I don't suppose you saw many children out there,' she said, 'across the black waters? She is a good child, isn't she? But I will take her now, while you eat.'

He would have touched her as she bent over, but she seemed unconscious of his movement, and lifted the child quietly from his arms.

When he had finished his meal and had drawn a few puffs at the pipe that his wife—was she still his wife?—had filled for him, he heard loud, firm footsteps at the door of the inner room.

'Here is Jetra,' the woman murmured quietly. 'Now, be careful how you behave with him. He may be rather stiff with you, you can understand.'

Inquiry in his look, Jetra entered the room where they were seated. His mother bade him sit down, and told him to look upon the stranger from over the seas. Then she added, 'He is your father, Jetra. He has just returned.'

III.

The long summer afternoon passed painfully for the older man in a constant reiteration of questions and recriminations. His every word was weighed and discussed, brought back again to refute him, hurled at him. He found nothing of reverence for his years, of pity for his sufferings. He was the accused, on trial before his own offspring; an accused to be plagued and worried and cross-examined, to be doubted and rebuked and censured. 'What have you come here for now?' had been Jetra's first words. And this was the query to which he always returned. This father, who had come back, unknown and

unwanted, from the ends of the earth after all these incurious years—what had he come for, what exactly did he want, how could he be most cheaply satisfied?

'Look at the disgrace, mother,' Jetra had once dared to exclaim. 'People have forgotten all about him. We were well regarded, and now'—

The police were the matter of another thought to which the young man kept recurring. He saw the house open to constant police visitations, constables coming at all hours with schedules and papers to sign, bribes to be expended, a respectable family become suspect. It was the shutting of a door upon many aspirations, and Jetra's disappointment overflowed.

'He left us alone to starve or live, to sink or swim, for twenty years. Why need he have come back now?' he exclaimed again and again. For the son's spirit had been lulled to the proprieties, and he had an almost physical repugnance to the living reminder of disgrace. One thing was clear, that, whatever else be done, in the family farm and in all the management of house and home the older man should have no share or part. He had left them when they had nothing, and he could not come back now to control or meddle when they were comfortably settled in a quiet way. If he was to be cared for at all, it must be as a dependant in the kitchen-corner. And it was only right he should work and repay his keep, like any other labourer or poor relation. Otherwise he could go to the factories in the city and earn his own livelihood. It had been harder labour in the hulks.

'We cannot afford useless mouths, that is true enough,' the woman had agreed. 'Do you hear what your son says?' she added, turning to the poor cowed creature that sat there in a silence as of death, overwhelmed by the bitter flow of words. 'If you come here, you stay in charity, that must be clearly understood, and you have nothing to do with the house or our arrangements. And if you don't like it—well, the door is always open. We have had to do without you for twenty years. We can make shift without you again.'

And once more the ceaseless argument began. Jetra's wife sat beside him and interjected shrill complaints. She had not married to have a convict always beside her, a man who had even forgotten his own language and could barely utter what he had to say. Her father would never have given her to such a family, if he had ever guessed the old man could return. God be thanked, her father's house was large and she could always find a corner there, where she could live and die—alone, if need be, without her man.

IV.

So the afternoon wore on wearily, while the fierce heat of the day somewhat abated, and, as the sun dropped slowly down towards the horizon, the village awoke to its evening labours.

Men passed along the street to their fields, and the bell in the little temple near them clashed from time to time, as passers-by stopped for a hurried prayer. The dust rose thick like a garment as cattle huddled past to their stables and scuffled at the narrow lanes and turnings. Every now and then a woman, pausing, would shout a word or two of greeting to those in the house, and the argument would be hastily hushed while she was answered and sent away as best they could. For a long time the older man had sat silent, without an attempt to stem the clatter of the others' tongues. At last, with a visible effort, he roused himself from his lethargy and pointed his bony finger at his son.

'Be silent now,' he said. 'I have learned my lesson and have understood. You have no cause to cherish me, that I know; but I thought you might be kinder. Whatever is written in fate, that befalls, and it is not in man to cure or to avoid. Mark that, Jetra, for maybe your fate too is even now hanging over your head. I was young and careless; I meant no wrong; I did that which I did without malice or forethought; yet I have had to suffer. Him whom I killed I hated, and he hated me. We met one evening—the public place before the meeting-house—and he mocked me. Worse, he mocked your mother—the woman who now sits here, and who then was young and fair and pure. He called her harlot and he called me blind. I knew it to be a lie, vile, a mere coward's insult. And I became a thing of rage, wind-drift before the blasts of hate. I struck him on the lying mouth and felled him; my hand sought the dagger, and buried it twice, thrice, in his neck. It was hours before I knew myself again. Long before, I was already bound and under arrest. They tried me for murder, and the sentence—for I was a young man, and the killing sudden—was transportation for the period of my life. And I laboured in obedience and good work for remission of sentence that I might return. And now I know that hanging had been better. But it is over now. Give me food and bed to-night. That cannot be much to give. To-morrow I shall go away and find work elsewhere—in the factories or in the fields.'

Jetra had sat dumb while his father spoke, and something of shame settled like a cloud upon his face, as if at last he felt that he had gone too far. 'You press the thing too hard,' he murmured. 'Of course, we do not want you to go away at once. You can stay here, if you like; only, you can see yourself that it is not altogether easy to manage. And, after all, you are a weak man, and I have been accustomed to do everything.'

He was going on in the same strain, as if seeking palliation from his own heart, when his mother interrupted.

'Be quiet, Jetra,' she said; 'and you, too,' she added, turning to Dayal, 'while I tell you what is to be done. And you, Jetra, tell that

worthless wife of yours to stop snivelling at once and cook our dinner, or I shall give her more than the rough side of my tongue. She will have something at her ears in a moment that she will not forget for a long time. Now, listen; this is how the thing stands. First of all, Jetra has been making a fool of himself talking of *his* house and *his* fields and *his* God knows what.—Sit quiet and hold your tongue,' she added, turning sharply to her son; 'it is I that am talking now; your turn is done for the present.—Jetra has, as a matter of fact, no house or field at all. He has had two fields, that is true, but they still stand in the village registers in the name of Dayal Rajha; and now that their owner is back again, Jetra has nothing more to do with them. And the house and all the other lands are mine, and will belong to this other boy and girl when I am gone, and not to Jetra.

'Now you, Jetra's father, listen here. When you were taken away, I lived alone for six years, and looked after the infant, and kept myself chaste for you, and hoped for your return. But you never sent me a line of letter or a word of mouth. You have told us to-day that you did not know how to get a letter written or how to send it, that you were ignorant and frightened. Well, I still think you could have got some warder or found some cleverer head to do it. However, that's gone and past, and it's no use fretting over it now. At any rate, there was the fact. I knew nothing more about you, whether you were dead or alive, whether you could ever return. I got nothing from you, and had to do the best I could myself. Well, the villagers helped me, and I got a little rent for your two poor fields, and I went for months at a time to the salt-pans and worked there in the burning sun, while the glare of the white salt seared my eyes, and my hands and feet were cut and chapped and blistered, and my skin grew dry enough; my back ached and ached from the constant stooping. But I kept this boy alive.

'In the fifth year Purtab Guman, that was a widower, took a liking to me. He was well enough off, and he promised to be kind to Jetra, and he kept his word. He sought me, not dishonourably or lightly, but in marriage. By my own Koli law, three years of desertion were enough to give me the right to marry again, as a free woman. But five years had gone by, and I waited yet another, while he pressed me hard before I would consent. Then I married and went to his house. I bore him two sons and a girl. One boy is dead; the other is here before you, and you have already rocked the girl to sleep in your arms. I lived with him as a good wife, and he was a good man to me, too. I could have wished none better. And since his death, four years come New Year, I have looked after his house and property, and kept his name clean and respectable. So now you have the whole thing clear. The house and the property are mine, and they

are mine in trust for these children. Neither you nor Jetra has any right whatever over anything here. However, Jetra has been managing it for me since my man's death, and it is convenient he should go on doing so. On the other hand, you are old and weak now, and you were once my lord, and your shame is my shame and your son's shame, and we have no call to be judges upon you. I will be no party to your being sent away. Here you are, and here you can stay as long as you like, until your hour comes and your eyes are closed in death. But, if you stay in this house, it must be with no rights of mastership; and in return for your board and keep, it will be well that you give your own two fields also to my care. And I will see that no one—neither Jetra nor his dirty little wife nor any one else—shall ever hurt you in act or word, so long as you remain true to the agreement and do what you can to help us. You are weary and broken, and need a rest. Very well, you can get it here; but remember that you have no rights either over me or over house or home. I have been twice widowed, and I own no master now.'

Jetra sat silent now, his face bent down, with his eyes quickly glancing under his brows at his father's face. The old man's fingers played idly on the ground as he strove to arrange his thoughts and order his will. At last he nodded in weary acquiescence.

'I agree,' he said. 'You were quite blameless in what you did; it was your right; you are in the right again. I will do what you want. I will stay here with you all and help.' Then he added, rather sadly, almost below his breath, 'I have no claim upon you now, whatever I once had, of any kind whatever.'

Hardly had he finished when the woman was on her feet. 'Very well, that is all settled now,' said she, 'and we must never discuss it again. I am going to see how dinner is getting on. I cannot trust that silly girl.—You, Jetra, take your father to the headman, and give the information that he has returned on release and is going to live in the house of Puttiba, the widow of Purtab Guman. Better tell him also that we shall give a feast to the village on the occasion, and ask him to invite the constables from the outpost, so that we shall have no further trouble.'

V.

Dinner was over, and the children had been put to bed. Jetra and his wife soon followed. Dayal and the woman who had once been his wife continued to sit in drowsy meditation on the doorstep to the small garden. The air remained parched and hot, and the walls of the house were still warm to the touch. But the first cooler breezes began to breathe upon the stillness of the night with promise of some hours' mitigation in the summer fierceness of

the heat. Overhead ten thousand stars shone like brilliants upon the dark blue curtain of the sky. On the village walls a peacock raised his harsh cry, and was answered by the calls of his mates. On the doorstep the former convict leant back, tired by the heat and the weariful excitement of the day, and thought, half in regret, of another land in a softer, languid climate; of islands where cold was unknown but the air was never dry or burning, where orioles and humming-birds flew twittering from twig to twig or poised, tremulous, before the scarlet hibiscus. He could hear again the long, low roll of the surf upon the shore and dew-drops pattering on the broad palm-leaves. And once again in the thickness of the tropic forest he seemed to see the convict-gangs and feel the bitterness of unwilling toil.

His thoughts came back to the voice of the woman beside him, speaking softly in the darkness.

'It's a long, long time,' she was saying almost to herself. 'Years of work and striving! You too, I suppose, knew other women over there. But why should I ask? Of course you did—bad women, women who had done great crimes, God help them! . . . And after all these years you are back again, a poor weak man, broken and weary—poor old man! And I am getting an old woman too, God knows, with wrinkled face and faded figure. The mother of four children, too! Well, well! it is no use troubling. Come along,' she continued in firmer tones,

getting up; 'it is time to sleep now. You must be tired enough, and it is time for me too. You had better get off to your bed, and I shall shut up the house.'

They stood beside each other on the step, while he sought some phrase of thanks and good-night. By the glow of the kitchen fire she could just see his face, lined and early old, turned towards her. There was a light of timid appeal in his eyes.

'And so you really knew me again when you saw me?' she asked quietly.

He nodded gently. His look seemed rather firmer now, more full of purpose.

'I think I am too old now. I wonder if any man could care for me a little still?' she asked in a low voice.

For answer he stretched his right hand to her shoulder and put it round her neck. He could feel her catch her breath a moment at the touch. Then she spoke out again in her usual calm and kindly tone, with just a trill of gaiety and laughter in her voice.

'Well,' she exclaimed, 'after all, I shall not be sorry to have a man in the house again. It is pretty dull being by one's self. Only, remember what you have promised—no claims and no rights! And, now, do shut that door. It's time we went to bed.'

And Dayal shut the door with his left hand, but kept his right arm tight where it had found a home.

THE END.

THE SIGNING O' THE CALL.

By ALBERT G. MACKINNON, Author of *Hospital Jock*.

I.

'HE'S no soond on the fundamentals, an' I'll sign nae call tae him.'

The words fell like the sentence of doom on the little gathering in the church of Balnacroy. The few young men in that remote Highland congregation had set their hearts on the Rev. Hector Macleod, and the young women were behind them; but now they realised that, in their haste, they had forgotten to be tactful. In their desire to get this young man to be their minister, they had overlooked the necessity of taking Sergeant Roderick M'Luskie the right way.

He stood there in all the imposing height of his six feet, with squared shoulders to match, and a bearing that had once made him the idol of the old 42nd. From underneath bushy eyebrows fire flashed. That same glance had struck dismay into the heart of many a Boer in South African days; now it quelled rebellion in the breasts of the Balnacroy church members. It was not the influence of wealth that told.

M'Luskie was not a rich man. His farm was a small one, and he lived a simple, honest life. The blacksmith and the grocer in the little village had bigger bank accounts. So it was not the threat of the loss of a goodly subscription that appalled; it was the personality of the man. The sergeant was not an individual to be disobeyed, and no one could say why he had this power except that he was just Sergeant M'Luskie.

'For eicht years I hae walked past five kirks every Sabbath mornin' to worship here,' continued the sergeant, with great deliberation and emphasis, 'an' ye'll a' admit we hae got guid doctrine frae him that's awa'. We hae been fed on strong meat, an' I for ane canna stummick the milk-an'-water o' this youth's teachin'. He'll no be allooted to gang intae that pulpit, that has echoed wi' predestination for twenty years, with my consent. The verra thocht o' it wud mak' the godly Hamish Mackintosh turn in his grave. I was loyal tae him when he was alive, an' I'll be loyal tae him when he's deid.'

Thus the Past laid its silent hand on the Present. The sergeant had certainly imbibed

the sermons of the Reverend Hamish, and it was even whispered that when alive that teacher was not infrequently afraid of his own disciple. His doctrines had become petrified in the stern, dour soldier.

'I dinna grasp yer point. Truth has mair sides than ane,' ventured Ronald M'Fadyen, the tailor, in almost an undertone, not daring to meet the sergeant's glance.

'Ay, ye are ane o' them that wud pit a piece o' new cloth on to an auld garment, an' that which is pit in tae fill up taketh frae the garment, an' a sorry rent is what ye hae left. Na, na; the auld truths are guid eneuch for me, an' I dinna want ony patchwork,' was the sergeant's crushing retort, the sting lying in the fact that the tailor was accused of using shoddy material.

Silence followed M'Fadyen's discomfiture. No one had sufficient courage to enter into the breach, and the sergeant's eyes wandered restlessly round on the faces of the congregation, seeking whom they might devour if, by chance, revolt should find expression.

At last one youth, egged on by feminine nudges, rose to his feet. 'Talk o' the papacy!' he began in rather a sneering tone. 'I think we hae got it in Balnacroy. I speak for the young people o' the congregation.' Then his eye met the sergeant's, his voice faltered, he stuttered, and ended in feeble tones, 'We—er—demand—freedom.'

'Freedom to dae what ye like wi' the Scriptures—that's what ye want, young man,' responded the sergeant in scathing tones. 'Ye sigh for the flesh-pots o' auld wives' fables, an' spurn the manna o' soond doctrine. Ye wud try an' tak' the Gate o' the Kingdom aff its hinges wi' yer preachin' o' Free-Wull.'

No response was forthcoming to those words that burned with their fervour of holy indignation. Perhaps no one dared to face those flashing eyes; perhaps none could think of a fitting reply. The sergeant was to receive his answer to the theological problem he had enunciated in scenes far different from that peaceful glen.

In the meantime M'Luskie had triumphed. All hope was crushed of sending a unanimous call to the Rev. Hector Macleod, whose supporters, guided by the ultra-orthodox interim moderator in the chair, resolved to sacrifice their candidate rather than proceed to his election at the inevitable cost of a split in an already tiny congregation.

II.

Hector Macleod sought his way to a villa on the outskirts of Inverness. His heart was heavy, and for the first time his feet lagged on that journey. The burden that weighed him down was contained in an envelope which he carried in his pocket. It was a letter stating that Balnacroy had failed to elect him.

Before he reached the door it was opened, and

a girlish figure came running to meet him. 'Fido heard your step,' she called merrily, 'and he is quicker than I.'

The spaniel was already adding his welcome, and he had not the modesty of his mistress to restrain his demonstrations. He liked Hector best of all the young men who frequented that house, for with his canine intuition he could scent true character. The response he got now was rather disappointing. He recognised before his mistress that something was wrong.

'Well, what is your news? Good, I am sure. I have just been hearing what a pretty manse there is at Balnacroy—at least, how it could be made beautiful with a little taste,' continued young Elsie Smeaton.

'Unfortunately congregations, when they are calling ministers, leave out of account the most important factor, the future mistress of the manse; and yet how much of the success of their work depends on her! Had Balnacroy sent a deputation to interview you, that would have settled the question right off,' said the probationer chivalrously.

'So they and I disagree on one thing,' replied the girl, with a laugh, as she led the way into the house and entered a cosy sitting-room.

'What is that?'

'You—you dense boy!'

'I don't quite see—the point,' he stuttered as he took the proffered chair.

'Explanations blunt it. I like you, apparently *they* do not, and therefore I shall never like *them*.'

'That is their misfortune,' interrupted Hector.

'Rather it is their fortune not to know what they lose,' was her repartee. 'That is the compensation of ignorance. Tell me what made them shy. Your frown? It sometimes displeases even me, as at present. It could not be your beard, for you have not got any; only, perhaps they quarrelled with its absence. The ministerial fashion in Balnacroy is no doubt a shaved upper lip, and the moustache worn under the chin.' So she rattled on, trying by her banter to chase away the cloud of disappointment.

'No; it was my doctrine. It was too broad for them,' he replied gloomily. 'The Rev. Hamish Mackintosh spent all his life in "fencing the tables," as it is called. They say he was at his best on those occasions when he was expelling the goats from the flock. He has managed to leave behind a very small space of barbed-wire enclosure, with the elect inside, and Sergeant M'Luskie in the centre keeping guard. The man who tries to break through does so at his peril. I got caught on the barbs, and the sergeant finished me off.'

The girl smiled. 'You will have to attack a less fortified position next time,' she said. 'After all, there were possibly too many nettles and thistles round the manse in Balnacroy for my taste.'

'I have made up my mind that there is to

be no next time. This method of candidating for a church, of fishing in troubled waters for a kirk, goes against my grain. Besides, I have not the art of baiting the hook—I always put the wrong fly on.'

'Nor the patience of the true angler,' she rejoined.

'I am like the impotent man,' he continued; 'I have no one, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming another steppeth down before me. I made up my mind that if I failed to get this vacancy, it would be my last attempt, and that I should leave the ministry, emigrate to Canada, and go in for farming.'

'A congregation of cabbage-heads would certainly be more amenable.' Then, noting the gravity of his expression, she added, 'But really, Hector, you should not be turned aside from your calling by one man, even though he be a sergeant.'

'It is the doctrine, not the man, that is the rock. About him I suppose I might find some bit that was human; about it there is none. No; I have decided to make Balnacroy the test case. Their decision has meant more to me than the loss of a kirk. It is the forfeiting of a profession—nay, perhaps even a greater sacrifice, the surrender of a wife.'

His voice assumed almost tragic tones, and Elsie Smeaton felt their chill.

'I am giving up the prospects of a home,' he continued, 'and have nothing to offer you. It might take years for me, without capital, to provide a suitable home in the West. It is not fair to ask you to wait. I have come to release you, Elsie, not because my love has changed, but'—

'Because an old fossil blocks the way,' she interrupted. 'I should use a little dynamite on him first, and blast the obstruction out of the path before I'd own myself beaten.'

'I wish you would supply me, then, with the dynamite. I know of none powerful enough to have any effect on Sergeant M'Luskie. As long as he lives he will be pope in the parish of Balnacroy, and woe to the heretic who has incurred his ban!'

At that moment a newsboy dashed along the street, crying in husky, excited tones, 'Ultimatum to Germany. War inevitable.' It was 4th August 1914.

The Reverend Hector ran to the window and stood silently, gravely, looking out on the rippling waters of the Ness. 'War has been declared against Germany,' he said at last in a voice struggling with deep emotion. 'This is going to be a very serious matter, Elsie; it will mean the calling up of every man to fight.'

'Then the old sergeant will have to go too, and that will get him out of the way, and give him something to fight against, since he's never happy unless he's in the thick of it. Perhaps,

when he is gone, Balnacroy will call you, after all.'

'No, that cannot be.'

'Why?'

'Because I shall have gone too,' said the probationer as he rose and, with a face set with a new-born resolution, moved towards the door.

III.

'I am finished, sergeant. They have got me this time.'

The words came in broken syllables. The major who spoke had fallen to the bottom of the trench at the feet of Sergeant M'Luskie.

'Dinna say that, sir; we may patch ye up a' richt,' was the sergeant's response as he bent over his fallen officer.

'No—M'Luskie—this time it's—It. But quick, kneel down beside me so that you can hear. I have a lot—to tell you—and my strength is going quickly. I feel a dimness. All the officers are knocked out now. You are senior N.C.O., and—and—must take command of what is left of the battalion.'

'A' richt, sir.'

'The orders are, sergeant, we must stick to our post—to—to—the last man. That cannot be very long—unless help comes. I fear they have forgotten where we are. Perhaps they have despatched a message, and the bearer has not got through—for we are surrounded now. Our ammunition is running out. You must send a messenger back to headquarters telling them we cannot hold out much longer. Pick the best man you have got—for the safety of the battalion depends on his success. If he fails to get through, then we are lost. Meantime our instructions are to stay here. You are the right man, sergeant, for the job.'

A smile for the moment softened the drawn features. The major had had many occasions in the past for noting the stubbornness of M'Luskie.

'Ye can trust me, sir; I'll no budge. If thae Boches pass here, it'll be ower my deid body.'

'That's the spirit, sergeant. Work the men up to it—not that they need it. They have done wonders—poor fellows! I am sorry not to see you through with it. But I know you will stick it to the last, sergeant—for the sake of the dear old regiment—and the grand old flag.'

The speaker's head fell back, the eyes glazed, and Sergeant M'Luskie was left first in command.

He rose to his feet and looked round. There might have been the suspicion of a dimness in his eyes, but otherwise he was as calm and unmoved as when on parade. A whisper passed along the trench that M'Luskie was in command, and somehow it brought confidence into the men's hearts. He was a born leader of men when courage rather than tact was demanded; for the tight corner M'Luskie was the man.

It was growing quite dark now, and the sighing of the wind in the neighbouring pines formed an undertone to the increasing whistling and bursting of shrapnel. Batteries roared, and all along the horizon shells spluttered in splashes of angry red. Rocket after rocket flamed into the sky, describing gleaming arcs in the bitter wind of the darkness. Searchlights swept in ghostly sheets across the fields. Here, there, almost everywhere, the undulating crackle of musketry, like furze ablaze in a high wind, alternated with the banging of the machine-guns, long-drawn and regular, like the thud of a distant train. The whole landscape was populous with sound.

M'Luskie, who was a widower, had one son, John, his father's idol. John inherited the good points of his parent, with the failings toned down. For a few moments the sergeant stood rubbing his chin in thought. The whisper of his dead officer still echoed in his ears, 'Pick the best man.' To M'Luskie, the best man in the company was his own son John. It was a terrible sacrifice to risk the life of the one he so dearly loved. The temptation to send another was not silent—some other father's boy would do as well. No, not so well! He knew John through and through—his resource, his courage, his unflinching loyalty to duty. John could go to his death with a smile on his face if he was ordered. If there was a chance of getting through with a message, he could rely on John's quickness to seize it.

The sergeant smothered something in his breast, and turned down the trench, the stern mask of battle once more upon his features.

'John,' he said to a young fellow caked with mud, who welcomed him with a smile, 'I hae an important task for ye. We're rinnin' short o' ammunition, especially bombs, an' ye maun gang back to heidquarters, an' tell them that we canna haud on much langer unless they send up reinforcements an' supplies. It's a risky business, laddie, for the enemy's a' roond us noo; but keep yer heid, as I am sure ye wull, an' remember the fate o' the battalion is dependin' on ye. When ye get in, tell them to flash three lights agin the clouds, an' I'll tak' that as a signal that help is comin', an' that'll gie us speerit to staund oor ground. Noo, aff wi' ye as fast as ye can gang.'

The lad obeyed at once, and climbing over the parapots, was soon lost in the shadows. The sergeant walked slowly along the trench to speak a word of cheer and prepare the men for what all felt was coming. They had beaten off successive waves of attack, each fiercer and more determined than the one before. The present lull had been the longest, and that was ominous. The enemy was preparing to make his biggest effort. If only the delay was prolonged, the sergeant hoped that the relief might arrive in time to save the position.

IV.

As the minutes dragged into hours M'Luskie scanned with feverish impatience the dark canopy of cloud. At last across their background shone three flashes, the signal of coming help.

'It's a' richt, boys; the laddie has gotten through. They ken oor need noo, an' reinforcements'll sune be here, sae we maun haud oot,' said the sergeant, and his words brought fresh hope. Then suddenly isolated shots rang out near at hand. The outposts were giving their warning with their last breath, and soon, in the dim light of dawn, a dense gray wall emerged as the ranks of the enemy stumbled forward over the batter of sodden fields. As they advanced there rose the throbbing lilt of '*Die Wacht am Rhein*.'

Then the trenches leapt into a flame of fire, and the sheet of lead carved its way through the dense columns. It ripped their formation to tatters, but failed to stop the momentum of that oncoming host, whose numbers were melting on the ground as others behind closed up and shoved forward.

'Noo, men, ready wi' the bayonet, an' drive it hame!' shouted the sergeant, as he planted himself more firmly in the soup of water and mud that soaked his legs to the knees. If M'Luskie was a terror in the kirk-session of his native parish, now the fierceness of his glance was multiplied a hundredfold. Yet, if one could have analysed his feelings that moment, there would have been astonishment at the exultant joy that thrilled his soul. In church-court or trench M'Luskie was the same—a fighter, and a stubborn one at that. Once he took up a position in debate or battle, he stood immovable. His example steadied the men. All knew that so long as the sergeant's eye was on them there could be no retreating.

The singing ranks steadily neared; only a few yards separated them from the trenches.

'Gie them the last unce o' lead ye hae,' roared M'Luskie, and his voice had the note of thunder in it. He had glanced towards the communication-trench, but there were still no signs of the relieving force. He knew that it was only a matter of minutes now, and if reinforcements did not arrive, the enemy's wave must sweep over them.

The rifles, almost too hot to hold, volleyed their last challenge. The gray line swayed backward and forward, and half of it tumbled to the ground; but the reserves from behind pushed forward. They seemed endless, and soon there were more Germans than British bullets, and the great mass came tumbling into the trenches. The scene was terrifying. The cries of the wounded, the shouts of the defenders, the yells of the assailants blended into one awful din. Above all could be heard the sergeant's stentorian voice, 'Dinna gie wey, lads! Dinna gie wey!'

Thrawn to the last, M'Luskie refused to move even though four big Germans jumped into the trench beside him. His eyes flashed not merely the glare but the stealth of the tiger. He was quick to note every movement of that swaying mass, every glint of uplifted steel. Yet, as he had only one pair of arms and one weapon, he could not ward off every blow. His bayonet had got home on one of his assailants, but this left him at the mercy of the others, and he realised that his hour had come, when suddenly a young officer sprang between him and his foes, and with his revolver laid them out—not, however, before a bayonet had pierced the sergeant's side.

For a few seconds the issue of the attack was uncertain; but the young lieutenant had been the leader of the relieving force, and as the reinforcements poured in, the tide turned. The Germans, realising that they had done their worst and failed, reeled, and soon were hurled back on the corpse-strewn path they had come.

The young officer stooped to lift the sergeant, then started as he recognised him. The last time he had seen that face was when he had looked at its dour, stubborn, disapproving features from the pulpit of Balnacroy.

'Sergeant M'Luskie, I hope you are not badly wounded?' he said.

The Highlander looked in astonishment at his rescuer. It was the Rev. Hector Macleod, though his blood-stained tunic and smoking revolver were a strange contrast to the Geneva gown in which he had last seen him robed.

'Mister Macleod! Weel, I'm richt gied tae see ye. Na, I dinna think I'm ower badly hurt. That Boche, ye killed wud hae had me in the vitals if ye hadna got him i' the nick o' time. He's missed the hairt, an' I'm thinkin' it's but a skin-wound.'

'Here are some ambulance-men; they will tie you up. I shall see you later,' replied the lieutenant as he hurried on.

V.

When dawn had broken and the sun was shedding its light on that scene of slaughter, and men, as if ashamed of their foul deeds in the darkness, were hiding from its rays, the guns died down, and a strange peace crept over the trenches. Macleod had time now to keep his promise, and he sought out the sergeant, who had his wound field-bandaged, and was waiting to be carried back to a dressing-station.

'Well, sergeant, I am glad to see you looking better. Everybody is speaking of the way you held on. It was simply splendid,' remarked the lieutenant.

'We'd hae been wiped oot had ye no' arrived when ye did,' replied M'Luskie modestly.

'And we should never have come had you not sent your son to ask for help. Do you know, sergeant, I see in this an illustration of

a great theological problem that has often worried us. Had you not made an effort to help yourselves, and sent your son with that message, you would have been left to your fate. You did not act on your theological dogma of merely standing still and saying that you had nothing to do with your own deliverance, and if your number was up—well, that was an end of it. That is fatalism; but when it came to a working creed, you scrapped it. You made the biggest and wisest effort possible to save yourselves. I know what it cost you to send your son on that perilous errand, but it was either that or surrender to the enemy. Sergeant, you are a better soldier than a theologian, though perhaps the folk in Balnacroy will not agree with me, for you are one of its "men." You are famed as a pillar of the kirk; but the Rev. Hamish Mackintosh's doctrine is no good when it comes to a tight corner.'

'Mon, that's a new licht on the subject,' responded the sergeant slowly. 'I see yer point fine. If I had waited for help to come o' its ain accord, we wud hae been wiped oot. Ay, ye're richt; it cost me an anxious hairt to send John wi' the despatch, but I kenned that he was the best mon for the errand.'

'You showed your wisdom in not entrusting it to less competent hands,' interrupted Macleod.

'That's it; the maitter was ower serious for onythin' except the utmaist effort we cud mak' regairdless o' the sacrifice. Ye're richt, an' ye hae got yer sermon hame this time. There's a place, efter a', for mon's free-wull, though the Reverend Hamish didna seem to see it. I'm gaun to send a message the nicht tae Balnacroy sayin' that I am wullin' to sign yer call.'

'It will make one heart happy, I know,' replied the officer, with a smile—'that of a young lady whose ambition it is to clear away the nettles and the thistles round the manse of Balnacroy.'

IN MEMORY.

(D. S. M.)

THE world is poorer now he's gone;
We ill can spare—to-day—
Such never-failing kindness,
Shown in that simple way.

To reconstruct a shattered earth
We puzzle and we plan;
But the Golden Age's architect's
The good Samaritan.

His purpose single and sincere;
(Not all can reach that fame!)
A fragrance sweet will linger long
For this around his name.

My Yarrow! When to Border hearts
You tell your wistful tale,
Ah, keep his gentle memory green
In his beloved Vale.

MARY ADAMSON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

SUPPORTED by authority of the best, we shall advance a curious proposition in the matter of the progress of the aeroplane and of man flying in the air. It is that now and for the future the aeroplane in its progress may suffer from a want of imagination and confidence on the part of man, who has been venturously exploiting it. Poor proposition that may be deemed when the short, tense, and tremendous story of the aeroplane seems now to have been one of the exertion of unprecedented imagination and confidence. For five years imagination overleaped itself by day and night; people stood marvelling in awe of their own species thus so fine. But did imagination ever once quite catch up with the fresh and obvious possibilities that were set forth at each new advance? The faster imagination ran, the farther did the grand horizon recede. The area of possibility was unbounded. For that it was the more fascinating. Here was a work with which we might continue for ever, finding it more enthralling all the time. Only imagination was wanted for stimulus, that imagination that lifts us free from all the littlenesses of the past, and is the medium by which souls are transported to their heaven. Imagination indeed, as we all perceive, is as the soul of man. It worked well enough during the five years' special demand and strain; but afterwards there was apparent a certain reaction, not so much among the flying-men as among those who contemplated them, their efforts, and many matters that concerned them. The aeroplane had done its duty, and there was some kind of a disposition in minds of moderate understanding and small capacity in fancy to dismiss it, reverting to an old belief that, after all, the aeroplane could scarcely be more than a toy; that all the time it had the terrible invincible force of gravity to contend with, and that this gravity must always prevail. That is a peculiar idea, and it is strange how even now it seems to rule the thoughts and the instincts of many persons in contemplating the future of the aeroplane.

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The war being over and no menace from enemies among the clouds now being apprehended, there is a disposition to thank the aeroplane and turn the attention in considerations of practicable

and profitable flight exclusively to dirigible balloons, large gas-bags of improved construction, most ingenious things in their way, but, after all, not more than improvements upon apparatus employed by our distant ancestors, the principles being identical. Commercial and other people murmur that for the future the balloons will have it. It matters not that there is a daily aerial service to Paris and other places; that the aeroplanes are on the track of Puck in his girdling of the earth; that for a sudden, quick, and sure journey under almost any conditions and at the maximum speed attainable by man the aeroplane is the most readily available and certain thing; and that never in any test or emergency to which it has been submitted has it failed. For all this and so much more, a section of the community that is much concerned turns now away from the aeroplane, agreeing that it was excellent, most interesting, remarkable, but that for the steady and progressive jog of commerce in times of peace the air must be given to dirigible balloons. They are bigger, safer, steadier, and so forth, it is said. In this one perceives a certain reaction after the straining of imagination in the war. There is a temporary tendency in man after one step forward to make two backward if he may, and entrench himself again in the old stabilities of antiquity. But in the end the progressive instinct in man prevails. We shall survive this affection for the dirigible, the gas-bag, as against the flying-machine. It is possible that some commercial potentates will come to comprehend the considerable truth that all birds, from the lordly eagle to the lively tom-tit, are also heavier than air, even as the aeroplanes that soar above them, and after the almost superstitious faith in the omnipotence of gravity of which we have been witnesses, a realisation of this circumstance might cause a flutter at directors' meetings. They may not as yet have apprehended that the first transportation of humanity ever effected in the air was by the eagles when they carried off children to their nests. Such eagles concerned themselves not with gravity. If, then, progress is desirable, and we would progress in flight, there should be a return to confidence without reserve in the aeroplane for every aerial purpose. It is a suggestion made with the encouragement of

those who, in the pursuit of progress, feel themselves to be much concerned.

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The other day this affair was discussed in a corner of London with an eminent airman with whom we who write first flew the air ourselves, upon which occasion, in meditation at a height of some thousand feet, we formed convictions upon this and kindred matters. It seems better, perhaps, to judge upon such affairs at a height of half a mile or so, on the upper side of clouds, than in a conveniently furnished apartment on the most positive and solid earth. He was the man who first flew across the Atlantic Ocean, Captain Sir John Alcock, who, alas! not many weeks later, was to meet so untimely a fate in France. On this afternoon it was proposed that, with a certain end in view, we should go flying. He was telling us something of the possibilities as he saw them, and speaking of the need for removing certain miscomprehensions upon the management of aeroplanes. Skill and nerve are demanded for most undertakings with which progress is concerned, and they are needed by aviators; yet the management of these machines by one who is fitted for the task is not such a very difficult or fearsome business. I put it to my friend: how long a period is needed to teach a fellow knowing nothing of the aeroplane, its ways and tricks, to manage it, control it, fly up in the air with it far away alone? That is a point upon which many persons may have cogitated, and here is the answer by what was clearly an authority of the best. The answer was: four or five hours. This also, in a certain sense, indicates the maximum period. Sir John Alcock declared that a person who had the instinct for flight—and it is not rare—should, by the exertion of his intelligence, his progressive faculties, and such venturesomeness and resource as are demanded, learn the business in four or five lessons of an hour each, all of which might be taken in a day. At the end of this series he should be in a position, and have sufficient knowledge and confidence, to take his pilot's seat in an aeroplane alone, and set the apparatus to the air. He should be capable of making it lift from the ground and go forward and balance in the air—and there you are! The rest is a matter of practice and confidence. It is not sufficiently appreciated that flying at a hundred miles an hour at a height of five thousand feet is in essentials not more difficult than mere buzzing just above the surface of the earth—that, indeed, in the matter of confidence and safety it is easier. Our good authority put the case for the day's complete tuition more definitely even than it is here expressed, for he urged that if a pupil could not thus in such few hours learn to control the aeroplane, and himself alone control it in the air, then he was no Icarus, nor ever would be, but should move always on solid earth afoot or awheel.

The late Captain Sir John Alcock was much of an idealist, sparkled with imagination, and believed in the aeroplane as against the dirigible. Particularly he insisted upon the necessity of applying imagination to the grand purpose of the navigation of the air, as it was applied in war; for progress to a splendid and most commercially practical aviation could only be attained by such imagination accompanied by its indispensable ally, faith. He seemed to lament the new scepticism that has arisen concerning the aeroplanes, now that they have completed so splendidly their war work. He suggested to me that this injurious scepticism results from exhaustion of such imagination as is essential in all affairs of flying, and a certain reaction after the war. It was because imagination, and demands arising from it, were always at highest during the war that achievement kept splendid pace, and one day's success was extended on the next. Development has perhaps never been lashed to such a furious pace before, and that is why the aeroplane, which in 1914 fluttered in the wind and often fell, is, in his opinion, a sound commercial proposition in 1920. Imagination has been effective. If imagination also is now to be demobilised and we are to set ourselves to ponder upon limitations and impossibilities as not hitherto, would it not be a sorrowful and an un-British thing? So the chance should be dismissed. 'It is by optimism that the present great success has been achieved, and only by optimism can we advance,' he said. 'The era in aviation now opening is the commercial era. Possibilities and, indeed, the almost indeterminate probabilities are boundless, not merely in the spectacular but in the practical and commercial way; but, as I urge, they must be contemplated with imagination and with reasonable optimism. It is of no advantage in contemplation to murmur that this or that has indeed been done, *but*—The consideration of the future of aviation is not an affair in which "buts" should be encouraged to take too formidable a part. In this reaction where that homage is again being paid to the lighter-than-air, which stands for a more ingenuity rather than imagination. At the moment the aeroplane has failed that now, in times of peace, new doubts should arise about it, but they are as nothing after all. Surely it is waiting for a new triumph by our people. For my own part in this matter I am a practical optimist. I believe in the future of aviation, the aeroplane which is heavier than air—practically, every way, but above all commercially, and that is the thing of the greatest importance at the present time. One of the chief faiths is that commercial aviation may be called, the doing of business: the conveyance of passengers and goods, nationally and transatlantically, will be

established in five years from the present time. Doubts and hesitations must give way before proofs, and these will be continuously yielded in abundance. In my opinion, the great machine of the future will not be like anything we have seen so far. It will be bigger, stronger and more stable, and far more powerful than anything we have at the present day. This machine will enable Britain to trade with the United States, and will carry passengers from one to the other on a regular service in a few hours. Positively there should be such a regular passenger service, the journey accomplished within the day, in not more than five years from now. The machine will be, I think, a large flying-boat with engines of about 5000 horse-power. Imagination must work hard upon the idea, and it is doing so. It is not a case only of imagination, idea, and faith, and much present speculation. The project has been entered upon. The designing of this machine has been begun. It will soon be constructed. The necessary improvements will be added as they are conceived, and in five years there should be a great consummation of the idea.'

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On this occasion of confidence and contemplation there was some opportunity for talk with a fine adventurer upon his secrets, or at least his private judgments. This, like other heroes, was a man whose modesty ran to the point of vice, in that it might conceivably militate in some measure against worldly advancement. Sir John Alcock had ideals, and with them enthusiasm, and, like his tribe, he did not commonly mix considerations of worldly reward with the enterprises of his spirit. There are the thought and the hope, the intention and the action, the full cycle of an idealist's achievement. The reward, if any, comes afterwards, and concerns not the splendid drama. Sir John was a Lancastrian, frank in feature, sincere in heart. Business men (and it is strange to see how often the commercial world lags sadly in imagination and enterprise, and sticks to old convention as to a safe financial rock) might complain that too often a hero is not in their own or the City sense a very practical man. They murmur that he is fanciful, perhaps, and does not present a practical 'proposition,' something that will really work and, in consequence, has money in it, a sound (even if a somewhat speculative) 'proposition.' The City constantly seeks a 'proposition,' and much as it would scorn the accusation, it loses thousands because it is old-fashioned. It is true that some commercial men, most commendable pioneers, are backing the aeroplane and being well justified, but Gog and Magog sometimes seem to fancy that the dirigible bag of gas is the more gilt-edged thing. So these people of Throgmorton Street, of Cornhill, and Lothbury regard heroes kindly and with patronage as idols

for banquets, but not always as propounders of those practical 'propositions' of which they are ever in quest. This man who first flew the Atlantic Ocean made a confession to me of what in his serious and carefully considered judgment had been the tensest moment of his life, and, be it remembered, this was one who in early youth saw the first planes that went his Lancashire way, and, soon as could be, himself took to flying, and in the war did marvellous things. A scout at the Mudros base, he set up a record for long-distance bombing operations, made flights that lasted for eight hours or more, dropped bombs upon Constantinople, Adrianople, and the Dardanelles, and sent seven enemy planes below. He and his men, machines being scarce, showed how practical they were by building one for this scouting business at Mudros. Great adventures were his lot. Once he and his associates had to descend into the sea off Suvla Bay. They hung on to their wreck, Turks firing upon them, struck out for the land, swimming in the darkness towards the rocks, where they hid; but in the end they had to surrender. Here was some very practical business, such as won a D.S.C. But what he told me of his selected moment was more impressive. One who has known loneliness in superb intensity has wondered since upon the utmost possibility in the way of a different and more desolate human loneliness, and though Alcock had with him his faithful Brown, he seems to have gained this distinction and secured it for himself. For, difficult as the contemplation of extreme possibility in lonely isolation may be, we may ask if it is conceivable that ever there could be a more really terrible loneliness than for a human body and soul to be wrapped in a fog, nothing to be seen up or down, away at a height of many thousand feet, above the clouds and among, as one would say, the invisible stars, unaware of position or direction of movement, knowing only that somewhere below was the Atlantic Ocean, and somewhere above what we call the heavens. Literally, absolutely, here were two units lost in space, and space befogged at that.

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He who was most concerned told me that soon after leaving the other side of the ocean, on his great attempt, his wireless apparatus having almost immediately given out, he struck a Newfoundland fog, and for seven hours sped along at two miles in the minute, seeing neither sea nor sky. This was as a gentle introduction to the depths of solitude. A little later the fog became universal, superseding the small cloud that had accompanied it, and the machine was wrapped in it. Then for half-an-hour the atmosphere cleared, and navigator Brown busied himself with the only things in the universe that were of any use to them, being the Pole-star, Vega, and the moon, by which they fixed their

position and continued hopefully on. The fog again closed round them, and shut them out from everything. Some time after this their air-speed indicator failed, the machine jolted and shook in a new uncertainty, and they lost their course. They knew not where they were, and in the fog had no means of finding out—no Vega, no moon, no Pole-star, no horizon. The machine, turned crazy in the dilemma, rocked and began to spin. It spun, as down and down it descended from a height of four thousand feet. Now, that was a proceeding that was sure of one ending if it continued, an ending such as would have prevented any telling of this story. Captain Alcock held to a full realisation of the circumstances and the situation. He told me that amid his waiting and wonderment as to whether in this strange and most perilous descent the fog would at some level clear away sufficiently to give him the momentary glimpse of the horizon that would be enough to locate his altitude—not merely his position, but what we may call his angle to the earth, which, in the circumstances, he did not know—the idea for a part of a moment did enter his active mind that those might very well be the last beatings of his heart. If the fog reached to the level of the sea, they would be. But when, the machine still spinning, the atmosphere became clear, and he saw he was a matter of but fifty feet above the waves, the sight of the sea and the horizon was enough for the instant action of a very practical man—the spinning and the falling were corrected, the course was set again, back they climbed to seven thousand feet, and though there were still fog and clouds, though hail and sleet whipped them for six or seven hours, on they went to Ireland, and at last, after nearly sixteen hours from the start, they suddenly saw below them a tiny glow of green. That was land, the land of an island just off Ireland. So much for idealism and practice. A 'proposition' had been realised.

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There has been much written and spoken and thought of what we call the romance of the air. But this is a business that begins with romance and so continues, with no interruption. Each detail of human flight is of necessity what we call romantic. But let us glance, for a fit conclusion perhaps, at a strange incident of which this famous and much-lamented adventurer informed us. Out fighting in the air somewhere near the Dardanelles, it came about that with difficulty he dismissed a German flier, who toppled broken to the sea. Some time later that German airman's propeller was picked up from the sea with what was meant to be a last message of his written big upon one of the propeller-blades. The message was addressed to a lady in Bulgaria, and was transmitted to her. It transpired later that the airman must have been rescued after all, but, luck being against him, he was killed at a

later period of the war. Now, the lady discovered the manner and the circumstances in which her friend—or perhaps her lover—was tumbled down into that eastern sea where, in his supreme plight, he had the consideration to write to her—in the absence of a pad of paper—on the floating propeller. He having later gone to his final doom, the lady was moved now to write to his quondam conqueror, Alcock, which she did accordingly, and he received the letter—strangest epistle surely that ever airman had. She wrote in English, and she desired to tell him all about herself, and longed to know something of him in turn. She apologised for having taken the liberty, as she said, of writing to him without being known to him, but she would 'introduce herself.' She was the young lady, so she wrote, to whom the German pilot, Müller, whom he had brought down two years previously, had written last greetings on the propeller of the wrecked seaplane. She had received a copy of an English newspaper with a picture of the said propeller, and another of Captain Alcock who had done the deed. Thus she knew that he was the man. Now listen to the continuation of this letter: 'I was very curious to know something about you, and Captain Wildish and Commander Greig, who know you very well, told me what a good flier you are, and that just recently you gained the prize in a concourse for a flight over the ocean. I congratulate you for that. My friend Müller was a very good pilot; he was one of the best, and I see that he has had a worthy ending. More than that, you must have excelled him to have beaten him down. I myself have never been in an aeroplane, and don't know what the sensations may be when one is so high up, but there must be something that makes you risk your life so readily. You really must feel great, having conquered the space. I began by introducing myself, and I must say something more to let you have a complete picture. I am a Bulgarian, and am a graduate of an American college; I lived several years among English and American people, and learned to love your language and literature. Last winter we had a great many English people here, and I had a chance to practise the language, and enjoyed it greatly. I shall be immensely pleased if you send me a good photograph of yourself; and if you add some snapshots of your seaplane too, I shall enjoy them none the less, and with the picture in the paper I shall highly treasure them. I shall not say how I would wish to possess the famous propeller, but rightly it belongs to you. It is your trophy, for it is you have risked your life.' She believed he would answer her 'small request,' and she sent him her 'very best wishes' and was his 'sincerely.' Such was the curious letter that Straoka Ilievna sent from her abode at Varna in Bulgaria, and it seems to add another item to the very perplexing feminine puzzle.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER VII.—continued.

VII.

THE noise of the party in the *cabinet particulier* had been growing apace with the reinforcement of champagne-bottles. The strident laughter of the women dominated the lower level of men's voices, and there was a constant clinking of glasses, punctuated by the occasional drawing of a cork, which always whipped the gaiety to a feverish pitch. Monsieur Beauchamp rubbed his hands rather anxiously. He would have preferred a little more intrigue and not quite so much noise. But, then, was it not a testimony to his wine?—and certainly there would be an excellent bill.

One of the men in the party called on some one for a song. There was a hammering on the table, a promise of a kiss in a girl's voice that trailed off into a tipsy giggle, the sound of shuffling chairs and accompanying hilarity as the singer was apparently hoisted on to the table. There came a crash of breaking glass as his foot collided with some dinner-things.

Monsieur Beauchamp winced, but consoled himself with the reflection that he could charge what he wished for the damage. The voices were hushed at the order of the singer, who was trying to enunciate the title of his song.

'I shall shing,' he said, with considerable difficulty, "'Moon, Moon, Boo—(hic)—Booful Moon," composed by myself at the early age of sheven months. It ish very pash—pashesh—it ish very shad, so, if ye have tearsh, pre—(hic)—pare to shed 'em now.'

There was loud applause, which the singer interrupted by commencing to sing in a bass voice that broke into falsetto with such frequency that it was difficult to tell which voice was the natural one. He started off the verse very stoutly, but was growing rather maudlin, when, reaching the chorus, he seemed to take on a new lease of vitality and bellowed quite lustily:

'Moon, Moon, boo-oo-oo-ful Moon,
Shining resplendantly, radiantan' tenderly;
Moon, Moon, boo-oo—(hic)—booful Moon—
Tell her I shy for her, tell her I die for her,
Booful, BOO-OO-oo-ful Moon.

'Now then, fellow Athenians, chorush, chorush!' With an indescribable medley of discordant howling the party broke into a series of 'Moon, Moon, boo-oo-oo-ful Moon,' which came to an abrupt ending as the singer fell back, apparently unconscious, in the arms of his friends. There was a murmuring of voices, and a waiter was sent for some water to revive the young man.

Considerably disgusted at the ending to the incident, Selwyn, who had turned to look towards

the *cabinet particulier*, once more sought his companion's eyes.

Her face was white; there was not a vestige of colour in the cheeks.

'Miss Durwent,' he gasped, 'you are not well.'

'I am quite well,' she answered quickly, but her voice was weak and quivering. 'I—I thought I recognised the singer's voice. That was all.'

The curtain of the *cabinet particulier* was drawn aside, and two youths in evening-dress emerged, supporting between them the dishevelled singer, who was miserably drunk, and whose hat almost completely obscured his right eye. They were followed by three girls with untidy hair, whose flushed, rouged faces had been made grotesque by clumsy dabs of powder.

The singer's hat fell off, and Monsieur Beauchamp, who was hovering about with the bill, had just stooped to recover it, when Selwyn heard a suppressed cry of pain from Elise Durwent. Thrusting her chair away from her, she made for the emerging party and halted them at the top of the stairway.

'Dick!' she said breathlessly. 'Dick!'

The drunken youth raised his heavy eyelids and looked with bewildered eyes at his sister. One of the girls tried to laugh, but there was something in the insane lightness of his eyes and the agony of hers that stifled the ribaldry in its birth. His face was as pale as hers, a pallor that was accentuated by dark hair, matted impotently over his forehead. But there was a careless, debonair charm about the fellow that made him stand out apart from the other revellers.

'Hello, sis!' he muttered, trying to pull himself together. 'My li'l sister Elise—friends of mine here—forget their names, but jolly good fellows—and ladies too; nice li'l ladies'—

'Bravo, Durwent!' cried one of his friends, emitting a dismal howl of encouragement.

'Dick! Boy-blue!' The breathy intensity of her voice seemed to rouse some latent manhood in her brother. He stiffened his shoulders and threw off his two supporting friends—a manœuvre which enabled Monsieur Beauchamp to present his trifling bill to the more sober of the two. 'Why aren't you at Cambridge?'

'Advice of consul,' he muttered. 'Refushe to answer.' He shook his head solemnly from side to side.

With a swift gesture she turned to the American. 'This is my brother,' she said, 'and I know where his rooms are in town. If you will bring my cloak, I'll get him to my car and take him home.'

Selwyn nodded his understanding. He hardly knew what words he could speak that might not hurt her.

'Listen, Dick dear,' she said, stepping very close to him and taking his hand in hers. 'Please don't say anything. Just come with me, and I'll take you to your rooms.'

Through the befuddled wits of the young fellow came the sound of the voice that had dominated his childhood. He smelt the freshness of the long grass in the Roselawn meadows; with his disordered imagination he heard again the clattering of horses' hoofs on the country-road, and he saw his sister with her copper-tinted hair flung to the breeze. With a look of mixed wonder and pain in the yellowish blue of his eyes, he allowed her to take his arm, and together they went slowly downstairs and through the throng of diners craning their necks to see, while the party he had left emitted snorts and howls of contempt.

Selwyn reached the door in time to help the drunken youth into the car, and then placed the cloak about Elise's shoulders. She put out her hand.

'Good-night,' she said.

'But you will permit me to come?' he said. 'I could be of assistance.'

'No—no,' she said tensely, 'please—I want to be alone with him. Have no fear, Mr Selwyn. Poor old Dick would do anything for me.'

He held her hand in his. 'Miss Durwent,' he said, 'I cannot express what I mean. But if this makes any difference at all, it is only that I admire you infinitely more for'—

'No—please—please say nothing more,' she cried with a sound of pain in her voice.

'But may I come and see you again?'

She withdrew her hand and pressed it against her brow.

'Yes. I—I don't know. Good-night. Please don't say any more.' The words ended in a choking, tearless sob. She stepped into the car, and with no further sign to him threw in the clutch and started away.

Huddled in the corner, his pale face glistening in the lamplight of the street, the Honourable Richard Durwent lay in a drunken sleep.

(Continued on page 150.)

ANDEAN GOLD.

By A. R. GROVES.

THERE is only one area in the world where creatures resembling sheep have been used in connection with gold-mining, and that is among the Andean sierras in Peru, Bolivia, and the Argentine provinces of Jujuy, Catamarca, and La Rioja. In this wild and desolate region of the *quebradas* and the *puna*, so sparsely inhabited in parts that one may travel a whole day and see no more of human habitation than one or two wretched low structures of mud and grass that in the distance look like boulders, the llama furnishes food and clothing to the miners, and has from time immemorial been used by them as a beast of burden. It will carry about one hundred-weight twelve miles a day, along the merest shreds of tracks cut into the face of tremendous precipices. Its broad back, covered with thick wool, bears the burden with the minimum of packing; its spongy hoof, supplemented by curious claws, fits it to cross securely the icy surfaces abounding in the high regions where it exists; and, like the camel—with which it has considerable affinity otherwise—it can go for lengthy periods without water. That the original Spanish conquerors of South America were too proud to utilise such a homely animal, as they found the Incas doing, was one reason why they failed to develop the richest of the gold-mines, for the sake of whose produce they subdued the continent. The earliest invaders, in default of horses, did attempt to ride llamas; but the result was frequently disastrous, for the animals have a

habit, when wearied, of turning round and expectorating at their riders. To be thus spat upon by sheep proved too much for the Castilian pride of the mail-clad gold-seekers, who therefore left the llamas alone as soon as mules could be imported in sufficient numbers to supersede them. The natives, however, continued to use them, as they do to this day.

But there are recesses in the Andes where even the hardest of mules cannot penetrate, and it appears to have been from these that the original inhabitants procured the immense supplies of the precious metal which the *conquistadores* found in their possession—supplies so great that, as Prescott puts it, 'gold seemed to be the only thing in Cuzco that was not wealth.' Except coins, everything down to the commonest articles was made of it, and it is significant of the part that the llama played in its production that full-sized statues of these animals, in pure gold, were repeatedly discovered by the conquerors. Yet the Spaniards quite failed to trace the chief sources from which this enormous mass of treasure had been drawn. Even to this day they can only be surmised. Somewhere amongst these tremendous mountains goldfields must exist richer than any known to our generation; but even scientific prospecting—of which there has been much during recent years throughout this region—has been unable to rediscover them. There are romantic stories that the secret of their location exists among the descendants of the

ancient Inca families; otherwise they are as utterly lost to the world as though they had never existed.

Other deposits of lesser importance have, however, been discovered, and these, from the nature of the country, constitute most important mining propositions. To say nothing of Peru and Bolivia, whose mineral wealth has long been known, there are the extraordinary (though little-heard-of) possibilities of the north-west Argentine provinces. La Rioja alone is a veritable storehouse of minerals. Gold, silver, copper, and iron have all been found, and, to a limited extent, worked, as well as nickel, cobalt, chlorates, carbonates, sulphates, nitrates, rock-crystal, salt, and coal. Mr O'Driscoll some years ago, in a paper read before the Geographical Society, stated that 'there are enough mineral resources in the province of La Rioja to pay the whole foreign debt of the Republic without in any way exhausting the supply of minerals.' Catamarca, too, is a mineral-bearing province, though with other resources as well; and there is a goldfield of considerable extent in the arid plateau known as the Puna de Jujuy. Some of the mines here are 14,000 feet above sea-level, and all the gold-seekers suffer from mountain sickness until acclimatised. Many of these men are mere 'fossickers,' seeking fortune in the dry gullies, or over the arid, treeless plains with which the district abounds. Some deep sinkings have been made, but the remoteness of the locality has as yet been preclusive of any striking success as regards these. What is remarkable about this Puna field is the vivid colouring assumed by the gold-bearing rocks. Red, blue, and green in combination are common; and, besides these, all shades between them, as well as snow-white quartz and black basalt, are often present. This is, of course, indicative of the highly mineralised nature of the country, and it is doubtful whether any other goldfield in the world is so rainbow-hued. Farther to the south, near the province of San Luis, another field has been opened up in the sierras; but, although it is rich in silver and other metals, its gold contents are comparatively small. It is entirely a deep mining area—at least, in the sense that the deposits are seldom workable on the surface—and it has been severely handicapped by its long distance from the railway. The difficulty of

transport is, indeed, the drawback of all these Andean mines. When you have to bring produce down from a height almost equal to that of Mont Blanc, on llama or mule back by mountainous tracks, then carry it for days in a slow-moving wagon across practically roadless pampas, and afterwards pay heavy freight for hundreds of miles, it requires exceptionally rich ore to cover the costs involved.

Twentieth-century engineering has, however, tackled the problem with success in at least one instance, that of the mines of Famatina, near Chilecito, in the province of La Rioja. The deposits there, situated over 15,000 feet above the level of the sea, are exceptionally rich, not only in gold, but also in silver, copper, and iron. They are, of course, within the region of perpetual snow, and to work them by any of the ordinary means would be almost impossible. No road could be made to the spot, and any kind of animal transport, otherwise than in the most sporadic fashion, is out of the question. It appeared as though the problem could be solved only by a kind of flying-machine service, and something of the kind was, some ten years ago, actually constructed. It consists of a wire-rope railway, or gigantic endless rope, over twenty miles in length, the longest in the world, which stretches away from the Government railway at Chilecito, swings over some of the wildest country on earth, and climbs two miles almost perpendicularly up the Andes to the frigid height where the mineral is mined.

This wonderful aerial railway is literally suspended from mountain-top to mountain-top, some of the unsupported spans being from 600 to 800 yards wide across the most tremendous gulfs—the greatest, indeed, is more than half a mile across. By this weird arrangement men and material are borne upward to the workings, and the ore is sent down. The working of this aerial line is automatic. The cars leave the mine full, rush down at the rate of one a minute, or less, stop near the terminus to be weighed by mechanism, and empty themselves before starting to climb upwards again for another load. Some day, when the old Inca gold is at last revealed, it will doubtless be by some such machinery, instead of by the llama or the mule, that it will be made available for the world's service.

KING RUFUS'S LOVE AFFAIR.

By W. VICTOR COOK, Author of *Grey Fish*.

I.

THE abdication of a reigning monarch may seem a simple step to the vulgar, who in their lowly station have small conception of the problems of kingship. But to the monarch the

moment when he lays down his authority is apt to be fraught with grave embarrassment.

Rufus Jefferson was King of Horseshoe, and had been any time these forty years. You might not have taken him for a king if you had seen him sitting at the door of his wooden house on

the border of the creek, considering the complicated questions connected with his abdication. He did not wear a crown or go abroad in purple and fine linen, though he could well have afforded those symbols of royalty if his tastes had lain that way. Under the wide brim of his felt hat was a hawk-like old face, lit with steely-gleaming, deep-set blue eyes, and the lower half of his features was hid in a tangled gray beard. He wore a suit of stained corduroys and a pair of heavy laced boots, and as he sat and meditated he emitted clouds of pungent smoke from a pipeful of *kinickinick*, the dried bark of the weed beloved of Indians—which, by the way, is a luxury you would do well to avoid if any one should press it on you.

It was a noble prospect on which King Rufus gazed through the fumes of his *kinickinick*. Snow-capped peaks, gleaming against the blue, showed themselves between the gaps that opened among the mountain-masses; great dark blankets of pine-forest swathed the nearer slopes; dizzy cañons split the hills, cradling in their depths swift-rushing streams fed from the eternal snows. Right at his feet lay Horseshoe, his own domain, famous as the origin of the biggest nugget ever found in Montana.

Rufe, as his subjects called him for short—though not always to his face—had founded his kingdom in the long-ago, and seen it grow around him, and ruled it with a strong hand. His thoughts, wafted on the curling wisps of *kinickinick* smoke, went back to the old days when he had established his kingship. He remembered that first terrific journey of his, when, as a young trapper, he had crossed from Montana into Oregon with a saddle-horse and nine mules, loaded with all kinds of supplies, travelling through immense untracked forests, crossing three ranges of mountains and several big unbridged rivers, till on his return journey, after eighteen months of solitary wandering, he had struck the site of Horseshoe, on the western side of the great Continental Divide. There was no other white man in Horseshoe then, nor was there for sixteen years after Rufe settled himself on the creek, and with his unaided hands built himself a sawmill, and a reservoir half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, and sawed lumber, and hewed out a shaft. Everything about his mill was of timber except the saw; and he made a carriage for the logs, and everything else. He remembered the day when he broke his saw, and by his own efforts welded it again himself—a feat which many a good mechanic could not accomplish with all the appliances of civilisation to aid him—so that you could not tell where the welding was. At last other pioneers began to come to Horseshoe to mine for gold, but by that time Rufe had all the water rights, and leased them to the new-comers, and sold them lumber, and mined himself, and made a lot of money. The place had grown and

grown; and as it had grown, so had King Rufus's fortune, till he was one of the richest men in the State of Montana. And now Horseshoe was a town of several hundred inhabitants, and had its gambling-saloon and its dancing-hall, where doubtful characters congregated to collect their tithes of the miners' gold-dust; and there were four stores, and a stage station, which was also a public hotel. And every house in the place was built of wood which King Rufe had sold to the builders at a hundred dollars per thousand feet, and in every industry in the place King Rufe had his interest.

To every abdicating monarch the supreme problem of his position is the safe disposal of his plunder, and this it was that was knotting the frowning brows of King Rufus as he sat smoking before his timber palace. The almost illegible scrawl of 'R. Jefferson' had long been a power in the Montana State Bank at Helena, forty miles away across the mountains, but King Rufus maintained his own royal treasury also in his own capital. Just where it was none knew but himself, though many would have given a good sum to learn. Just how much it was, too, was unknown to any but Rufe himself; but he knew to an odd hundred dollars or so that in that safe and secret repository he had a store of nearly half a million in dust and nuggets. His problem was how to transfer that treasure from Horseshoe to the coffers of the State Bank without the risk—nay, the certainty—of a tragic interruption on the journey. Rufe was a dead-shot, and had never been known to shirk a scrap; but these qualities were common among his subjects, and his journeys to the state capital were too few and far between to be regarded as other than public events. And though the fact of his abdication must in due time become public property, he had no intention of advertising it beforehand.

The more Rufe meditated, the more difficult seemed the solution of his conundrum. Like many absolute monarchs, he knew he was not popular in his kingdom, and into every scheme he thought of for evading publicity in the conveyance of his gold a disagreeable vision intruded itself—the picture of a dishevelled old man lying dead at the bottom of a gully, somewhere along the forty-mile mountain-trail to Helena.

II.

Down the winding valley of the Horseshoe Creek the western sun slid behind a bluff, and the purple shadow of the mountain crept over the settlement. In sawmill and stampmill the sound of the day's business slowly died away, till the murmur of the rushing creek had things to itself. Still Rufe sat smoking and thinking.

'Gie's a licht, Rufe!'

With a deeper frown King Rufus looked up at the daring subject who thus familiarly broke

in upon his royal reverie. A tall, raw-boned young Scot, with gray smiling eyes, and a mop of fair hair innocent of any hat, stood before him, holding an unlighted briar in a big, toil-hardened hand.

Young Alan M'Leod, who had somehow drifted into the Great Divide from Perth—which he always called 'Pairth'—was one of the few men in his dominions for whom King Rufus had any kind of respect. He was a gay, unaffected lad. Rufe, who eschewed women as the plague, knew only one thing against him—that in the course of a mere three-months' residence in Horseshoe Alan had succeeded in winning the affections of Madge Tremaine, the dark-eyed daughter of Rufe's mill foreman, and the unchallenged beauty of the settlement. With a grunt, Rufe tossed his match-box to the young miner, who caught it neatly.

'When I was a young man,' said Rufe, 'we used to buy our own matches.'

'The wor-ld improves with keepin', Mr Jefferson,' said Alan, grinning cheerfully. 'Did ye never hear o' the Scot in the railway-train?'

'Guess I've heerd of Scots in every goldarned kind of place,' answered Rufe grimly. 'What about him?'

'There were three other guys in the compairtment, an' he asked each o' them in tur-rn if they wud kindly obleege him wi' a match. They a' said they hadna ane, so the Scottie pulled oot his box, an' said, "Aweel, I'll e'en hae to bur-rn ane o' my ain!" Say, Rufe!'

'What?'

'Have ye found the mother-lode?'

'What are you getting after?' Rufe spoke sharply. To strike the 'mother-lode,' that mythical origin from which the glacier-borne deposits of the precious metal are commonly reputed to come, is the prospector's dream.

M'Leod laughed, and having lit his pipe, uncereemoniously tossed back the match-box on to its owner's knees. 'Mon, ye were so preoccupied, I thocht ye micht hae struck it, an' be plottin' hoo to keep the secret frae the rest o' us.'

King Rufus took his pipe from his mouth, and, with his lips slightly parted, sat staring at M'Leod with such a fixity of expression on his lined face that the young man was startled.

'So long, Rufe. I'll gie ye ane o' ma matches next time I'm passin'!'

He was moving off, but the old man held up a detaining hand. His stare had given place to a cunning smile. 'Who told you Rufe Jefferson had found anything?' he drawled.

M'Leod was surprised at the sudden change of tone. 'I kind o' guessed it,' said he for want of a better retort.

'You're kind of quick at guessing, Alan,' said Rufe. 'Say, Alan, I've lived a longish time in this country, and I tell you it don't do to guess

too much around Horseshoe, Montana. It ain't healthy. You get me, lad?'

'I get you, Mr Jefferson,' said Alan, moving off. 'Mum's the wor-rd.'

III.

And yet 'mum' wasn't the word. Somehow it got about thereafter in Horseshoe that King Rufus had struck it rich. No one could quite trace the rumour to its origin, though it was currently reported to come from Tremaine, the sawmill foreman. Tremaine, indeed, on being sounded, admitted that he had heard something, but what it was that he had heard he would not particularise. It was observed that Mr Jefferson made sundry unobtrusive visits with a hand-drill to a certain gully in the vicinity over which he had rights, and the sound of blasting was heard in the gully.

Then one day it became suddenly known, on no less authority than that of Mr Jefferson himself, that Rufe had hit upon an unsuspected vein of rich auriferous quartz in the gully. Day after day the old man visited the site of his discovery, and day after day he brought back with him a grip full of quartz, which he piled outside his home.

He made no secret of his find. He was ready to show the quartz to all comers. He boasted royally of its exceptional quality, and vowed he would take an early opportunity to have it properly assayed. The claims of Rufus's quartz were publicly discussed at the saloon, in the dancing-hall, wherever the inhabitants of Horseshoe forgathered for business or pleasure.

And gradually, from being a nine-days' wonder, the thing became a public joke. For it was a community of miners, and many by now had seen and handled the wonderful ore, and one and all who had examined it declared unhesitatingly that the thing was a frost. There was gold in it, of course. There was gold in any amount of the quartz that could be quarried in that gold-bearing land. But that it was worth mining there was a consensus of negative opinion. King Rufus was not beloved of his subjects, and great was the chuckling that a man so experienced in the land should be so fantastically deceived.

The voice of public incredulity was not unheard by Rufe, but it caused him no qualms. He was not the sort of man to be jockeyed out of his convictions by unbelief, however general. Indeed, his infatuation became the more obstinate, and the pile of quartz outside his dwelling continued to grow, adding to the merriment of Horseshoe. 'Jefferson's Jewel-Dump' became its recognised title.

The crisis of the joke came when King Rufus solemnly announced his intention to take the stage to Helena with a sample of his famous quartz to be assayed. The old man was in high feather over the prospects of his journey. The

oldest inhabitant could not recollect a time when King Rufus had so happily relaxed from his customary taciturnity.

The stage left Horseshoe in the morning, and a small crowd assembled at the hotel to speed their departing monarch, and to partake of the hospitality which he dispensed with unaccustomed liberality. No one had ever seen the old man so jovial. He had brought down a couple of great bags, their bulging sides tied up with cord. To the huge diversion of the company, he insisted on unfastening the cords and displaying the chunks of quartz within, before he carefully corded them up again. He assimilated so many drinks before the stage left that he seemed quite fuddled as he climbed into his place, and at the last moment friendly hands hauled up after him the twin bags, which he had left behind him in the bar. He rewarded their bringers with an incoherent profusion of thanks.

The driver of the stage was let into the joke before he started, and Rufus's fellow-travellers were also made privy to it. It was a very merry party which started up the long mountain-trail. At the several stations at which they stopped during the day King Rufus insisted on getting down and absorbing further refreshment, and treating all who would accept of his hospitality. It was an uproarious journey altogether; though, as the day wore on, Rufus sobered down considerably, and became visibly anxious lest they should arrive in the city after business had ceased.

As a matter of fact, it was well past banking-hours as the stage went round the last twist of the long trail, and came rolling down the Last Chance Gulch, at the mouth of which the up-to-date city of Helena is built on old placer-mining ground. Nevertheless Rufe, with ludicrous anxiety, insisted on taking his precious sample-bags straight to the bank, remarking that the manager lived on the premises, and would undoubtedly stretch a point for a man who had come so far. And the last his fellow-passengers saw of him, he was seated in an automobile, with his samples on either side of him, and his grim old face wreathed in smiles, *en route* for the bank.

IV.

By the time King Rufus reached Horseshoe again, a few days later, he had relapsed into his habitual grimness. He would vouchsafe little information as to the result of his journey, and in his present frame of mind few cared to press him on the subject. It was gathered, however, that he was quite satisfied with the assayers' preliminary report; and whatever the truth of this might be, it was certain that the old man continued to make frequent visits to the 'Gully of Golden Hope,' as the community had christened it, and that the 'Jewel-Dump' continued to grow.

But in the course of a few weeks interest in Rufus's discovery paled before a yet more piquant development. King Rufus had fallen in love! At first the thing seemed too wildly absurd to be credible. Yet there it was, a fact patent to all eyes. Rufus Jefferson, King of Horseshoe, was infatuated with Madge Tremaine, the lovely daughter of his mill foreman. Tremaine's house stood between that of Rufus and the quartz-gully, and whenever the old man visited his 'Gully of Golden Hope,' he would call in at the Tremaines', either going or returning, or both, and competent observers reported from week to week the progress of his courting. It was a supreme joke.

There was, of course, one individual who failed to see anything humorous in the situation, and that was young Alan M'Leod. Poor Alan's open-hearted gaiety underwent a sad change. His honest Scots face became dour. He grew silent and uncommunicative, and toiled ferociously at his work, and his gray eyes, when he encountered King Rufus, looked unutterable things.

For the extraordinary part of it was that dark-eyed Madge herself, though at first she had treated the advances of her elderly admirer with cold disdain, perceptibly thawed as the weeks went by. Rufe was now clearly a welcome guest at her father's house. The girl had been seen openly visiting his quartz-quarry in his company, and gaily laughing as the old man showed her this and that feature. Grinning gossips shrugged their shoulders and asked each other what you could expect when an old reprobate so well lined as Jefferson wooed the daughter of his hired man. Tremaine kept his own counsel, like the stolid Cornishman he was, but it was plain that he saw no objection to the affair.

As for Madge, she was credited with keeping up with poor Alan a flirtation of the most heartless coquetry, showing to the agonised lad a face of smiling innocence, and treating him on the same footing of affectionate intimacy as before the advent of his wealthier rival. But every one could see for himself that Alan's visits to the Tremaines' grew fewer, and that the poor fellow constantly returned from them in a condition of greater desperation. There were not wanting those who prophesied a tragic outcome of the jest of Rufus's courtship.

Then suddenly, within two months of his journey down to Helena, Rufe himself one day publicly announced in the saloon his intention to take the stage with Madge and her father for the purpose of being married in Helena. With the foolish infatuation of an elderly lover, he descanted on the magnificence with which it was his intention to mark the ceremony. There was to be a grand wedding-breakfast at the Placer Hotel—no less a place would serve—to which he extended an open invitation to any of his old friends at Horseshoe who might care to accept.

The old man seemed clean taken out of himself at the prospect.

In a corner of the bar Alan M'Leod was deliberately spoiling his fine young manhood with raw spirit. The dramatic announcement reached his fuddled brain, and he stepped unsteadily forward, fronting the old man with glaring, dangerous eyes. 'It's a lee!' he declared bluntly. 'It's a damned lee!'

The company held their breath. There were plenty of reckless spirits there, but not one of them, even if drunk, would have dared to address King Rufus thus.

The old man started as if he had been struck, and his right hand went to his hip-pocket. There was murder in his fierce old eyes as he pulled out his pistol and frowned into the Scot's flushed face. But with an effort like a man pulling up a restive horse he seemed to jerk himself round, and instead of addressing Alan, he let loose a storm of invective at the surprised bar-tender.

'What in hell do you mean by serving a drunken man in my saloon?' he raged. 'Yes, sir. Seventy-five per cent of this shebeen stands in the name of Rufe Jefferson. If you serve another drink to that young fool across this bar, I'll have you fired out.—As for you, Alan M'Leod, go home and get sober!'

He stalked from the place in a royal fury; and Alan, finding the hired bar-tender suddenly adamant in his refusal to execute further orders, had perforce to make a virtue of necessity, and yield a vengeful submission to the old tyrant's behest.

v

The lad was still sufficiently master of himself to know better than to seek the Tremaine home in his then condition, but next day he deliberately waylaid Madge.

'Madge Tremaine,' said he bitterly, 'ye're killin' me. Tell me, is it true ye're gaun wi' yer faither to be selt tae auld Jefferson at Helena the morn?'

For all her coquetry, fair Madge had an honest face. There was trouble in the dark eyes that met her old lover's eyes, but there was pride there too. She drew herself up. 'I'm not going to be sold to any man, Alan.'

He caught at that. 'Then tell me ye're no gaun, Madge!'

'I am going,' she said.

'An' yer faither wi' ye?'

'Father's going too.'

Poor Alan gave a dreadful harsh laugh. He was too full of bitterness to see the distress on the girl's proud face. 'An' ye're the lass that swore she loved me!' he exclaimed. 'The lass that took ma kisses, an' gied me hers! Ye heartless, fause chit!'

Madge winced under the lash of his contempt as at a blow, but her eyes flashed back into his.

'I wish the auld thief joy o' his bargain!' cried M'Leod.

'If you mean Mr Jefferson, I believe he is satisfied with his bargain,' said the girl coldly.

'I dinna doot it! An' I dinna doot his bargain is weel satisfied wi' auld Rufe! Gray hairs look weel eneuch when they're dyed gold, if the dye is laid on thick. Eh, my God, I'd never have believed it but frae yer ain lips, Madgie!' The man's face worked under the storm of passion which carried his attempted sarcasm before it. He turned brusquely on his heel, and would have left her without another word.

'Alan!'

At the swift softening of her voice he swung round again. He eyed her hungrily, but did not speak.

'Don't be cruel to me, Alan! You don't understand. You can't understand!'

'Can I no!' he cried. 'It's a great fule I maun be, sure! But I'm no that dense, ma lass, that I canna see the difference atween a millionaire an' a miner.'

'Alan'—the voice was soft and pleading—'you kissed me.'

'Ay!' he exclaimed fiercely. 'He canna rob me o' that!'

'Won't you—won't you kiss me again?'

His face twitched, and the blood thumped at his temples, but he stood firm. 'No,' he said, 'I'll no kiss ye again, Madge. If I did, I'd be wantin' to kill ye. An' I wud dae better to kill masel'. An' I winna gie auld Rufe that satisfaction. But ye'll no see me again.'

'Alan,' said the girl, her cheeks burning, 'I've asked you to kiss me, and you have refused. I'll not do it again; but there's one thing you won't refuse me—for the sake of what we have been to each other.'

'An' what's that?'

'I want you to promise on your honour—I know you're a white man, Alan—that you will stay at Horseshoe for a week—just one week—after I go to Helena with Mr Jefferson. Dear Alan, please!'

Through the turmoil of his jealousy and despair that 'Dear Alan, please!' wrought with strange appeal. M'Leod passed a great hand across his brow. He felt dazed and helpless, but, like a drowning man at a straw, he caught blindly at that 'Dear Alan, please!'

'Ye dinna ken what ye're askin' me,' he groaned, 'but I'll promise.'

'Shake!' she said, and smiling up at him with tear-dimmed eyes, she put her small hand in his big one. He held it for a moment in a grip that hurt her, though she gave no sign. Then he flung it from him and strode away.

vi.

The next morning the stage for Helena drove off with King Rufus, and Tremaine and his

daughter. Rufe was sober enough this time, and Madge's trunks and his own were piled in orderly array on the stage before they took their places. The crowd who assembled for the send-off did not have to chase him with forgotten baggage. He was quietly jubilant, though at the back of his mind there was an uneasy mistrust of where that fellow M'Leod might be.

Far up the trail, hollow-eyed after a sleepless night, the Scot lay hid, and with bitterness of soul watched the vehicle drive away into the range.

No two men in Horseshoe could have got through the work that Alan performed in the week which followed. Debarred by his rival's tyrannical prohibition from the drink which he had sought, he took refuge in utter physical exhaustion. He worked as if his very life depended on it, as perhaps, indeed, it did, for the lad was terribly in love, and there was not much just then between him and madness. Once, when a comrade made some jesting reference to his affair, Alan, without an instant's hesitation, hurled a heavy mining-pick with such force that, though it missed the man's skull and took off his hat instead, the iron pick-head snapped in two against the rock. Thereafter Alan was left to nurse his misery without comment.

On the evening of the last day of the week, long after the other men had quit work for the day, M'Leod, haggard and dog-tired, was grimly bending over his toil, when a shadow came between him and the failing light. He looked up and saw Madge. She held out a letter. 'For you, Alan,' said she.

Alan dropped his tools and stared. 'What's this?' he demanded.

'A letter, Alan,' said the girl demurely

'Wha frae?'

'Mr Jefferson asked me to give it to you, and said it was important.'

'I'll no read it,' said Alan dourly.

'Mr Jefferson said, if you would not read it, I was to read it myself.'

'Then ye can read it, Mrs Jefferson. There's nae secrets between man an' wife.'

With crimson face and shining eyes, the girl unfastened the envelope and took out the letter. 'My name is Madge Tremaine,' she said. 'This letter was written to you, Alan, and I think you ought to read it for yourself.'

The meaning of her words penetrated slowly to her lover's brain. His weather-tanned face went pale.

'My name is Madge Tremaine,' she repeated. 'Take it, Alan.'

He snatched the letter fiercely from her hand, opened it, and read the following sentences, written in King Rufus's cramped and angular

hand: 'Alan M'Leod, you goldarned young fool, I oughter have shot you, but it warnt worth while. You see the Tremaines and me had got the better part of 300,000 dollars in dust done up in our grips, and I could not afford to be interrupted by trifles. Guess that Madge is a good girl that can hold her tongue. I gave her father and her a top-notch time in Helena after I had stowed the stuff at the bank, and I've given her 5000 dollars for a wedding present in case she takes a fancy to any of the boys down in Horseshoe. But I guess they aint fit for a girl like that. Praps I'll come back some day, and praps I wont. So long.—RUFJE JEFFERSON. P.S.—You can have my quartz-quarry if you have a mind to it.'

The colour came slowly back into the young Scot's face as he stood staring at the ill-spelt script. 'I doot I'm slow, Madge,' he said. 'I dinna quite get the hang o' this.'

'Sit down, and I'll tell you, Alan,' said Madge. 'You look dreadfully tired, poor boy!' He sat meekly beside her on a jutting rock. 'You see,' she explained, 'old Rufe wanted to go out of business. He had got a big fortune stowed away here in dust, but he was frightened he would get plugged on the trail if the boys had wind he was shifting it to Helena. You see, he's not what you would call a popular man, anyway, and half-a-million dollars is kind of tempting to some folk. So Rufe hit on the notion of that quartz-quarry. He got away with a lot of stuff on the bluff that it was quartz samples that he was going to have assayed; but there was a lot more left, so he had to think of something else before he could move it safely. He didn't think the sample lay would work a second time. So he opened up to my father, who was the only man he thought he could trust, and he offered father a good commission for his help. But it was to be a dead-secret, you understand. So it was put about that Rufe and I were going to be married. If it hadn't been for you, Alan, it would have been the greatest fun; but I was terribly afraid you would go and do something to upset the whole scheme. I never thought you would have believed it; Alan. But you did, you silly boy. Well, we got to the bank all right, without a soul suspecting what was on, and emptied our packs. And then, when we came out, Rufe had another little pack that he put in my hands. "That's for you, my girl," he said, "in case you ever want to be married."'

Alan's honest face was a study.

Madge's dark eyes drooped shyly, and the toe of her little shoe fidgeted with the gravel. 'You don't want me to ask you again, do you, Alan?' she murmured gently.

Alan M'Leod didn't. Words failed him, but actions speak louder than words.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

CHEAP POWER FROM RIVERS AND TIDES.

WHAT may be termed 'current water-wheels' have been used almost from time immemorial for generating small amounts of power for pumping water and other purposes. These contrivances consist of wheels having curved buckets—or even flat boards—set radially round their peripheries in a similar manner to the floats on the paddle-wheels of steamships. In action, however, there is the important difference that, while in the latter case the floats push the water, in the former the water pushes the buckets or flat boards, and thus causes rotation. In swift rivers considerable amounts of power can be developed at a very low cost, the expense resolving itself into (1) the interest on the outlay for the wheel and gearing, and (2) the cost of upkeep, which in the case of so simple an appliance is very low. With low-speed currents, such as those normally produced by tides, the amount of power available would be very small relatively to the size of the wheels; and with a view to obtaining more power without proportionately increasing the size and cost of the apparatus, an improved form of current water-wheel has been invented by Mr Joseph Clarkson, engineer and manager of the Air Power Co., Prestwich, Manchester. The arrangement takes the form of an endless chain or chains (there may be two or more for wide buckets) which run round sprocket-wheels at each end of a floating frame moored in a river or a tideway. Attached to the chain (or chains) are buckets or flat-board floats; those on the portion of the chain under water are pushed along by the current until they emerge from the water at the rear, and return to the front through the air, the contrivance bearing some resemblance to the caterpillar traction-belts used on tanks and on some agricultural tractors. Naturally, when the chain is pushed along the sprocket-wheels are turned, and power may be taken from their spindles. It might be thought that one bucket would absorb some of the pressure that would otherwise reach the next behind it; but this is not the case provided that the buckets are fixed at the correct distance apart. An experimental current wheel of this description was tried recently on the Mersey by the chief engineer of H.M.S. *Conway*, Lieutenant-Commander Le Mesurier, R.N., when it was found that power could be developed from currents of only two miles an hour at a lower cost than from coal. On the assumption that the bucket-chain is run for four periods of about three hours each per day when the tide is strongest, and the power is used to drive a dynamo from which the electricity is stored in accumulators, it is claimed that electric current can be supplied continuously for less

than a penny a unit. This figure is based upon an allowance of 10 per cent. for interest and depreciation on the capital outlay for the actual power-production gear, and of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the cost of the electric apparatus. Moreover, the power developed is based upon a current of only two miles an hour, which is greatly exceeded in the Mersey. In rivers with currents of only two miles an hour which flow continuously, double the amount of electricity would be produced at less than half the cost, as no accumulators would be needed; while in swift rivers power could be developed at a very low figure indeed.

A VALUABLE FRUIT-JUICE.

That the juice of an edible fruit should be waterproof when brushed on to surfaces as a varnish or lacquer will come as a surprise to many. Such, however, is the case with the juice expressed from the Japanese persimmon, or date-plum, which is used extensively in the 'Land of the Rising Sun.' In addition to being impervious to water, coatings of persimmon-juice are insect-proof and are unaffected by heat. According to the *Japan Magazine*, this substance is particularly suitable for mixing paint for damp climates, such as that of Japan. It is also used either as an adhesive or a varnish (or both), for packing-paper, umbrellas, raincoats, paper-boxes, waterproof bags, and insect-paper, and is employed for putting a gloss on silk, on tortoise-shell, and on similar surfaces for which varnish or lacquer is used in this country. For mixing paint for ships' bottoms and for buildings persimmon-juice is said to be invaluable; in fact, it is stated that ordinary oil-paints would not withstand the damp climate of Japan without it. The fruit of the persimmon grows to a huge size, berries exceeding a pound in weight being not uncommon. An appliance similar to a cider-press is used for extracting the juice.

X-RAYS FOR DETECTING DIAMOND THIEVES.

Diamond-mining in South Africa is carried on mainly by native labour, and the blacks are prone to steal the precious stones when opportunities arise. Naturally they are searched on leaving the mines, but although they are stripped for this process, various tricks are resorted to whereby a considerable number of diamonds are passed out undetected. Recently X-rays have been invoked by the superintendent of a large mine for discovering concealed diamonds about the naked persons of the natives, and this plan has proved entirely successful. Enough X-ray tubes (of the Coolidge type) are so mounted in a frame as to illuminate the whole body of a native standing in front of them. This arrangement permits of viewing all

parts of the body through a fluoroscope in a few seconds—a *sine qua non* when hundreds of natives have to be searched within a short space of time. It might be thought that, provided the diamond were masked behind a mass of bone, it would not be detected; but the difference in transparency between the two substances, and the tendency of the diamond to glow when lit up by X-rays, render its discovery comparatively easy. The failure of other means of detection can be readily understood when one learns that the stones are often swallowed, and have been secreted even in self-inflicted wounds.

A MECHANICAL ROAD-MAKER.

Roads and streets all over the country have been worn into a bad state during the last five years, and an enormous amount of work will have to be expended upon them in the near future if the surfaces are to be put into their pre-war condition. Gangs of men are to be seen repairing the streets in many parts of London, and in Brixton an interesting machine has been introduced by Messrs John Mowlem, the well-known contractors, with a view to expediting the work, while economising in manual labour. Streets laid with wood pavement have a foundation of concrete, composed of one part of Portland cement to three of sand and five or six of broken stone, gravel, or other similar material. Hitherto the concrete has been mixed at the side of the road and wheeled in barrows to the place where required, the operations being carried on entirely by hand-labour. The new device, known as the 'Lake-wood-Milwaukee Paver,' consists of a four-wheeled trolley, upon which is mounted a rotary concrete-mixer with a steam-engine and boiler or an oil-engine to drive it, the power being also available for propelling the vehicle and for dumping the mixed concrete at any point in the road. The dumping is carried out by a steel bucket with a capacity of fourteen cubic feet, made in the form of a hopper, and fitted with doors at the bottom. This bucket is hung from a trolley which runs on a swinging horizontal steel arm with a radius of sixteen feet. A wire-rope passing round a pulley at the end of the arm serves to haul out the loaded bucket to the point desired, the return journey being effected by a second rope. The action of hauling in the latter releases a trigger gear that holds shut the doors at the bottom of the bucket, which therefore open and allow the concrete to fall out during the return journey; or, if desired, the complete bucketful may be dumped at one point. Winding drums, driven by the engine, haul in and pay out the wire-ropes as required. At the inner end of the arm the bucket hangs under the spout of the concrete-mixer. The materials are conveyed into the mixer by means of a hinged shoot with a wide, flat end, which can be lowered so

that it rests on the ground. When the cement, the sand, and the stone have been shovelled into the shoot in this position, it is hauled up by the engine through a winding gear until the contents slide by gravity into the mixer.

AN ELECTRIC BATH-CHAIR.

No type of vehicle other than the bath-chair gives the silent, restful motion so necessary for invalids. Except on flat paths and roads, however, a fairly strong man is needed to draw a bath-chair containing a heavy person. This being the case, it is only natural that attempts should be made to propel these vehicles by mechanical power. For this purpose the petrol motor is put out of court by the noise and vibration accompanying its use, but a means of silent propulsion is to be found in the electric motor. An electric bath-chair which has been perfected and placed on the market recently is known as the Elieson-Carter electric invalids' carriage. The body is roomy and comfortable, but needs no special description here. The driving-gear, however, is unique, and possesses many interesting features. Unlike the wheels of a car, the front instead of the back wheels are driven by the motor, which is mounted immediately over the front wheels, where it is entirely out of the way of the occupant of the chair. Owing to the absence of any need for spring suspension of the motor, the transmission-gear is exceedingly simple, consisting of a worm on the motor-spindle, which engages with teeth on a wheel keyed to the front axle. Two front wheels are adopted in these chairs instead of one, and they are both fixed to one axle, with the aforesaid driving-wheel between them. The motor has a vertical spindle, and is therefore above the axle instead of out on one side, where it would be very much in the way. Friction due to the weight of the motor armature (the revolving part) and to the drive of the worm is eliminated as far as possible by ball-bearings. Worm transmission is vastly superior to other types for these chairs owing to its silent running as compared with chain-drives or ordinary gearing. Electric current is supplied by a storage-battery of twenty cells carried under the seat, where it is easily 'get-at-able' and takes up no space needed for other purposes. This battery may be charged from the lighting circuit of the house in which the chair is kept, or at a garage, the cost being small in either case, and it will run the chair for twenty miles on one charge. The operation of the electric invalid-carriage is very simple, only one lever being concerned in going forward. All the occupant has to do is to push forward this lever more or less according to the speed required, which ranges from a crawl to five miles an hour. Even the brake is worked by this same lever, being put on when the lever is brought back to the stop position. On pulling over a smaller lever, the same range

of speed is available for going backwards. There is no cranking, oiling, or filling of petrol-tanks, and no adjustments are needed, the carriage being ready to glide off at any time. A secret switch prevents the use of the chair by would-be thieves when it is left standing unattended; while a small fitting on the front axle, on being released, disconnects the transmission-gear, so that the chair can be pushed along by an attendant in cases of emergency.

MOORING-TOWERS FOR AIRSHIPS.

So long as they remain afloat modern rigid airships are not easily damaged, but the greatest care has to be exercised during the operations of manœuvring the vessels into, and out of, the huge sheds in which they are housed. Even under the calmest conditions, 300 or more men are required to effect the housing of a large airship; while on many days in the year when flying itself would be perfectly safe the vessel has to remain idle owing to the difficulty and danger of bringing it out into the open and housing it again. The natural solution of this problem was the mooring of airships clear of the ground in such a manner that they could swing round with the wind. This method of overcoming the difficulty entailed a mast or a tower to which they could be moored at a sufficient height to ensure their keeping clear of the ground under all conditions. Then it was suggested that gas, petrol, and water should be supplied through such towers, and finally that the passengers and crew should obtain access to the gondolas by them. Towers serving all these purposes are now being made by Vickers Limited, of Barrow-in-Furness, the world-famous builders of warships and all kinds of aircraft. One or more towers will be provided at every aerodrome, and round the bottom of each may be built a passenger and goods station. The tower itself is constructed of steel lattice-work, and rises to well over 100 feet, the top being stayed by steel wire-rope guys, securely anchored to the ground. A passenger-lift runs up the inside of the tower and delivers passengers on to a platform in the enlarged head. Mounted above the platform chamber is the swivelling head to which the nose of the airship is attached by a patented coupling. This coupling, while being perfectly secure, allows of some vertical movement, so that no strain comes on the tower when the airship floats with her tail slightly up or down. Once the nose is made fast, a flexible gangway, similar to those between the coaches of corridor-trains, is extended between the swivelling head and a passage into the airship. On alighting at the top platform, passengers ascend a staircase into the swivelling head, and proceed thence through the flexible gangway into the airship. At no point are they exposed, although they can look through small windows in the lift-car and the tower-head. The lift is worked by an

electric motor in the top-platform compartment. In the swivelling head is a winding drum (worked through gearing by another electric motor), upon which is wound 1000 feet of the highest quality steel wire-rope. A similar outfit, with 600 feet of wire-rope, is situated in the bow of the airship, the end of this rope being passed through an attachment on the nose which fits into the patent coupling forming part of the swivelling head. After an approaching airship has notified by wireless her intention to land, the wire-rope at the head of the tower is threaded through the patent coupling and paid out until the end reaches the ground, when it is attached to a light car and driven away from the tower in the direction from which the airship is approaching, the rope uncoiling from the drum as the car proceeds. When 700 or 800 feet from the foot of the tower, the end of the rope is detached from the car and landing-signs are laid down to indicate its position to the airship pilot. Meanwhile the ship is approaching at a height of 500 feet, which is the normal procedure for landing with the apparatus being described. On arrival over the end of the rope pulled out from the tower, the bow mooring-rope of the ship is released, and runs out through the fitting on the nose under the pull of several hundred pounds weight of sand-bags. The release of the bow mooring-rope is under the control of the bow-hand, who can check, or accelerate, the rate of fall of the rope in such a manner as to ensure the descent of the sand-bags in the immediate vicinity of the landing-party, which need not exceed six in number. Two men of this party now take charge of the rope which has dropped from the ship, unshackle the sand-bags, and effect a junction with the mooring-tower rope, which is in the hands of the remaining men of the landing-party. The rope-ends are coupled together by means of a special self-locking coupling, which enables the junction to be made in the space of from three to five seconds, and which, when once closed, will not allow the ropes to separate until the coupling is released by hand. On receiving a signal from the ground-party, the men in charge of the winding-gear in the mast-head proceed to haul in. As the rope tautens, ballast is discharged from the ship, and she continues to maintain her height well above the ground and the mast-head, while the distance between herself and the latter is steadily decreasing. On approaching close to the mast, the amidships propellers are put astern, and the ship is slowly hauled into connection with the automatic coupling already set in the open position to receive the attachment on the nose. When once this coupling is closed the mooring-ropes can be dispensed with, the ship's rope being re-wound on to the storage-drum in the bows, and the end suitably stowed ready for making the next flight. After landing at the mast-head, connection is made with the supplies of hydrogen,

petrol, oil, and water; and fresh gas, fuel, and water-ballast are placed on board in order that the ship may be kept in trim during the discharge of cargo, and the embarkation of passengers and stores may be effected. When it is desired to leave the mast-head for flight, the pulling of a lever in the automatic coupling releases the airship. She then draws astern and upwards under the influence of the prevailing wind until she is well clear of the landing-station and can proceed on her course. The design of this apparatus is such that the landing of an airship can be effected as easily in a strong wind as in complete calm, and a ship is enabled to effect a landing in practically any wind in which it is safe for her to fly. Should the wind be so high (that is, over sixty or seventy miles per hour) that the ship cannot reach a given mast, it will always be possible for her to ascertain, by means of her wireless, the nearest station at which favourable conditions obtain, and she will there make her landing, proceeding on the abatement of the storm to her true destination.

DICTIONARY FOR COMPUTING INTERNATIONAL
COMMERCIAL QUOTATIONS—VOLUME II.

In our issue for March 1919 we referred in eulogistic terms to Volume I. of Mr James Robertson's *Dictionary for Computing International Commercial Quotations*, pointing out how serviceable it would be to the British merchant who traded with any part of the continent of Europe. We have now before us Volume II., intended specially for those who do business with North or South America. Careful examination shows that the new volume is just as serviceable and as reliable as its predecessor. With its aid the British trader can readily convert any price expressed in his own currency and weights and measures to the equivalent price in the currency, weights, and measures of any country on the American continent. The reverse operation can be performed just as quickly, ample provision being made in both cases for fluctuations in exchange. To the importer and exporter these volumes are a veritable boon, enabling catalogues to be compiled and quotations to be given in a form intelligible to the customer with an ease, accuracy, and speed hitherto unattainable. We understand that a third volume, dealing with the East, is in active preparation.

NEW COLOUR-MATCHING APPARATUS.

Until the advent of the invention that forms the subject of this note the only artificial light in which colours could be matched with any satisfactory degree of success was filtered through special screens of glass and gelatine, by means of which the blue end of the spectrum was strengthened relatively to the red, artificial light—even from the electric arc—possessing a much

smaller proportion of blue and violet rays as compared with red and yellow rays than is characteristic of sunlight. The new correcting apparatus consists of a concave reflector fixed below a powerful electric lamp or series of lamps (those used in the experimental model were of 600 candle-power), by which the light is directed upwards on to the inside of a curved screen. Small patches of different colours, arranged according to a formula calculated from the results of experiments on the pigments, form the inner surface of this screen, from which there is reflected downwards light that almost equals daylight for the matching of colours. Invented by Mr G. Sheringham, the artist and designer, this device has been developed at the Imperial College of Science and Technology by Mr L. C. Martin, with the help of Major A. Klein, late of the Camouflage School, and colour adviser to the Cotton Printers' Association, and was exhibited recently before a meeting of the Illuminating Engineering Society. A representative of the *Times* who compared coloured wools, Chinese enamels, pastels, and prints by daylight, ordinary electric light, and the new Sheringham light successively, states that under the last-named 'delicate yellows were quite distinct, indigo blues were blue, cobalts had their full value, and violets lost the reddish shade which they display in electric light.'

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

KISSES FOUR.

Love kissed the earth all gaily,
And whispered Summer's name;
A thousand lilies awakened;
The roses stood aflame.

Love kissed the earth all sadly;
The blossoms paled and died;
And frightened, sobbing Summer
Saw Autumn by her side.

Love kissed the earth all coldly;
The very hedges froze,
And Winter's heartless laughter
Rang o'er the buried rose.

Love kissed the earth all shyly;
Sweet Spring, asleep too long,
Came dancing out of heaven,
And earth became a song.

EDITH L. ELIAS.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

HENRIETTE DE BEAUVALLON.

By LETTICE MILNE RAE, Author of *Eagles of Rome*, &c.

PART I.

I.

THE advent of one of Napoleon's generals as a prisoner-of-war on parole was hailed with enthusiasm in Dulbury. The news that he was young, handsome, and covered with medals spread like wildfire, till every maiden's heart fluttered and all the matrons began to consider what steps they should take to annex him.

The national prejudice against the French had considerably abated of late years in Dulbury owing to the presence of a young *émigrée*, Mademoiselle Henriette de Beauvallon, now known under the abbreviated and anglicised title of 'Mamselle Vallong,' who had fled from the terrors of the Revolution, and, after various vicissitudes, found a haven of refuge in Dulbury in company with her compatriots, the Comte and Comtesse de St Armand.

At first Dulbury had looked askance at the refugees and eyed them with deep distrust; but when it found that they ate neither snails nor frogs, did not cheat or steal, or challenge any one to a duel—all of which enormities Dulbury had hitherto believed to be synonymous with the French—it inclined to be more charitable in its attitude to the strangers, and even showed them no little kindness.

The *ci-devant* aristocrats led an extremely quiet and decorous life at Widow Watkin's, eking out a livelihood by giving lessons in dancing and the French language, until Madame la Comtesse drooped and died, and Monsieur le Comte departed to America, where his son was prospering. He had begged Henriette de Beauvallon to accompany him and try her fortunes in the New World; but changes had been so frequent in her life that she felt she could not face another, and so elected to remain in Dulbury and continue the dancing lessons.

When Henriette reviewed her four-and-twenty years of life, they appeared to be divided into as many scenes as a play. She had made her entrance in the Château de Beauvallon in beautiful Touraine; yet her earliest memories were not of the castle by the Loire, but of the humble peasant home where she had been put out to nurse, and where she had remained until her

ninth year. That had been the happiest time in her life, when Mère Jeanne Raimond had loved and tended her with a love far excelling that of Madame la Marquise, her mother, who, indeed, had forgotten all about her daughter amid the distractions of Versailles—which accounted for the unusual length of time that Henriette spent with her foster-mother. And then there was Marcel Raimond, her foster-brother, three years her senior, who had also loved and tended her with unflinching devotion. Ah, what happy playmates they had been, little brother and little sister, unconscious of the great gulf that lay between them, untroubled by the poverty, the bad harvests, the wrongs of the peasantry, and the murmurs of discontent! Small wonder that Henriette de Beauvallon looked back on those years as her paradise on earth!

The scar on Henriette's cheek dated back to that blissful time. It was a very disfiguring scar that ran from the corner of her mouth half-way across her left cheek, and gave her face, when seen in profile, the appearance of perpetually wearing a grin that was strangely incongruous when compared with the sweetness of the unscarred side. Yet Henriette rather valued that scar, because it was reminiscent of those happy days of childhood. It brought back the moment of exquisite delight in a forbidden world of white cherry-blossom, into which she had climbed with Marcel's assistance, though entirely against his advice. Of the subsequent abyss of darkness into which she had fallen she remembered nothing, nor of Marcel's agony of distress when he beheld his precious little foster-sister lying motionless with a great bleeding gash across her face.

But the scar also recalled to her mind another scene she would fain have forgotten. It was the last in the First Act of her life, when Madame la Marquise, on one of her rare—very rare—visits to Beauvallon, had suddenly remembered the existence of her daughter at Mère Jeanne's, and swooped down to claim her. It was no joy to Henriette to recall that first meeting with her mother, who appeared in the guise of a very fine lady, beautiful to gaze upon, but

very terrifying to hear as she abused Mère Jeanne for her carelessness in permitting such a disfigurement to befall the sacred person of a De Beauvallon. Henriette could still remember her childish screams of protest and dismay when she found she was to be borne away by this dread stranger to the great château that frowned down upon the orchards and the humble dwellings of the peasants.

II.

Then the curtain had gone up upon the Second Act of Henriette's life. The scene was the Carmelite Convent of the *Sacré Cœur* where she had remained until she was seventeen. Across the stage flitted the gentle figures of the nuns, the grave and dignified Mother Superior and her gay, light-hearted charges, Henriette's schoolfellows, into whom she had tried to instil something of her own stateliness and decorum. The years at the convent had been happy too. From within the shelter of its walls the world had seemed a very wonderful and delightful place, full of all kinds of pleasures forbidden by the sisters. Even within its quiet precincts life had not been without its interests for Henriette. It was at the *Sacré Cœur* that she had become acquainted with Jane Howe, the warm-hearted, generous-natured, if somewhat eccentric, English girl whom she had admired and worshipped with schoolgirl devoutness. Jane was the child of a French Roman Catholic mother and an English politician whose advanced democratic views were fully shared by his daughter. It was Jane Howe who had first awakened Henriette to the Rights of the People and the iniquities of the *Corvée* (tax paid in compulsory labour), the *Gabelle* (salt tax), and the *Taille* (a tax levied on land—nobles, clergy, and holders of office being exempt), until her heart burned within her with shame and indignation against her order. Oh, those walks and talks in the convent garden with Jane Howe—could she forget them?—when they two would conjure up glorious visions of a Universal Brotherhood of Man, with all the social wrongs and injustices swept away! It was Jane Howe, in fact, who sowed the seeds of democratic principle—in ground unconsciously prepared, no doubt, by those years of Mère Jeanne Raimond's care—that were to take strong root in Henriette de Beauvallon's heart.

At the *Sacré Cœur*, too, Henriette first discovered the joys that lay between the boards of sober-coloured books, and the still greater joy of impersonating the characters described in that world of romance. This Henriette had found to be particularly her *forte*, and she used to thrill her companions by acting to them scenes from Molière and Racine in a manner that caused the good sisters to shake their heads and wonder if it were not a sinful propensity to be crushed by prayer and penance. 'It is a gift of the good God, child,' said the wise old Mother Superior. 'May you always use it for good, and not evil!'

III.

It happened that Henriette did have occasion to use this talent, and for good; but that was in the Third Act of her life, when the scene had changed from the convent to the gay world where she followed the vagaries of Madame la Marquise, her mother, and her brother, now Marquis de Beauvallon.

They were at Beauvallon, and Henriette joyfully renewed her acquaintance with the home of her childhood after eight years' absence. In spite of Jane Howe's teaching and Henriette's full acceptance of her tenets, the years had inevitably marked the gulf which lay between her and her former friends. But for Mère Jeanne she still retained her old affection, and sought her out at the earliest opportunity. Henriette inquired with eager interest for her playmate, Marcel. He had grown to be a very promising young man, Mère Jeanne told her with maternal pride. He had good looks and keen intelligence, and Monsieur le Curé had taken a fancy to him, and taught him to read and write as well as himself, and hoped to make him a priest. But Marcel's heart did not lie that way, and he preferred to remain as he was, helping his father on the farm.

One wintry day, driving along the roads in a high curricule attended by a lackey, Henriette had encountered Marcel leading home a donkey laden with faggots from the forest. Her attention had been drawn to him owing to her lackey's insolence in nearly running him down and then breaking forth into a volley of abuse because he had not moved out of the way more sharply. The blaze of righteous anger that leapt into Marcel's eyes as he turned to face the insolent flunkey, and its sudden dying away in a downcast gaze of abject submission as he recognised Mademoiselle Henriette, revived all her enthusiasm for Jane Howe's advocacy of the Rights of the People, and she greeted Marcel with a gracious courtesy that brought him literally, as well as metaphorically, to his knees before her. But the sight of him humbly kneeling in the snow with bent head as before a shrine brought a pang of regret to Henriette's heart. She realised that, whatever her sentiments might be, the old intimacy could be no more, nor could the chasm be bridged over. Henceforth she was Mademoiselle Henriette de Beauvallon, aristocrat; he was Marcel Raimond, a son of the people.

But even from her high position she endeavoured to hold a certain kindly intercourse with her foster-brother. She found occasion to express her interest and sympathy in his education, and told him of the wonder and pleasure that was to be discovered in the world of books. Sometimes she would even declaim lines from the dramatists in her own inimitable fashion until the peasant-scholar gazed spell-bound and enthralled at his instructress.

They were standing thus one day in the forest, close to the château, when they were discovered by Monsieur le Marquis, who was returning from the chase with a party of friends. Marcel had been engaged in chopping wood when Mademoiselle Henriette, wandering unattended in defiance of all rules of propriety, had come upon him by chance and fallen into conversation. Their talk, beginning with woodcraft and politics, had passed on to literature, and ended by Henriette reciting to him from Racine's masterpiece one of *Athalie's* famous speeches.

Finding them so, Monsieur le Marquis's anger leapt into a flame at the outrageous audacity of the peasant in daring to stand and hold speech with, or even to look at, mademoiselle his sister, and he promptly struck Marcel a violent blow across the face with his riding-whip. The youth staggered, blinded and stunned; but recovering himself, with an anger that equalled that of the marquis blazing in his eyes, he boldly faced his assailant and demanded the right to cross swords with him.

The marquis was outraged and aghast at such a suggestion coming from one of his own peasants, but his companions urged him to accept the challenge for the jest of it, and give the vermin his deserts. Henriette stood by, distressed and horrified beyond words by the turn of events. It was terrible enough that her brother should have come upon her in company with Marcel and misinterpreted the scene. In her own heart she knew that she had never demeaned her proud lineage by speaking with this lowly foster-brother, and that he had ever regarded her in utter reverence, as befitted his peasant blood. But Monsieur le Marquis could not be expected to understand such a position, nor could he altogether be blamed for striking the blow. He was only following the fashion of the day. He belonged to the old *noblesse*, and was ignorant of all things save those which appertained to his order. In truth, it was Marcel Raimond who had transgressed against the canons of civilised society by daring to claim the right of crossing swords with the Marquis de Beauvallon. It was an unheard-of proceeding, and could only end one way. The De Beauvallons had been noted swordsmen for generations, and Monsieur le Marquis excelled the reputation of his house. Marcel had only practised the art surreptitiously in his father's barn, because the muttering of 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,' was becoming daily louder in France, and Marcel, being young and ardent, supported the new theories with enthusiasm. A chance had now come to hand whereby he could carry his theories into practice and meet Monsieur le Marquis as an equal, and without a thought of fear he determined to seize it.

Shocked as she was at his boldness, the certain knowledge of the result filled Henriette

with horror and misery. She seemed to see Marcel lying gasping his life out through a thrust from her brother's sword. The vision turned her sick, and she resolved, if possible, to prevent the meeting. Yet what could she do? No words of hers could have any effect upon the marquis. The duel was fixed for that evening after supper. It was to take place in the *salle d'armes* of the château, in the presence of the noble company the marquis was entertaining. The hour came, and Marcel presented himself in the *salle d'armes*, pale, grave, and resolute. He was provided with a sword from the marquis's armoury. The blades were measured, the opponents stood facing one another, when the door swung open and Henriette appeared upon the threshold like an apparition, pale as death, and with a strange, unusual expression upon her face—an expression of contempt and hate and scorn that seemed to pierce Marcel's heart as her eyes fell upon him.

'Marcel Raimond, what do you here?' she asked in a cold, cutting voice.—'Armand, my brother, what is this? You are going to cross swords with one of the *canaille*—you, a De Beauvallon—one of the *noblesse d'épée*? Consider, I pray you! His reptile blood would stain your blade for ever, and be a blot upon the honour of our house. Ugh! I shudder.'

Then she lunged again at the peasant swordsman with piercing thrust. 'Marcel Raimond, you dare to set foot within the Château de Beauvallon to meet Monsieur le Marquis as if you were his peer? You dog of a peasant! Is it because you happen to be my foster-brother—because I have condescended to let my eyes rest upon you—to let a word fall from my lips as I would throw a bone to a cur—that you dare to aspire to this? Ha! You scum! You rat! Pig, go back to your sty! Go! Go! Go!'

Her voice rose with impelling fury, and she pointed a terrible finger to the door, with her dark awful eyes fixed upon the cowering Marcel. It was more than he could endure. The blow of the marquis was as nothing compared with the scorching bitterness of Mademoiselle Henriette, whom he had adored. With a cry he let fall the sword upon the flags of the *salle d'armes*, and turned and fled through the door to which Henriette's finger pointed him, breathing vengeance in his wounded pride against the De Beauvallons and all their order.

He did not know that in her chamber Mademoiselle Henriette upon her knees thanked the good God for His gift to her—the gift that enabled her to impersonate so successfully a truly aristocratic virago, blasting the upstart peasant duellist with a vituperation that had reduced even the marquis and his friends to a state of amazed and impotent silence, when all the while within her heart had rung the agonised cry to Heaven, 'Save him! Oh, save him! Help me to save him!'

IV.

But Marcel did not know this, and Henriette had never had a chance to enlighten him. They did not meet again; nor did she try to seek him out, perceiving that her efforts to bridge over the chasm that lay between them brought only greater wrong and trouble. And so the spark of hate that was kindled that night in Marcel Raimond's heart glowed and burned, fanned by the winds of strife and discord that were blowing tempestuously through France, until at length it burst into a flame that fired the Château de Beauvallon.

That was a very terrible scene for Henriette to look back upon. She could see it all still with horrible distinctness—the gay company within the château, unconscious of danger, indifferent, callous indeed, unheeding the signs of the times. It was the night of her *fiançailles* with Monsieur le Marquis de Lafère. But it had not been on that account a day of supreme bliss. She had had no desire to be betrothed to the count. There was no love in their union—rather the reverse for her. He was not young, nor was he well-favoured. But Madame la Marquise had commanded, and Henriette had been forced to obey.

They were all at supper in the banqueting-hall when tumult broke out in the courtyard. It was swift and overwhelming. An unwashed and ragged host, drunken with the lust of revenge and armed with hideous weapons, burst

into the hall and began their awful work of slaughter and spoliation.

'Are these the People—the People of Jane Howe's dream of Democracy triumphant?' was the sudden, sorrowful question that flashed through Henriette's brain. Then a great and merciful darkness came over her. She did not see her brother meet his fate, nor her mother hers. It was well. The only thing she did see when her senses returned was Mère Jeanne bending over her, murmuring endearing words. She found she was lying in one of the surrounding plantations, brought thither by Mère Jeanne's arms, while the sky above them was ruddy with the reflection of the burning château.

Thus the curtain dropped on that Act of her life. The scenes that followed were confused and blurred. She vaguely remembered being packed into a rude cart beneath vegetables and cheeses and driven to the nearest market-town by Mère Jeanne. There she had been handed over to the care of a relative of her foster-mother, in whose house she spent perhaps a week, perhaps more, she could not tell now, for she had lived a close prisoner in a little attic and lost count of things altogether. Then Mère Jeanne had contrived to link her foster-child's fate to that of the Comte and Comtesse de St Armand, neighbours at Beauvallon, and refugees from the same cause; and with them Henriette had at length found safety in England.

(Continued on page 169.)

THE WRECK OF THE AURANIA.

By WALTER MENZIES.

THROUGHOUT the entire length of the west coast of Scotland there can be few shores more wild and inhospitable than the north-west corner of the island of Mull, round Caliach Point. There is nothing in the nature of a beach. Great rocks and huge boulders, resembling a vast herd of petrified monsters, fringe the foot of the cliff, which rises abruptly from the water's edge. At that rugged promontory the sea is never wholly quiet. Even on the calmest days the great swell of the Atlantic rolls in unbroken, making the hollow crannies in the cliffs sing their uncanny chant, as they are filled and emptied again with the rise and fall of the waves. But let there be a breeze—farther up the Sound it is nothing—here at Caliach Point the sea begins to break, and the white horses to chase one another to the shore. At no time a pleasant place for a small boat, it then becomes a dangerous spot even for a fair-sized vessel.

In the Gaelic *caliach* means an 'old woman.' The name is apt. Here, like some evil spirit, the Old Woman sits, remote from human habitation. Year in, year out, she hears naught but

the screech of the gale, the lashing of the waves, and the scream of the gulls, as she waits for what the sea may bring. Black, long-necked, crested cormorants preen themselves on the rocks. At low-tide seals lie basking in the sun. Up above circle unceasingly the great solan geese, ready at the first silvery gleam of mackerel to plunge headlong straight from the clouds into the waves. These are all the company the Old Woman enjoys.

A few miles out to sea appear the white rocks of Coll and the gleaming sands of Tiree. To the south lies the Dutchman's Cap—the similarity to the headgear of the beefeaters at the Tower is remarkable. Away on the southern horizon rises the outline of Iona. To the north are seen the islands of Canna, Rum, and Eigg; and beyond them glitter in the sunshine in all their grandeur the far-famed Cuchullin Hills of Skye. Verily, a wild and desolate spot. Wherever the eye is turned the clouds are pierced by great mountains rising one behind the other in seemingly endless succession.

It was a bright summer day when last I visited Caliach Point, and although it was

perfectly calm in the Sound of Mull, yet here the sea was running and the wind whistling in the rigging. But when the winter storms are raging it is an awe-inspiring sight. Then it becomes a boiling cauldron, a seething whirlpool, a roaring chaos of green water and white foam, with the great waves dashing on the rocks and flecking with spume the green turf that serves the Old Woman for hair. He would indeed be a reckless man who sought to effect a landing there. Yet what man in his prudence shrinks from attempting, ruthless Destiny accomplishes; for, out of all the west coast of Scotland, inscrutable Fate chose Caliach Point as the final resting-place for a fine, tall ship.

The *Aurania* was a brand-new Cunard liner of nearly 14,000 tons, and had started on her third voyage across to America when she was torpedoed off the north coast of Ireland in January 1918. She was considered to be in a sinking condition, and all on board took to the boats. There was a high sea running, and unfortunately some seventeen lives were lost. It was thought, however, that the great ship might be towed to safety, and she was picked up and taken in tow by tugs. During the night the cable snapped, and, with such a wind blowing, it was deemed impossible to take her in tow again in the darkness. The tug-boats made the best of their way to their stations, reporting that the *Aurania* was as good as lost—as indeed those in charge had reason to believe was the case. In the morning search was made in all likely directions for the liner. Not a trace of her was found, and it was assumed she had gone to the bottom. However, abandoned by man, derelict, at the mercy of the Atlantic in mid-winter, nevertheless the great ship made a bold bid for safety. For no less than ten days did this floating mountain drift about, driven this way and that, leading, it would appear, a charmed life. Unseen of man, she was driven northwards. The inclement coast of Islay—off which another great liner, the *Tuscania*, met her doom—was passed without let or hindrance. Scatheless she left behind her the wild islands of Oronsay and Colonsay. With fortune that, on a glance at the map, appears almost divine, she steered a safe course past the dangerous Dhu-Heartach Rock and its lighthouse. Nay, she may even have made and weathered the great Skerryvore—that outlying Pharos, monument to the ingenuity of the Stevenson family. Neither the strand of Tiree, gleaming with white sand, nor the cavernous rocks of holy Iona were deemed meet as an altar for the sacrifice. It was left for the Old Woman to receive in her lap this offering from the sea—the sea that for so long had dashed nothing but its own angry waves against her.

Picture this great Argonaut, her brasses shining, her white decks gleaming, her huge funnels towering some hundred feet above the

sea, her masts reaching a still dizzier altitude, pursuing all that time her wild, erratic course—a modern *Flying Dutchman*. Surely it is a fitting subject for a second *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Much has been said and written of the Spanish treasure-ship that sought safety and fresh water in Tobermory Bay—some sixteen miles distant from the Caliach Point—only to be sunk by the wild clansmen. Much money has been spent in trying to recover this problematical Spanish gold. Yet here was a more valuable booty; here was a treasure rich and rare—not at the bottom of the sea, but ashore on an inhospitable coast.

No effort was made to save the *Aurania*. It does not seem to have been thought worth any one's time and trouble to remove even any of the fittings, themselves of no small value. Yet it would not have been a work of surpassing difficulty. She lay with her bows well out of water. Four of her promenade-decks were unsubmerged. Her stern lay under water. This was her condition early in February 1918. Owing either to official neglect or the inclement weather, no steps appear to have been taken to save any part of the ship. She lay sloping to leeward, and so received the full fury of the northern winter winds. What a time they must have had of it! How the waves must have laughed like fiends as they dashed themselves against such a noble prize! Here, at last, was something on which they could wreak their vengeance for the innumerable rebuffs they had received at the hands of the Old Woman. How they must have screamed aloud in their glee as they battered to match-wood the noble decks, rising one above the other! These, however, must have served merely as *hors d'œuvre* and *entrées*. How about the more substantial courses? Figure to yourself the great funnels, through which a fair-sized trawler might pass. Gradually, as one tide succeeded another, as the angry sea lashed itself incessantly against them, one stay after another would be broken, and add to the general din by flapping against the hollow funnels. At last the funnels themselves would fall into the angry depths, with a splash that must have sounded even above the roaring of wind and sea. What chaos and pandemonium must have raged on and about that miserable ship! The waves would surge through cabins and doorways with a hiss, to be followed by a long-drawn sigh as they retired to gather themselves for a fresh assault.

For seven months the *Aurania* had been battered about by wind and tide when I set eyes on her. Only her bows were out of water now. Her decks, except at the bows, were all gone, and the rocks were littered with wood and spars. Barnacles clustered in millions on the winches and the great anchors. Slimy emerald-green seaweed grew on the erstwhile gleaming

decks. Somewhere about amidships there sprawled across the wreck what looked like a huge python—on examination it proved to be only one of the ship's davits. It alone weighed nearly three tons. On the foremast there still hung the brass bell bearing the ship's name. Numerous broken stays flapped about in the wind. Some five or six hundred feet away showed a little above the water the remains of the stern. The unfortunate vessel made a pitiable picture. Over her, and keeping out the sun, hung the Old Woman, throwing, as it seemed, her baleful shadow over her prey. The cormorants hardly ceased to stretch their wings and preen themselves in recognition of our approach. From the wreck itself issued the greedy sound of lapping water. The insatiable sea, having gorged itself on the flesh and entrails of the *Aurania*, was still greedy for more, and even on this calm morning was nibbling at the carcass.

I had come far and been at some pains to visit the wreck; yet, now that I had arrived, it seemed almost a sacrilege to disturb her solitude. Was she not even to be allowed to die unseen of the eyes of men, in the desolate spot she had chosen, unaided, when she fled northward, with a great gaping wound in her side? An atmosphere of permanent fixedness seemed to pervade everything. The Old Woman, of course, had sat there from the birth of the world, and would doubtless remain until the crack of doom. Even her offspring of petrified monsters, lying at her feet, although many æons younger than their dam, had forgotten whence they came. The cormorants, albeit the individuals were continually changing, had become one with their surroundings through the association of many centuries. The sea was there,

immutable but ever-changing. And now this new feature had entered into the scheme of things. Seven months of storm and rain might be a mere trifle in the history of the Old Woman, but to the *Aurania* it was an age, and she now fitted into the landscape and seemed to have become a part of her surroundings. Yet, in the nature of things, it could be but a temporary place she occupied. All too soon the sea would complete its work, and nothing would be left above water to show where the ship lay—only below would the partans and the lobsters rejoice in fine breeding-beds, and the great rock-cod find a pleasing labyrinthine maze through which to wind their finny way.

Sadly, therefore, I climbed on board and smoked my pipe, revolving in my mind many things—things spoken and things unspoken. Even as I smoked, the wind rose and the rising tide rushed in and out through the great anchor-winch. Clambering into the trawler, I left the *Aurania* to desolation and the Old Woman.

The ensuing winter saw the final break-up and total disappearance of all that was left of the liner. Her end was probably that of many another fine ship during the war; but the bid she made for safety, after being torpedoed, almost makes one think that Fate had intended her for a longer life. That for the space of ten days a ship of this size should be able to career about in home waters, unobserved by a single individual, at a time when every ship that sailed was on the alert for enemy craft, seems almost incredible. It is true that the weather was very bad at that time. Yet, when the prize was so great, when the necessity was so compelling, when so little was wanting to secure safety, it is hard not to think that something might have been done which was left undone.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER VIII.—INTERMEZZO.

IT was several months later—May 1914, to be precise—when Austin Selwyn made the determination, common to most men, to remain in for an evening and catch up in his correspondence.

After the manner of his species, he produced a small army of letters from various pockets, and spreading them in a heap on his desk, proceeded to answer the more urgent and postpone the less important to a further occasion when conscience would again overcome indolence. For an hour he wrote trivial politenesses to hostesses who had extended hospitality or were going to do so; there was a reply to a literary agent, one to a moving-picture concern, an answer to a critic, and a note of thanks to an admirer.

Having disposed of these sundry matters, he sat

back in his chair and read a long letter that had been enclosed in an envelope bearing the postage-stamp of the United States of America. At its finish he settled himself comfortably, lit a cigar, and, squaring his shoulders, wrote a reply to the Reverend Edgerton Forbes, rector of St Giles' Episcopal Church, Fifth Avenue, New York:

'LONDON, May 12, 1914.

'MY DEAR EDGE,—I've been supplying your friend the Devil with all sorts of cobble-stones recently, but, my dear old boy, if I had written you every time I intended to, you would have had no time to prepare those knock-out sermons of yours.

'In your letter you hint at possible heart

entanglements for me. Do you not know that to a writer all women are "copy"? Even when he falls in love, your author is so busy studying the symptoms that he usually fails to inform the lady until she has eloped with some other clown.

'I must admit that you were partly correct in your surmise. I almost fell in love last November with a girl who invariably angered me when I was with her, but clung to my mind next day like an unfinished plot. I saw her quite frequently up to February, when I went to the Continent, but have not called on her since my return.

'I met her first at her mother's town house, where there were several people who admitted their greatness with an aplomb one was forced to admire. This girl sort of sat there and said nothing, but her silence had a good deal more in it than some of the talk. We had our first chat that night by the fire, next morning went riding in Rotten Row, and had dinner together the same night. Fast travelling, you say? On paper, yes; but actually I don't know the girl any better now than the night I met her. She's a strange creature; self-willed, fiery, sweet, and sometimes as clever as your Ancient Adversary. But friendship with her makes me think of the days when I was a kid. My great hobby was building sky-scrapers with blocks, and very laboriously I would erect the structure up to the point when "feeding-time" or "washing-time" or "being shown to the minister" used always to intervene. When I returned, the blocks had always fallen down. Well, friendship with Elise (pretty name, isn't it?) is not unlike my experience with the blocks. You can leave her, firmly convinced that at last you are on a basis of real understanding; and two or three days later, when you meet her again, you find all the blocks lying around in disorder. Instead of a friend, one is an esteemed acquaintance. The only way to win her, I suppose, would be to call at dawn and stay until midnight. It would be a bit trying, but I get awfully "fed up" (as they say over here) with being constantly recalled to the barrier.

'Of course, you old humbug, I can see you pursing your lips and saying, "Does Austin really love her? If he did, he would be unable to see her faults." It's an exploded theory that love is blind. Good heavens! if a man in love can see in a girl beauty which doesn't exist, is there any reason to suppose he will be unable to see the faults that *do*?

'But, candidly, I don't think I am in love with this young lady. I might be if I were given half a chance, but then emotional icebergs were always my specialty. I meet a dozen girls who treat me with a tender cordiality that is touching; then there comes into my course one who expresses a sort of friendly indifference, and there I stay scorching my wings or freezing my toes— whichever figure of speech you prefer.

'She makes me think of a painting sometimes,

one that changes in appearance with the varying lights and shadows of the sky. But, Edge, given the exact light that her beauty needs, she is a masterpiece. In some strange way her personality has given me a new pleasure in Corot and Diaz. It is difficult to explain, but it is so. I feel my powers of description are inadequate really to picture Elise to you. She is truly feminine, and yet when she is with other women her unique gift of personality makes them *merely* feminine. "Lordy, Lordy," as a nigger of mine used to say, "dis am becomin' abtuse."

'As a matter of fact, the girl is a result of conflicting elements of heredity. I haven't met her father, but I gather that he is a good old Tory of blameless respectability, and has a deep-seated disbelief in evolution. On the other hand, the girl's mother is rather a buxom and florid descendant of a vigorous North of England family, the former members of which, with the exception of her father, were highly esteemed smugglers. The lady's grandfather, Elise tells me, was known as "Gentleman Joe," and was as adventurous a cut-throat as a small boy's imagination could desire.

'Well, Mr Parson, you can imagine what happened when these conflicting elements of heredity were brought together. In the language of science, there was one negative result and two positive. The first-mentioned is a son Malcolm, whom I have not met. He has a commission in the cavalry, is a devil at billiards, can't read a map, and rides like a Centaur.

'Of the positive results it seems to me I may have already mentioned one—Elise. The other is Richard, the tragedy of the family. Poor Dick was practically kicked out of Eton for drunkenness when he was about fifteen. For the past year or so he has been at Cambridge, but he got in with a bad set there, and after several warnings has been "sent down"—or, in ordinary language, expelled. It appears that the old combination of "booze" and women got the better of him, though there's something oddly fine about the fellow too. He was hitting an awful pace at Cambridge, and when he tried to pass off a fourth-rate chorus-girl as the Duchess of Turveydrop, the axe descended. As the masquerading duchess was rather noisy and very "elevated," you can see that there must have been complications.

'Of course, his governor was furious, and, settling a very small allowance on the poor beggar, turned him out of the family home, and forbade him to ever darken, &c., &c. (see, split infinitive and all, any "best seller" of a few years back).

'Does this seem at all incongruous to you? These so-called aristocrats bring a son into existence, and, providing he's a decent-living, rule-abiding chap, he is sheltered from the world and kept for the enriching of their own hot-house of respectability. But—if one of them upsets the ash-can and otherwise messes up the

family escutcheon, the father says, "You have disgraced our traditions. Get thee hence into the cold, outside world. After this you belong to it."

'Damned generous of paterfamilias, isn't it? Only, as one of the cold, outside world, I can't help wondering why, if Milord is going to keep his good apples for himself, we should have to accept the rotten ones.

'Concerning Cambridge—I spent a week-end there recently with Doug Watson of Boston, who is taking Engineering. Cambridge is quite a little community, as separate from the rest of England as the Channel Islands. On the Saturday evening I was there Watson took a punt, and with considerable dexterity piloted me along the Cam, with its green velvet banks and overhanging trees. The river is an exquisite thing, and there was a sensuous drowsiness in the beauty of the hour before dark.

'The lawns from the backs of the colleges slope down to the river, and as we passed along we noticed group after group of students drinking coffee made in percolators in their possession. There was something almost pastoral in the sight of those young Britishers in such complete repose. Perhaps I should have enjoyed it all without question if it had not been that, a week before, I had visited a poor little Non-conformist preacher who labours on an empty stomach to a little congregation in a chain-making district. Edge, the sights I saw there were not good for any man to see and remain quiet. Women work at the fires when pregnant, and fuddle themselves with beer at night; the men are a shiftless lot, who spend their lives hand-in-hand with poverty and think only of beer, "baccy," and loafing. You know I'm no prohibitionist, but I hate to see beer the goal of men's ambitions. In one school there was a class with forty "backward" children. That's the kinder word, Edge, but the real one is "imbecile." Think of it—forty human destinies that must be lived out to a finish! They tell me that conditions are improving there. I hope so, in Heaven's name.

'It was that visit I had in mind when punting along the Cam. A man is a fool to pit his little mind against so vast and wonderful an edifice as a great university like Cambridge, but one thought which occurred more than once to me was whether or not a man can be considered educated if he be ignorant of human misery existing beyond the college gates. In the Scottish universities the Professor of Latin is called Professor of Humanity. I wonder, Edge, if the time is not ripe for a chair of Humanity in a wider sense in all universities.

'On Sunday we went to one of the churches, and, with eleven others, managed to present a formidable congregation of thirteen. The preacher's prayer, which he read, was a superb piece of work. He started off with the King and

the Royal Family, passed on to titled and landed gentry, after them the higher orders of the clergy, leaders of the navy, the army, and all those in more or less authority, then the lower orders of the clergy, and after several categories I have forgotten, he reached the commoners, and (in an appropriate tone of voice) hoped we should live in peace, one with another.

'Think of it, Edge, in this enlightened age! I wanted to go up to him after the service and ask him why he had left out the minor poets, but Doug stopped me—which is perhaps just as well. He might have added a prayer for Americans after the commoners.

'Sometimes I think that the English Church is losing its grip. I don't mean that snobbery of the kind I have described is common, but in the development of Church character it seems to me that the truth of Christ's birth into a humble walk of life is drifting steadily farther from the clerical consciousness. The timid snobbery which permeates so much of English life, and reaches its wretched climax in the terms "working class" and "lower classes," finds condonement in the ranks of the clergy. Even in its humorous aspect, when Mrs Retired Naval Officer starts to swank it over Mrs Retired Army Officer (senior service, dear boy, y'know), and so on down the line, the local rector too often takes an active part in seeing that the various grades are punctiliously preserved. Of course, there are glorious exceptions to all this, and they are the men who count.

'I suppose at home we are just as bad, and that even so democratic a preacher as yourself doesn't take supper on Sunday night with the poorest parishioner. Perhaps living in a strange country makes a man see many things he would not notice in his own.

'To finish with Cambridge—we joined a party of two large punts on Sunday afternoon, and with about twelve college chaps and local (approved) girls we went for a picnic up the river. The girls were fairly pretty and terrifically energetic, insisting upon doing an equal share in the punting, and managing to look graceful while they manoeuvred the punts, which were really fair-sized barges. And when we reached the picnic-place, they made all the preparations, and waited on us as if we were royal invalids. Bless their hearts! Edge, to restore a man's natural vanity, commend me to life in England. Coming home we played the gramophone, and, with appropriate flirtation, floated nearly the whole way to the holding of hands and the hearing of music.

'And, theologian as you are, if you deny the charm of that combination, I renounce you utterly.

'Just one more Cambridge thought. (This letter has as many false endings as one of your sermons.) There were quite a number of native students from India in attendance, and I noticed that these men, many of them striking-looking

fellows, were left pretty much to themselves. The English answer when spoken to, and offer that well-bred tolerance exerted by them so easily, but the Indian student must feel that he is not admitted on a footing of equality. I'm not certain that the dark races can be admitted as equals—but what effect on India will it have if these fellows are educated, then sent back with resentment fermenting their knowledge into sedition? It may be another case where the Englishman is instinctively right in his racial psychology; or, again, it may be a further example of his dislike to look facts squarely in the face.

'Of course, we have our own racial problem, and have hardly made such a success of it that we can afford to offer advice.

'Well, Edge, this letter has run on to too great a length to permit of any European treatment. That will have to wait. Of course, I have paid several visits to Paris, and understand as never before the saying: "Every man loves two countries—his own and France."

'Edge, why is it that people who travel always have the worst characteristics of their nationality? On the Continent one sees Englishmen wearing clothes that I swear are never to be seen in England, and their women so often appear angular and semi-masculine, whereas at home—but then you know what an admirer I am of English women. And our own people are worse. Tell me: at home, when a gentleman talks to you, does he keep his cigar in his mouth and merely resonate through his nose? Or is that a mannerism acquired through travelling?

'But enough, old boy. This has covered too vast an acreage of thought already. Oh yes—about my writing. I have been doing very little recently, but can feel the tide rising to that point where it will of necessity overflow the confines of my lethargy. I have had the honour of meeting several of the foremost writers here, and there is no question about it,

they are doing excellent work. But I wish that I could feel a little more idealism in their work. The whole country here is parched for the lack of Heaven's moisture of idealism. People must have an objective in their lives, and the Arts should combine with the Church in creating it.

'Of course, there is an amazing amount of drivel written over here, most of which, I think, would never get past the office-boy of an American publication. The English short story and the English music-hall are things to be avoided.

'Before I end, have you seen Gerard Vanderwater recently? I heard that he joined the diplomatic service at Washington after leaving college. I often think of him with his strange pallor, but suggestion of brooding strength. Did it ever strike you that every one respected him, and yet he really never had a close friend? It always seemed to me that he carried about with him a sense of impending tragedy. Find out what he is doing, and let me know.

'Well, old boy, in another few months I shall pack up and return to America, and once more woo the elusive editor. I am looking forward to sitting by your fireside and, through the cloud of tobacco-smoke, weaving again our old romances. I am really proud of you, Edgerton, and know that you must be a tremendous power for good.

'A letter any time addressed c/o The Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, will find me.—As ever, your old chum, AUSTIN SELWYN.'

The writer addressed an envelope, inserted the letter, sealed and stamped it, then yawned lazily. Gathering his outgoing correspondence and the old letters, he took his hat and sauntered into the street, conscious of having done his duty—also that he had unearthed some thoughts the existence of which he had not suspected beneath the surface shrubbery of everyday existence.

(Continued on page 164.)

ICELANDIC VOLCANOES.

THERE are few portions of the earth's surface which exhibit more abundant proofs of intense volcanic activity than Iceland.

This island, which has an area of about 40,000 square miles, is composed almost entirely of rocks of volcanic origin. Vast quantities of volcanic debris and numbers of craters (the mouths of which have been wholly or partially destroyed by mere erosion) bear witness to the eruptions which must have taken place long before the foot of man trod this land of ice and fire; and still the activity of the Icelandic volcanoes seems by no means exhausted.

In some parts of the island volcanic cones of various dimensions can be counted by the hundred, but most of them are extinct. We

know with certainty, however, that twenty-three or twenty-four of them have been active in historic times, and doubtless a good many other eruptions have taken place which have not been observed—more especially in the inner tracts which had not until recently been explored. In all we know of 130 active and extinct volcanoes, with at least a couple of thousand craters.

These volcanoes occur in groups, between which a certain connection can sometimes be traced. Usually they stand across rifts in the mountain-ridges, which in the south run from south-west to north-east, and in the north from north to south. In the north-western and eastern parts of the island there are no volcanoes. The most important groups are (1) the Reykjanes group, on

the peninsula of that name; (2) the Hekla group; (3) the Laki group, to the south of Vatna Jökull; and (4) the Mývatn group, in the north.

The most famous of the Icelandic volcanoes is undoubtedly Hekla. It is a mountain composed of alternate layers of lava and tufa which have been formed during various eruptions; but its base is in a mountain-range which runs in a north-easterly direction, and upon which there are a number of other volcanic cones. The formation of all these cones is due to a great eruptive rift which runs lengthwise through the aforesaid mountain-range.

Hekla has been active on a number of occasions in historic times. Streams of burning lava have descended its sides, and dense showers of ashes—accompanied by violent earthquake shocks—have caused widespread destruction. The volcano's last eruption, which took place in 1845–46, lasted for seven months, and it was computed to have discharged during that period not less than 432 million cubic metres of lava. The column of ashes rose to a height of four thousand metres, and portions thereof were borne by the wind to the continent of Europe. Even at noon the darkness was such that people had the greatest difficulty in finding their way home; the hot ashes dammed up the rivers and raised the temperature of the water almost to boiling-point; vivid and constant flashes of lightning lit up the scene; and, throughout, loud thunderings and explosions came from the mountain. The devastation wrought on this occasion, however, was slight as compared with that done by the eruption of Hekla in 1766.

To the south of Vatna Jökull, the most extensive glacier in Europe, there is another great volcanic tract, the so-called 'Laki' region, where in the eighteenth century there occurred the most terrible outbreak ever recorded in the annals of Iceland. Here there is a rift some fifteen miles in length, running in a north-easterly direction, which is closely studded over with craters, large and small; and it was from these that, in 1783, came the eruption which caused a catastrophe from which the island did not wholly recover until the middle of the following century. The lava flowed forth in two huge streams—one of which attained a distance of fifty-five, the other of thirty, miles—and covered an area of more than two hundred square miles of country. According to the calculations of the Norwegian geologist Professor Helland, Laki must on this occasion have vomited forth about fifteen milliard cubic metres of lava and some three milliard cubic metres of ashes and scoria. The lava-streams destroyed forty farms, and the falling ashes ruined the grass pastures for several years throughout a great extent of country. After the eruption people and animals were attacked by severe illnesses, caused, no doubt, by the poisonous gases and vapours with which the atmosphere was impregnated; and 18 per cent. of the population

succumbed. In 1783–84, 11,000 cattle, 190,000 sheep, and 28,000 horses—in all, two-thirds of the island's entire stock of animals—died.

On the peninsula of Reykjanes, to the south of Reykjavík, the capital, there is a volcanic area within which, according to Professor Thoroddsen, the Icelandic expert, there are thirty volcanoes and seven hundred craters. No such destructive outbreak as the one above referred to can be said ever to have emanated from this group, but the vast tracts of lava bear witness to violent eruptions in prehistoric times.

Of all the volcanic tracts of Iceland, however, the one at Mývatn is perhaps the most interesting, comprising as it does, within a comparatively limited area, volcanoes of so many different types and sizes. On the little island of Geitey alone there are ten craters; at least fifty cones rise above the surface of a tiny lake; and owing to the many hot springs which discharge into it, the temperature of the water is very high—so high, indeed, that the vegetation here is more luxuriant than at almost any other place in Iceland.

Notwithstanding the large number of volcanoes in this region, only one eruption has taken place in it in historic times, but it lasted off and on for five years—from 1724 to 1729. In 1729 the lava descended towards Mývatn and destroyed the hamlet of Reykjald, together with the parsonage. Close to the church, however, the stream of molten rock divided, and the sacred structure escaped uninjured. This the people attributed to special intervention on the part of Providence; but the fact is that the building had been constructed on higher ground, and now it stands in a green oasis in the middle of the black lava. When the lava reached the lake a great battle took place between the burning masses and the water. The battle lasted a long time, but in the end the lake came off victorious.

In addition to the volcanoes belonging to the groups referred to above, there are others which stand apart and which have also been responsible for titanic discharges. Thus we have Askja, the greatest volcano in Iceland, situated in the middle of the great lava desert Odádhraun, from which, in 1875, a violent eruption took place; Katla, in Mýrdals Jökull; Oeraefa Jökull (6500 feet), in the south; and many others.

The last great eruption in Iceland occurred in the autumn of 1918, but owing to the convulsions from which Europe was suffering at the time, it attracted comparatively little attention.

In October 1918, after having lain dormant for a period of nearly sixty years, Katla began to exhibit symptoms of activity in the shape of earthquake shocks in its vicinity, and on the 12th of that month an enormous column of mingled dust and steam shot up from the mountain. From observations taken at Reykjavík, the height of this column was estimated at 37,000 feet. Every now and again it was rent by vivid flashes of lightning, and these served

in some degree to mitigate the gloom which shrouded the entire district even on days of cloudless skies. At Vik, a village of some three hundred inhabitants, sixteen miles from the crater, the darkness was so great that lights had sometimes to be kept burning throughout the twenty-four hours. Although Reykjavík is more than a hundred miles from Katla, and several mountain-ranges intervene, not only was the cloud-like pillar visible from the town, but the streets were covered with a layer of volcanic dust sufficient to show clearly the imprint of footsteps. The wireless installation at the capital was at times subject to great disturbance, as also was the telephonic connection with Vik. In the district of Medalland, some twenty miles from the crater, four farms were swept away by the floods which accompanied the eruption. The people from these farms escaped with their lives, but they lost nearly everything else, including most of their cattle, horses, and sheep. The bridges over the rivers were destroyed, and in other districts many farms were laid waste by the fall of dust and ashes. To the east of Cape Hjørleifshofdi, where one of the flood-channels had its outlet into the sea, a new promontory was formed four miles long and one broad. The new land was strewn with glacial fragments, some of them a hun-

dred feet square, while similar fragments could be seen drifting in the sea along the coast. It is estimated that the weight of material which has gone to form this addition to the area of Iceland is something like two hundred million tons.

The meaning of the word Katla is 'the witch.' An atmosphere of mystery seems, indeed, to surround this mighty volcano, which has slept for so long beneath the everlasting snows of the Mýrdals Jökull. The great desert of Mýrdals-saendur, which lies beyond the intervening glacier, and which is mainly composed of sand and gravel discharged from the volcano, was in olden times a rich and fruitful district; but the witch-woman Katla revenged herself on the country-side by leaping down the crater and thereby causing its first eruption.

There have been twelve or thirteen outbreaks of Katla in historic times—the first in the year 900, the last but one in 1860. Those of 1625, 1660, and 1721 would seem to have been the most violent. In 1755, when Lisbon was destroyed by an earthquake, there was an eruption of Katla which caused great floods. Travellers who happened to be crossing the Mýrdals-saendur saved their lives with much difficulty, and the water in the rivers attained a height of more than six hundred feet above the ordinary level.

THE PICTURE.

By J. PARSON.

I.

WHEN Phillimore took up his abode in the little city of St Damian's, he did so because to build up a new dental practice it is necessary to find a public, and a *pied-à-terre* that will not lead to unnecessary expense. The house in the Close was cheap and convenient, which cannot always be said of extremely old and picturesque dwellings. It was, therefore, with justifiable buoyancy that he began his work.

He was an ordinary young man, caring not in the least for the antiquity of the Close clustering around the cathedral, nor marking its unusual dedication. Perhaps he did not even know that St Damian was himself a member of the medical profession; he knew only that he wished to build up 'the best local dental practice,' and to appeal to the dignitaries of the place. He therefore hailed the advent of Minor-Canon Chetham as a good omen.

Minor-Canon Chetham, who was also the chapter librarian, was a little middle-aged man, looking much older than he really was. After Morning Prayer—that is, at eleven o'clock—it was his custom to amble past the dentist's house towards the little turning that led to his lodging.

One bright morning he came out of the big south door just as a motor-cycle raced at high

speed round the west front. The rider was going with less care than he would have exercised in the Metropolis. Too late Mr Chetham saw the thing approaching—he was already in its path; it swerved, and so did he, the same way; it tried to pull up, emitted a fearful hoot, and the next moment its rider and Minor-Canon Chetham were sprawling in the road. The cyclist, being the first to recover, and seeing a small cloud like the shape of a constable in the near future, took to his machine and rode away. But Mr Chetham sat up on the grassy roadside, looking and feeling very sorry for himself. He was aware that somebody helped him across the way into what he took to be a doctor's consulting-room. But the house was Phillimore's, and the policeman, who was managing the show, sent a lad out for Dr Shaw, who happened to be passing. Dr Shaw, as it chanced, was the minor-canon's medical adviser, and the attentions of the crowd and of the policeman were, therefore, soon dispensed with. The patient's chief injury, besides shock and a few bruises, seemed to be that one of his teeth had disappeared beyond recall. Further examination showed that another, which had seen long service, was fit only to be extracted. Dr Shaw intimated that it might as well come out there and then.

'Possibly,' Phillimore suggested, in his best

professional manner, 'Mr Chetham would prefer to consult his usual dentist?'

Mr Chetham, it appeared, had no use for such a retainer; and at last, with a bad grace, he consented to the kindly collusion of laughing-gas with Phillimore's strong right wrist, but not 'there and then.'

II.

At the appointed hour the minor-canon allowed himself to be smothered in the latest approved manner known to Dr Shaw, and awoke at last to a fractious consciousness.

The first thing he did was to sit upright and look indignantly over his shoulder. 'Who's there?' he demanded sharply.

Phillimore turned in surprise, and the doctor answered coolly, 'There's not a soul here but us three, Chetham. You've been dreaming; it often takes people that way.'

Mr Chetham looked over his shoulder at the door. 'Some person came in,' he said with unwonted energy, 'and walked across to the fireplace; I heard the lock click distinctly. I may have been under the influence of the anæsthetic, but I was not dreaming.'

Shaw flattered himself that he knew the obstinacy of the English clergy in little matters, and stood unruffled. Phillimore, with a puzzled face, walked slowly to the door. He opened it suddenly, then shut it again with a jerk. There was no click.

The minor-canon rose, and Phillimore helped him with his overcoat. As the parson reached the door he turned with a last shot: 'I heard foot-steps coming along the corridor; then some one stopped, opened the door with a click, entered the room, crossed to the mantelpiece'—— He broke off. 'That's a very curious picture,' he said thoughtfully. 'May I ask its history?'

Phillimore explained that it belonged to the house, and that he had found it there.

'What's it meant to be?' asked Shaw.

'I haven't the least idea,' admitted the dentist. 'I had a patient the other day who knew this house thirty years ago; the picture was here then, and tradition connected it with St Damian.'

Mr Chetham looked at the old painting with more attention, stroking his tender jaw. 'It looks like the early Spanish school,' he said, 'but I am not much of a judge in these things.'

With that he really did go, and the two others were left alone.

'You never know how a patient will take things,' said Shaw disgustedly. 'In my experience they don't dream of immediate surroundings.'

The doctor departed, and Phillimore dismissed the incident from his mind.

III.

St Damian's was a small place, but the new dentist soon began to find his work almost as plentiful as he had hoped.

Among the cathedral clergy was a certain Canon Boscawen, appointed a few months before. He was a widower with one daughter, who was reputed to be really beautiful, and the fact that her wardrobe was supplied by London *modistes* lent colour to the belief. During August, when her father was in residence, a sister of his, a certain Aunt Matty, was staying with her. This lady suggested that, if Miss Boscawen objected to toothache, she had better consult a dentist, and together they appeared in Phillimore's surgery. Aunt Matty explained that her niece had been a patient of a certain practitioner in Wimpole Street. Phillimore proceeded to scan the great man's work with criticism born of another hospital. Finally he pronounced sentence: though one tooth could be filled, another should be extracted.

He crossed to the writing-table to turn up his engagements. 'I can give you to-morrow at twelve,' he said, 'or Thursday, same time.'

He stopped abruptly. As he stood at the table his hand rested negligently on the polished border round the leather. There was the reflection of his white drill coat-sleeve, and of the flesh-tints of his left hand lying close against the mahogany—but beyond this, he saw, in the depth of the dark wood, a pale face looking at him. He turned sharply to make sure that neither of the ladies had left the other end of the room. When he looked again the vision had disappeared. With unruffled nerve, however, he thrust the subject to the back of his mind till a more convenient season.

The appointment was made. Phillimore inquired the name of Miss Boscawen's medical attendant. It appeared that they had not yet chosen from among the many brass plates that adorned St Damian's. Phillimore was acquainted with only two of the practitioners in the city. One was old Dr Fearon; he had a good family practice, and a tremendous stock of after-dinner stories. Of Dr Shaw Phillimore knew little, but he believed him to be conscientious and up-to-date, and, besides, more likely to introduce patients to a new dentist than was the older man. He therefore gave Dr Shaw's address to Miss Boscawen.

IV.

At twelve o'clock on the following day Daphne and her aunt appeared again. The girl looked charming in lilac linen and a leghorn hat wreathed with purple clematis, which she gave into her aunt's keeping as she seated herself comfortably in the green-velvet chair. Her auburn hair sank against the head-rest; her purple suede shoes, which had come from no shop in St Damian's, were wedged against the foot-board. Then came a momentary blank, a struggling dream, from which she woke to a gasping consciousness. She seemed to be still dazed. But in a little while she sat up and

deliberately turned her head, looking over her shoulder round the room.

'There's nobody here?' she said, speaking to the doctor.

'There's no one here,' he replied quietly.

'You've been dreaming, darling,' interpolated her aunt.

Miss Boscawen sank back dizzily. 'I don't believe,' she said relentlessly, 'that I've been unconscious at all.'

The dentist looked hurt, while the doctor answered coldly, 'You were quite under, I should say. You went about the right colour, and so on.'

But Daphne looked unsatisfied. 'Somebody opened the door with a click,' she said; 'I couldn't see precisely who. A figure went across the room to the fireplace, and then turned and began to look at me; but before it turned its face so that I could see it, I was so awfully frightened that I woke.'

For once in his professional life Dr Shaw was at a loss for words. For want of something better to do, he put his finger on the girl's wrist.

Phillimore looked annoyed. 'No one has come into the room since you arrived,' said he positively.

Daphne was unconvinced. 'I heard footsteps coming along the hall just there; then the steps stopped at the door, as I told you.'

'My dearest,' said Aunt Matty, in a tone calculated to implant an *idée fixe* in any mind—'my dearest, it was just a dream.'

A thought occurred to Shaw. 'Pardon my asking one question,' he said. 'Do you know Mr Chetham?'

'We have just met him, but only once, I think.'

Shaw wished he had not asked. 'I can only suppose,' he said, 'that you have had an unusual form of dream; patients do dream the weirdest things. I mentioned Mr Chetham,' he added lamely, 'because he is interested in such matters, and you might have discussed them with him.'

Miss Boscawen jabbed two amethyst pins through the crown of her hat; then she went to the mantelpiece, as if she had noticed the picture for the first time. 'Is it very old?' she asked.

'I believe quite old,' answered Phillimore unwillingly. 'It was here when I came.'

'Do you know the history of the house?'

'Practically nothing; the landlord couldn't tell me much, but from the deeds it appears that it was altered about 1795. It is said that a smuggler hanged himself here to square his conscience; but, of course, that's only a story.'

The girl shuddered with a half-pleasant thrill. 'Is the house haunted?' she asked.

'Of course not, dear,' interpolated her aunt. Evidently the good lady noticed Phillimore's uneasiness under this catechism. Perhaps also,

in her opinion, it is only the houses of the truly great that have any right to such distinction.

Daphne gave one more look at the picture, then turned reluctantly and followed her aunt out of the house.

When Phillimore returned, he found Shaw standing thoughtfully at the window.

'With your permission,' the latter began in his curt way, 'I intend to try a little experiment. We will get a third person—that will be better than either of us—to sit in that chair, let himself be put under the influence of nitrous oxide, and tell us his experience. Of course, we must say nothing of what we expect.'

'Of what we expect?'

'It is more than a mere coincidence, I believe. At least, we shall have an interesting experiment.'

'I have no objection,' assented Phillimore. 'Whom do you suggest?'

'A colleague of mine at the hospital, Bruce Cathcart. Do you know him?'

'Not at all.'

'So much the better. He'll be absolutely unprejudiced in every way.'

v.

On the day appointed, a quarter of an hour before the time fixed, Shaw stalked into the surgery. There was an air of almost festive expectancy about the room. If you think of it, to a man who has spent two months in hard work on some days, and as near as may be to the pretence of hard work on others, a psychic experiment comes as a welcome diversion, even though he has no belief in spooks. On this point Shaw touched at once.

'Have you ever had any psychic experience yourself?' he inquired.

'Lord, no!' was the disdainful answer; then the speaker stopped with a jerk, remembering. 'As a matter of fact,' he resumed slowly—and described the vision in the writing-table. Shaw nodded thoughtfully, and looked at the place, but there was nothing spectral to be seen.

'Did any other of your patients make any complaints?'

'No; as it happens, I have had no other extractions. One lady did complain of an icy draught, though the door was shut, and the windows too, for it was that terrifically rainy day. Another insisted that the door-handle clicked.'

Shaw examined the lock in silence. 'It seems in good order,' he remarked.

'Quite; my landlord fixed a new one just before I came.'

'What did he do that for?'

'I suppose the old one was defective, but I didn't inquire.'

'You have arranged we shall not be disturbed?'

'My housekeeper has just gone out. She has a niece at the other end of the city who is, fortunately, ill, so I could get rid of her without inventing an excuse.'

'Then it won't be her footsteps we shall hear.'
'Certainly not.' Phillimore spoke carelessly, but he looked disturbed; the most matter-of-fact among us is not proof against the kind of insinuations Shaw had been making, particularly when they concern our own demesne.

VI.

Precisely at the hour named the third party to the experiment made his appearance. He hailed from a London hospital that prided itself on its urbanity and its scientific mind. When Shaw performed a curt introduction, he bowed ceremoniously and professed his entire willingness to further the scheme afoot. It was merely explained to him that Phillimore, for reasons known to Dr Shaw, desired to place some unprejudiced person under the influence of gas, and that Dr Shaw had suggested his suitability. The 'medium' seated himself in the chair, fixing his feet on the foot-board and fingering the chair-arms, and announced that he was quite ready.

It seemed to be a perfectly normal example of anæsthesia. Both investigators were on the alert. Shaw moved across to the writing-table, paused there a moment, and returned with an impassive face. He wrote a few words on a two-inch-wide slip of paper that he habitually carried for the day's notes. Then he waited.

Bruce-Cathcart opened his eyes and looked at the two faces near him; clearly he expected something else. He sat up abruptly and looked steadily over his shoulder. He rose and went to the door; obviously the scientific mind was in the ascendant. He tried the door; it was locked. The dentist turned the key, and the momentary delay seemed to restore the medium's equilibrium. He looked outside, then returned to the surgery.

'Let us go into the other room,' said Phillimore. 'There is a fire there—it will be more cheerful this chilly day.'

The others acquiesced. As the dentist turned to shut the surgery door, he looked round the pleasant room with a feeling of something like repugnance.

'I suppose,' began Bruce-Cathcart, 'you want me to tell you about my curious dream; that is obviously why I am here.'

Shaw nodded; and Bruce-Cathcart continued: 'It was quite normal at first, though there was no sound of rushing water, which, in some form or other, I always have. There came the usual blank. Then I imagined myself perfectly conscious. You were standing at each side of me. Suddenly I heard footsteps in the hall. The door-handle clicked, and the door began to open slowly. I felt a distinct draught at the back of my head. I sat up and looked over my shoulder. The door was opening. A figure began to cross the room—a man, to judge by the gait, and by the left hand, which was hanging at his side, and was distinct against the dark habit.

He looked like the picture of an old monk with his head covered by a sort of hood. He crossed the room to the mantelpiece, and putting up his hands, seemed to try to unfasten the picture. Apparently he couldn't manage it, for he turned. I caught a glimpse of his face. He had a rather handsome face, with dark Moorish eyes. I think I should know him again.'

The speaker paused, and Shaw interposed, drawing a paper from his pocket.

'Now,' he said, 'I will tell you what I saw when I went to the writing-table. I looked at the polished mahogany surrounding the leather top—by the clock on the mantelpiece it was one minute before you came round. I wrote at once on this piece of paper: "In the wood appears a face over my shoulder; it is a pale face, with clear-cut aquiline features and steady dark eyes." Evidently we were struck by the same vision.'

Phillimore looked uneasy. 'If the tale gets about, it will ruin my practice.'

'There is no reason in the world why the story should go further,' Shaw responded decisively. 'Very few people know anything; we three and the minor-canon are the only ones interested.'

'I have been expecting to hear from him,' said Phillimore. 'He very kindly promised to trace for me, if he could, the history of this house. In the cathedral library there seem to be a good many deeds and so on connected with these old houses in the Close.'

During the next week Phillimore followed his usual routine with increasing work. If any rumours had travelled, they had an opposite effect from that he had feared. His two medical acquaintances he had not seen since the day of the séance. As for Mr Chetham, the reason of his silence was bruited over the city: he was down with influenza. But one evening Phillimore opened a note from him. After acknowledging his correspondent's kind inquiries, the writer explained that, though much better, he had been too ill to do more than glance at certain papers bearing on the subject of the old houses in the Close. These, unfortunately, were not catalogued, and he had put them aside for further examination.

VII.

The third Saturday in September dawned with a gray cloud hanging over the cathedral, as if on purpose to show up the delicate sculpture on the great central tower. The masonry was of a local sandstone strongly impregnated with iron, and in no other light could its purplish-gray be seen to such advantage as when the sun was half-hidden behind an occasional bank of cloud. The air was much warmer than at the beginning of the month.

Phillimore, crossing the Close, was hailed by Dr Shaw, whose gray car drew up with a jerk. The appearance of the doctor reminded him of the mystery, and he pulled the minor-canon's

note from his pocket. 'I will go and see him to-night,' he said. 'I am glad he's so much better.'

The doctor looked up sharply. 'Haven't you heard?' he asked. 'I thought it was all over the city. He's gone.'

Phillimore started; the news seemed to hold more significance for him than that of the death of a mere acquaintance.

'Yes'—Shaw spoke more slowly than usual—'I saw him yesterday about five. He was writing letters—among them yours, probably, for he mentioned you, and remarked that he had hit on the track. He also said, by the way, that not a soul but himself knew what papers he had consulted or where they were. He seemed much better in every way, and now he has slipped through my fingers.'

'I had heard nothing,' said Phillimore.

As he passed the deanery a man stopped him with an apology, handing him a note from Bruce-Cathcart, asking Phillimore to meet the writer at the South door soon after six. There was only one 'South door' in the city, and at the hour named he found Bruce-Cathcart waiting for him with as much impatience as that gentleman ever allowed himself to show. The doctor led the way up the south aisle.

'When I had that curious experience in your house,' he explained, 'I felt certain of having seen that figure before. Yesterday it occurred to me where it was. Of course,' he added thoughtfully, 'the fact somewhat vitiates the experiment as such, because it is quite likely that others have seen it too. But even then the agreement of our dreams is very interesting—perhaps due to telepathy.'

They were now in the south choir aisle; it was here almost dark except where the great rose window cast a faint sheaf of light across the shrine of St Damian. This was a wonderful, ornate structure, erected within the sanctuary, but out of the straight line of the south choir screen, which at this point was carried out on three sides of a rectangle. Therefore it was possible for visitors to view three sides of the shrine from the aisle. It was a cenotaph, surmounted by a recumbent figure of St Damian; the left arm was folded, but the right was extended—probably the only example of that date extant. Between the thumb and the forefinger of the right hand was a small hole, still visible, by which the attendant priest might drop medals, to touch the relic and be returned, thus sanctified, to their owners. The nature of the relic was a subject of occasional speculation to local antiquarians. Some maintained that it was a lock of the saint's hair, some that it was a bone belonging to the right hand. The latter pointed to the fact that the relic was certainly close to the right hand of the figure; but this detail also supported the theory that the relic was a Damascene surgical instrument, or the saint's

pestle and mortar. Most claimed that the object, whatever it was, was still in existence. But the abbess of a neighbouring nunnery professed to have the real relic; certainly a human tooth, safely enclosed in a reliquary, was kept beneath the altar of her abbey church.

Of all these things Phillimore was profoundly ignorant. Bruce-Cathcart knew them only as a matter for local gossip; he was much more interested in the fact that the convent at present employed an ancient Roman Catholic medical man, and it was a matter for more or less silent conjecture who would be chosen to take his place when he should join the great majority of non-practitioners, whether by retirement or by death.

Relic or no relic, the shrine still stood in the cathedral, and much remained of its former magnificence. Some of the colour was left, and round the sides ran a series of paintings detailing the *acta sancti*. Upon these Bruce-Cathcart directed his electric torch. Among them was a scene depicting St Damian standing, looking towards the west, with his profile half-concealed by a black hood, and with his left hand hanging easily by his side.

'That,' said the doctor, 'is the person whom I saw in your surgery, and whom the others saw.'

Phillimore looked along the paintings. The same head was repeated in different positions—and it certainly bore a striking resemblance to the face that had looked from the polished woodwork of his writing-table.

'Then there's another thing I've noticed,' pursued the other. 'The third panel from that end doesn't fit exactly. The sacristan says he has never noticed it. I found it by touch at the lower edge, but you can see it if you move a little this way. My theory is that yours is the missing panel, and that this was restored from description and memory. You see, it is the same subject treated slightly differently.'

'It is partly a question of measurement,' said Phillimore. 'I wonder,' he added slowly, 'what Mr Chetham's researches amounted to.' He stopped abruptly; the speculation seemed scarcely decent with the minor-canon still unburied.

VIII.

They left the cathedral by the west door, stopping to look back along the lofty nave, with its effects of reflected light dimmed by the oncoming darkness.

'What is there to do?' Phillimore asked. 'The papers are practically inaccessible, though I shall, of course, make inquiries. It is out of the question to pay for research in the ordinary way. I don't even know who does that sort of work, or what they are paid,' he added vaguely.

Bruce-Cathcart was wiser on this point. 'It might mean a week's work,' he said; 'and, after all, what are you looking for? What would your landlord say?'

'It might,' said the dentist dryly, 'induce him to drop the rent, or sell the house at my valuation. It is far more likely to damage my practice.'

'In my opinion,' said the doctor, 'it's much better to let such skeletons alone. I've seen it again and again in private practice. After all, what have you really to complain of?'

But a word in this sentence set the dentist thinking, and that evening he went through the meagre evidence in his possession. If the house was not haunted in the usual sense, there was something odd about it. But what? He thought of the old-wives' stories that had come his way; they were tales of ordinary ghosts (he smiled at the adjective), or instances of *poltergeist* that had often been traced to the hysteria of a housemaid. There was nothing in his list parallel to this repeated dream. Yet was the influence in his house, whatever it was, responsible for dreams only? What of his own sight of the face in the writing-table, the face which had also been seen by Dr Shaw? But Shaw and he had not heard footsteps. He went into the hallway at this point and looked along the floor. There was nothing visible, except that it struck him that inlaid linoleum ought not yet to be showing signs of wear. There certainly was a slight depression in the surface at irregular intervals from the garden door towards the front of the house; and, oddly enough, the depression stopped at the surgery door. It was odd, too, though it had not struck him before, that, though the legend connected the picture with the cathedral, the dreamers had heard steps from the back of the house.

What was the connection between the garden door and that of the surgery? He stooped down, drawing his finger over one of the marks on the linoleum. Then he held up his head, listening. For, as if he had rubbed the magic ring, there came a slight vibration, and a sound, ever so slight, struck upon his ear. He drew back instinctively into the shadow of his dining-room; then he stooped again to catch any sound that came along the floor. He could not doubt his own steady senses; there was a faint step, not of a light foot, but like the memory of a regular, heavy pace. It disappeared as he listened, and, though he waited for some moments, he heard nothing more. 'Which rather proves,' he thought, 'that there is something in it. If it were my own nerves, I should still be hearing step after step.' He went to bed at last with a half-formed determination to ask Dr Shaw's help.

IX.

The doctor listened patiently to the story. Together they went over the chain of incidents, in themselves trifling, but, taken as a whole, perhaps significant. There did seem to be 'something' about the house, contained, perhaps, within it. Its topographical connection

appeared to be, as Phillimore thought he had worked out, between the surgery and the garden door. They looked at the latter carefully. There was nothing curious about it—no possibility of a *cache*, except beneath the step.

'Have the stone up,' said the doctor dogmatically. 'As you say, you want no publicity, nor the expense of research. Besides, what is there you could find that way? By all means have the stone up, and if there's nothing there, try the chimney. If you don't damage the structure, who's to mind?'

So, on the next Saturday afternoon, when the house was empty, the two men prised up the door-sill with some difficulty. It revealed a solid filling of builder's rubbish; but beneath this, closely packed in the subsoil, out of reach of the casual builder's man, and, as it happened, out of the direction taken by the modern drainage system, lay half-a-dozen lead-lined boxes. Most of them contained miscellaneous articles of more or less intrinsic value. One of them disclosed a dirty piece of vellum and a small brass box, beautifully chased.

In the box was something which Shaw declared might at one time have been a surgical instrument. The vellum read as follows: 'I, J. S., being about to close account and chete the hangman doe state and declare that I took the Brass Casket and Silver Scalpel from the old Shrine in the Church. This I did for a Wager. And I further testify that a painter, one O. H., did make a copy of a part of the Shrine that I took away and did hang in my dining-parlour. And I would lay a Wager that the Copy now in the Church goeth without Discoverie. And I did give to a friend of the said O. H. a Man's Tooth that I did get from a native in Van Diemen's Land; he told me that the Tooth hath magic property, the which I protest to be a Heathen conceit. And what hath been done with the said tooth I know not; but the truth is as I have said concerning the Box and the Picture. Let him who findeth them live with them, for truly I dare not.'

IF I WERE DEAD.

If I were dead I should be nearer you
Than I am now when standing by your side;
For then the barriers that now divide
Our souls were nothing. I should watch o'er you,
Fill and sustain you with the fervent tide
Of all-pervading life that courses through
The eternal me, until in time you too
Shook off this chrysalis shell of life, and died.

Then through vast realms of space no thought has
spanned,
Into the ecstasy no voice has sung,
Of Love's own kingdom of Infinity;
Wise beyond knowledge, yet for ever young
Through all the æons of eternity,
Blissful as children we'll pass hand-in-hand.

M. M. HALDANE.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE GILBERT ISLANDS.

By THOS. J. M'MAHON, F.R.G.S.

I.

THIS group of islands is one of the most remarkable of all the Pacific archipelagoes. The islands are small, the total area not being more than 170 square miles. The group is cut by the equator and the 175th meridian E., many of the northern islands being abreast of the Marshall Islands, now in the hands of the Japanese. The Gilberts, long under British protection, were annexed in 1915 to form part of the Crown colony of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, being administered by a British resident commissioner and his staff, responsible to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, who is also governor of the Fiji Islands.

The islands are of coral formation, covered with so scanty a supply of soil that, beyond coco-nuts and Pandanus palms and a few coarse roots of the taro class, no other vegetation is natural, these being the only indigenous plant products. And yet some of these barren islands are more densely populated than the most fertile islands of Oceania. The natives number over 30,000, and were less than half a century ago a fiercely cruel and bloodthirsty race. To-day, thanks to the wise measures of British administration in the hands of capable and humane British officials, these natives are one of the most civilised, most progressive, and best educated races in the South Pacific. They are Christians, and all heathen or savage customs have long since been abolished.

II.

Tarawa is the seat of administration, or, as it is more properly called, the 'head station' of the Government. It is a perfect example of a clean, picturesque station, every inch of ground being put under cultivation of the coco-nut, the staple food and trade commodity of the islands. The administrative buildings, surrounded by well-finished coral-gravelled walks and roads, mission-houses, and the stores of some Australian traders make up a little town, fronted by a stone jetty and breakwater. Commercially this station is growing in importance every year, as it is the port of call of all ships, and the copra production of the coco-nut is fast increasing. Prior to the war the German traders had a very strong

command of all the trade, and their trading-schooners were in constant touch with all parts of the group. In these days the Japanese are most energetically competing for the native trade, which is extensive, as the natives are wealthy.

Fifty years ago the natives were known as the giants of the Pacific for their size and strength, two physical advantages which went to their undoing. In those years the pirates or 'black-birders' of Peru were out upon the Pacific waters recruiting native labour for the silver-mines of South America. These inhuman men resorted to all kinds of tricks and cruelties to entice the natives aboard their ships. Once on deck, they were quickly imprisoned in the holds and battened down until well out at sea and far away from their island homes. Few—indeed, very few—ever returned; but those that did came back wasted by sickness and disease, and the once great race of giants dwindled from thousands to hundreds, and only ten years ago, though under British administration, it was believed that the race was doomed to extinction.

To save the stock, British officials entered upon a course of administration that appeared somewhat drastic to traders and all foreign outsiders in their relationship with the natives, but it has resulted in the complete restoration to health of the natives and a continual increase in population. The sale of grog and of poor and undesirable foods to the natives was sternly forbidden; exploitation of the islands for labour was stopped; British medical men were brought out and put in charge of large, well-furnished, and well-appointed hospitals; and the natives were given a form of self-government. All these measures have brought new life, hope, and prosperity to the people, who realise the joys and the security of British ownership, and proudly boast that they are as loyal to King George as any other section of the great British Empire. This loyalty is evidenced by the liberal manner in which the natives subscribed during the war to all patriotic funds, their contributions amounting to many thousands of pounds sterling, and by the number of fine men who volunteered and went to France to defend the freedom of the world. The following little fact will illustrate the keenness of the natives to go and fight for their 'great

chief George.' A boy who held a very responsible position in the native police force made application to the British master of police to have his name put down on the list of volunteers for the front, and to be examined by the doctor as to his fitness. He was refused on the ground that in carrying out the duties assigned to him as a sergeant of police he was already serving the King. He was not satisfied; and after two days of thinking over the matter, unable any longer to control his feelings, he rushed into the presence of the master of police and exclaimed, 'Oh master, subose me no go fight for King, I very shamed; belly belong me he very sick.' This pidgin-English, interpreted, means that the boy would be broken-hearted if he were not allowed to go to the front. The boy went to the war, proved himself a brave and true Britisher, was seriously gassed, has now recovered, and is to-day the 'boss,' or sergeant-major, of the Ocean Island police.

III.

Up to ten years ago, and before active measures were taken to restore the native race, the Gilberts were subject to regular periods of drought every seven years, and such inhabitants as disease did not kill off were reduced by starvation. These droughts in many cases left islands without a single native. British administration has not only put all the coco-nut plantations of the Gilberts under experienced management, with a modern system of working designed to make them profitable and prolific in all kinds of seasons, but has taught the natives agriculture, and the cultivation of European cereals and vegetables.

Food is now plentiful, but it is noticed that as the native becomes rich he prefers the tinned foods—meats and fruits—of the Europeans, and coco-nut is in a sense going out of fashion. In fact, it is considered a sign of extreme poverty to be obliged to subsist upon the coco-nut. The authorities are wisely endeavouring to keep the people both to their natural foods and to their meagre dress—the coco-nut-fibre loin-cloth. European foods, especially canned foods, eaten in great quantities—and the natives are big eaters—have been found detrimental to health, and according to medical observation the digestive organs of the natives cannot readily endure such a change of diet without dire results.

There is no resort to force in the British management of the natives; encouragement and advice are constantly given to maintain a moral and sensible style of living, and when a native falls ill reasons are pointed out why the illness has been incurred. Splendid hospitals have been built in most of the bigger islands; the one at Tarawa, the capital, is quite a village in its size. This hospital has every modern appliance and convenience, and is in the charge of a Scotsman, an Edinburgh graduate, the chief medical man of

the islands, who spends a great deal of his time travelling round the group investigating the health of all tribes. This gentleman is ably supported by his wife, also a doctor and an Edinburgh student, who gives her time to the treatment of all diseases and ailments of the native women. Classes for the training of native men as hospital orderlies, and native girls as midwives, are subsidised by the administration, and have been very successful. These students, after examinations and proved competency, are sent out to native villages and to all corners to be useful in cases of emergency. Native police, before they can claim promotion and be put in charge of a district, must prove themselves competent to deal with all minor ailments and accidents, while in all serious cases Government schooners are at the disposal of these officers to have natives sent to the nearest big hospital. It is little wonder that the population of the Gilberts is increasing, and the death-rate astonishingly low.

The regeneration of these islanders is an example to the whole world; it is a triumph of British administration. As an example of the care taken to prevent the spread of any epidemics such as dysentery, once very common on all the islands of the South Pacific, every two years all bank-notes in circulation or saved for that period are called in, and brand-new notes distributed instead—and this without a penny of cost to the natives. Care such as this has resulted in the wiping out of epidemics, a notable fact that has not been lost on other administrations in the Pacific islands. Furthermore, how progressive are these islanders is manifest in their desire to have sewerage systems installed in all the larger villages; and a Gilbert Islands village is a model of cleanliness in all other respects.

IV.

The administration is attempting, and with every prospect of success, a fairly high standard of commercial education in the Government schools. Up to recently education was entirely in the hands of the missions, and within the mission areas or stations this arrangement is continued. The instruction is but rudimentary, and does not include the teaching of the English language, which is now—and wisely—very much encouraged by the British officials. The Government is by no means discouraging the mission schools, but by grants of money is helping on any of these schools willing to undertake a curriculum including the teaching of the English language, simple rules of hygiene, commercial arithmetic, and some industrial or agricultural training. In the native Civil Service, especially the police force, a knowledge of spoken and written English is essential, and in order that such officials may improve themselves the administration provides free night-classes, which are very popular, and are the means of making native officials proficient in the language. Court

cases, once crude and unsatisfactory owing to the need of interpreters, are now carried on entirely in English. A police-boy recognises there is no quicker way to promotion, with good service and conduct, than by a thorough knowledge of English. It is intended in the course of time to have Government schools that will offer the very keen and intelligent native youth a standard of education equal to that of the higher European schools; indeed, it is planned that students of these projected schools will pass into the highest positions of the native Civil Service, as magistrates, scribes, and so forth.

The natives of the Gilbert Islands may be said to possess a talent—wanting in many other tribes of the Pacific—of sensible self-government. Though long since civilised and Christianised, they still preserve their old spirit of obedience to a ruling caste, kings and chiefs, so sternly enforced in former days by these royal families. They have a reverence for authority. They have adopted, by the consent of the administration, a blend of British and native ideals for their legal code, so that, while observing the laws of the administration, they are allowed full rights in tribal laws and customs. For this purpose a complete native Civil Service has been formed of chiefs, magistrates, scribes, lawyers, and a police force. Regular courts are held every day in the bigger villages, not only for the trials of offenders, if any, but to inquire into domestic disputes, to consider the fitness or otherwise, and the fortunes, of young people about to marry, and to proclaim the banns if permission is given for a marriage. These courts settle all land-ownership questions, and the Gilbert Islander as a landowner loves the aid of the law in settling land matters; he is a debater and an orator of remarkable ability, and delights to keep a court sitting while he delivers, with much gesture, splendid orations on land questions. Particularly does he like to go back to the days of his forefathers, and tell how by personal prowess some ancestor in some great national upheaval became possessed of the family domains. These courts also regulate native trading and the management of the coco-nut plantations. Native municipal inspectors are ever on the look-out for the neglect of regulations pertaining to sanitation, native gardens not tilled, and roads and pathways not kept free from weeds. It is an offence punishable by fine for a native to throw old leaves, paper, or refuse of any kind on a road or near a habitation. All rates and taxes are collected by native officials; particulars of births, deaths, and marriages are noted by the police and by native clerks, called scribes, who send monthly statements to the British officials.

v.

Butaritari is one of the prettiest villages of the Gilberts. It is famous for the fact that here Robert Louis Stevenson, the great novelist,

sojourned at one period of his travels in the Pacific, when in search of health. Many of the old men and women remember him, and still talk of his kind and friendly ways. An old horse he is alleged to have ridden is still alive, but so frail that on the least exertion it topples over. It is the pet of the villagers, and every morning and night the children, as a regular duty, go out into the plantations and gather grass for its food. An old trader, living away by himself on one end of the island, was a great crony of Stevenson's, and has a great many interesting stories to tell of their adventures in that part of the Pacific. The novelist was a champion of the natives and their rights, and in one of his South Sea letters comments on the graceful dancing of the native children. The children were constantly dancing for him, and it is not surprising that he spent much time in watching them; no other native people in the whole Pacific, he declared, could compare with the natives of Butaritari. From the tips of their fingers to the very tips of their toes their bodies twist, turn, and move in perfect grace and ease. Native dancing as a rule is monotonous, but such is not the case with the Butaritari folk, who certainly are entitled to distinction for their dancing.

Until recently the Gilbert Islands were thought commercially unimportant. Australian traders for many years maintained a very popular trade with the natives, besides being the buyers of copra from the coco-nut plantations; but the war, through lack of shipping, seriously interfered with these enterprising Britons, and Japanese traders, well supplied with shipping and with Japanese manufactured goods sought by the natives, have gained a footing and opened trading-stations. This development, added to the energies of a Chinese company, has brought into being a rivalry that proves the Gilberts of great trade value, while creating a bitterness among the various traders that may eventually lead to trouble. The administration is showing no favour to any particular nationality, but the natives, though attracted by the wares of the Japanese, are not at all in favour of any trade but British trade, and it is interesting to see the manner in which they are endeavouring to check the Japanese advance by persisting in dealing in copra with the Australian and the Chinese traders only.

The Gilberts stand out as one of the finest instances of the success of British officials and British administration in promoting the welfare of a native race. Already other administrations, including the Japanese in the Marshall Islands, are copying the methods that build up an intelligent and self-reliant native people, and there is not the least doubt that in the next few years the little-known atolls of the Gilberts in the Central Pacific will come into general prominence.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER IX.—A HOUSE-PARTY AT ROSELAWN.

I.

AS is the habit of the year, June followed May, and in its turn gave way to the yellow hours of July. Lady Durwent, wearying of London and its triumphs, returned to Roselawn to share the solitary, rural reign of her husband.

As she drove in a sumptuous car through the village and into the wide confines of the estate she purred with contentment. Men doffed their caps, women curtsied, and the country-side mingled its smile with theirs. It was not unlike the return of a conqueror from a campaign abroad, and after the incognito forced by London on all but the most journalised duchesses, it was distinctly pleasant to be acknowledged by every one she passed.

In this most amiable of moods she dined with her husband, and was so vivacious that, looking at her over his glass of port, he thought how little she had changed since, years before, she had first attracted his subnormal pulse. Together they wandered over the lawns, and he showed the improvements wrought since her last visit. She gave the head-gardener the benefit of her unrestricted smile, and shed among all the retainers a bountiful largesse of good-humour.

Still noting the beauties of Roselawn, they discussed their children. She learned that Malcolm was on leave from the —th Hussars, and was golfing in, and yachting off, Scotland with scions of the Scottish nobility. The mention of Dick brought a pang to her heart, and a cloud that marred the serenity of her husband's brow. Lord Durwent regretted the necessity of his actions, but the boy had proved himself a 'waster' and a 'rotter.' He had been given every chance, and had persistently disgraced the family name. If he would go to Canada or Australia, he could have money for the passage; otherwise——

After that imperialistic pronouncement, Lord Durwent turned to more congenial topics, and spoke of additions to the stables and improvements to the church. His wife answered mechanically, and it was many minutes before the heart-hunger for the blue-eyed Dick was lulled. She said nothing for the development of her sons' lives had long since passed from her to a system, but in the seclusion of their country home the domestic tragedy made a deeper inroad on her feelings than it had done in London.

It was perhaps not unnatural that they barely spoke of Elise at all. She was visiting a county family in the north, and would be home in a couple of days. As there was no immediate

suitor on the horizon, what more was there to be said of the daughter of the house?

Next morning Lady Durwent was still amiable, but rather dull. The following day she was frankly bored. On Sunday, during the sermon, she planned a house-party; and so, in due course, invitations were issued, accepted, or regretfully declined. She possessed sufficient sense of the fitness of things to refrain from transplanting any of her *unusual* varieties from their native soil, but asked only those persons whose family connections ensured a proper tone to the affair.

Perhaps it was just a kindly thought on her part to ask Austin Selwyn. It may have been the desire of having an author to lend an exotic touch to the gathering. Or, being a woman, she may have wanted an American to see her at the head of the table in two widely different settings.

Perhaps it was all three motives.

II.

In preparation for the arrival of guests, 'a certain liveliness' pervaded the tranquil atmosphere of Roselawn. The tennis-court was rolled and marked; fishing-tackle was inspected and repaired; in view of the possibility of dancing, the piano was tuned; bridge deficiencies were made good at the local stationer's; and gardeners and gamekeepers hurried about their tasks, while flapping game-birds signalled to trembling trout that the enemy was mobilising for the yearly campaign.

Roselawn differed little from the hundreds of English country-houses, the seclusion and invulnerability of which have played so great a part in forming the English character. A lodge at the entrance to the estate supplied a medieval sense of challenge to the outside world, and the beautifully kept hedges at the side of the mile-long carriage-drive gave that feeling of retirement and emancipation from the world so much desired by tranquil minds.

It was the setting to produce a poet, or a race of Tories. Once within the embracing solitude of Roselawn, the discordant jangling of common people worrying about their long hours of work or the right to give their offspring a decent chance in the world became a distant murmur, no more unpleasant or menacing than the whang of a wasp outside the window.

Not that the inhabitants of Roselawn were any more callous or selfish than others of their class, for the record of the Durwent family was by no means devoid of kindly and knightly deeds. Tenantry lying ill were always the recipients of studied thoughtfulness from the lord and lady of the place, and servants who had served both long and faithfully could look forward to a decent

pension until death sent them to the great equality of the Beyond.

If one could trace the history of the Durwent family from the beginning, it would be seen that among the victims of a hereditary system (and can it be estimated what millions these must total?) there must be numbered many of the aristocracy themselves. Caricaturists and satirists, who smear the many with the weaknesses of the few, would have us believe that the son of a lord is no better than the son of a fool—yet, if the vaults of some of the old families were to unfold their century-hugged secrets, it would be seen that, as Gray's country churchyard might hold some mute inglorious Milton, so might these vaults hoard the ashes of many a splendid brain ruined by the genial absurdity of 'class' wherein it had been placed. A boy with a title suspended over his head like the sword of Damocles may enter life's arena armed with great aspirations and the power to bring a depth of human understanding to earth's problems, but what chance has he against the ring of antagonists who confront him? Flunkeyism, 'swank,' the timid worship of the peerage, the leprosy of social hypocrisy, all sap his strength, as barnacles clinging to the keel of a ship lessen her speed with each recurring voyage.

It is not that the hereditary system injures directly; its crime lies in what it engenders—the pestilence of snobbery, which poisons nearly all who come into contact with it, titled and untitled, frocked and unfrocked, washed and unwashed. The very servants create a comic-opera set of rules for their below-stairs life, and the man who has butlered for a lord, even if the latter be the greatest fool of his day, looks with scorn upon the valet of some lesser fellow who, perchance, is forced to make a living by his brains.

III.

The house at Roselawn was large, and, with its ivy-covered exterior, presented a spectacle of considerable beauty. The front was in the form of a 'hollow square,' creating an imposing courtyard, and giving the windows of the library and the drawing-room ample opportunity for sunshine. From these windows there was a charming vista of well-kept lawns, margined with gardens possessed of a hundred tones of exquisite colour. At the back of the house the windows looked out on receding meadows that melted into the solidarity of woods.

The drawing-room (Lady Durwent tried to designate it 'the music-room,' but the older name persisted) had all the conglomeration of contents which is at once the charm and the drawback of English country homes. Furniture of various periods indulged in mute and elegant warfare. Scattered in elegant disorder about the room were relics procured by an ancestor who had been to Japan; there was a Spanish bowl gathered by Lord

Dudley Durwent; there was an Italian tapestry, an Indian tomahawk, a Chinese sword that had beheaded real Chinamen, all procured by Lord Dingwall Durwent in the eighteenth century. There was a massive Louis Seize table and a frail Louis Quinze chair; a slice of Chipendale here, and a bit of Sheraton there; portraits of ancestors who fought at Quebec, Waterloo, Sebastopol, and a very military-looking gentleman on a terrific horse, who had done all his fighting in Pall Mall clubs. There were 'oils' purchased by Durwents who liked to patronise the arts, and 'waters' by Durwents who didn't like oils.

And year after year, generation after generation, the ancient drawing-room received its additional impedimenta without so much as a creak of protest.

In the impressive seclusion of Roselawn, therefore, the house-party began to gather. They were an admirably assorted group of people who never objected to being bored, providing it was accomplished in an atmosphere of good breeding. The soothing balm of the Roselawn meadows offered its potency of healing to fatigued minds or weary bodies, but, like the fragrance of the unseen flower, it was wasted on the desert air. Lady Durwent's guests had not been using either their brains or their bodies to a point where honest fatigue would seek healing in the perfume of clover. If a hundred gamins from White-chapel's crowded misery had been brought from London and let loose in summer's sweet-scented prodigality, the incense of fields and flowers might have brought sparkle to young eyes dull with the wretchedness of poverty, and colour to pale, unnourished cheeks. But Lord and Lady Durwent, denying themselves the luxury of such a treat, asked people who lived in the country to come and enjoy the country.

The pleasure of their guests was about as keen as would be that of a party of bricklayers invited by a fellow-labourer to spend a Saturday with him laying bricks.

IV.

To the insatiable curiosity of Austin Selwyn the party presented an infinite chance for study, as well as an unlooked-for opportunity to meet Elise Durwent under circumstances which should either cement their friendship or else demonstrate its utter impracticability.

He listened to the chat of men who did the same things all the year round with the same people, and he wondered a little at their persistency in conversing at all. They rarely disagreed on anything, partly because they were all of the same political faith, and it seemed an understood thing that, so far as it was humanly possible, no one would introduce any subject which would entail controversy. When Selwyn, who was almost too thorough a believer in the productive powers of fiction, used to drop con-

versational depth-bombs, they treated him with easy tolerance as one who was entitled to his racial peculiarities. Sometimes they would even put to sea clinging to the raft of one of his ideas, but one by one would grow numb and drop off into the waters of mental indifference. They had a nice sense of satire, and it was a delight for the American to indulge in an easy, inconsequential banter which was full of humour without being labelled funny; but it used to fill him with sorrow to see many of his best controversial subjects punctured by a lazily-conceived play of words. He felt that, coming from the New World, he was in a position to give knowledge for knowledge, but his fellow-guests were impervious to his geographical qualifications, and persisted in their pleasant task of rolling vocabulary along the straight grooved channels of their well-bred thoughts.

The women were less of a type, but their little lives were so lacking in horizon that they seemed to live in a perpetual atmosphere of personalities. As pretty much the same topics of conversation did them for a whole season, they were not unlike a travelling theatrical company producing the one show wherever they went. One woman occasioned some mirth to Selwyn by her familiarity with the obscure royalties of Europe, whom she thrust forward on every possible occasion. On dowager-duchesses and retired empresses she was without parallel, and she went through life expressing perpetual regret that she had not known you were going to Ruritania, because she would have insisted upon your calling on her friend the Empress Lizajania.

It was perhaps an unfortunate circumstance that had brought together a group of women none of whom was artistically accomplished, although they were by no means lacking in social charm. Music for them was not a refreshing stream which ran by the road of everyday life, but something which was to be heard at the Opera, and which enjoyed a close alliance with sables and diamond tiaras. Pictures were of the Academy, and, like all the best people, they invariably said, 'Have you seen this year's show at Burlington House? My dear, it's frightful.' Nor did they neglect literature in their curriculum. Though literature lacks a yearly exhibition, such as is possessed by music and painting, they made it a subject for gossip, and denounced H. G. Wells as a 'bounder.' 'I never read him, Mr Selwyn,' said the obscure-royalist person. 'My cousin the Duchess of Atwater met him, and says—well, really, she says he's quite impossible.'

With a mixture of wonder and amusement Selwyn watched the spectacle of these people of more than average education and intelligence contenting themselves with a perpetual routine of small-talk and genteel insularity, and he wondered how it was that a race so gifted with the blessed quality of humour could evolve a

state of society offering such a butt to the shafts of ridicule.

He liked Lord Durwent, whose unflinching gentleness and courtesy would have stamped him as a gentleman in any walk of life. Although his mind was comparatively unimpressible to new ideas, it was saturated with the qualities of integrity and fairness, and in his attitude towards every one there was an old-world dignity, born of the respect in which he held both himself and his guests. The study of this man moving contentedly about his daily tasks, never making any one's day harder by reason of his passing that way, was the first jolt Selwyn had received in his gathering arraignment against English social life. By way of contrast he pictured certain successful gentlemen of his acquaintance in America, and the vision was not flattering to his national self-esteem.

He also enjoyed the refreshing vitality of Lady Durwent, who never quite lost her optimism no matter how tight was the grip of good form, and he admired without stint the devotion of every one, regardless of sex, to sport. Throughout the day there were constant expeditions that necessitated long, invigorating hours in the open air; and it seemed to the American that they were never so free from affectation, that the comradeship between the men and the women was never so marked, as when they were indulging their wise instinct for out-of-door sports.

He had been at Roselawn a couple of days before he had a chance to do more than observe Elise Durwent as one of the party. She had been his partner at tennis and bridge, and a dozen times he had exchanged light talk with her, but there was always about her the defensive shield of impersonal cordiality. When he spoke to her it was almost in a drawl, but no matter to what a lackadaisical level he reduced his voice, her replies were always punctuated by a retort that had in it the sense of sting, as Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* accompanies his song with the crack of a driving-whip.

He watched her with the men of the party, and wondered at their good-natured endurance of her sharpness, as reckless as it was disturbing; and he saw that her inclusion among the women made them less at ease and disinclined to chatter. No matter what group she joined, she was never of it; and even when it was obvious that she was doing everything in her power to reduce her personality to the pitch of the others, her individuality branded her as something apart.

Studying her, partly subconsciously and partly with the keen observation prompted by the attraction she held for him, Selwyn began to feel the loneliness of the girl. Not once did he see the melting of eyes which comes when one person finds close affinity in the understanding of a friend. When she spoke at the table her suddenness always left a silence in

its wake. At bridge her moves were so spasmodic that, when opposite dummy, she seemed to play the two cards with a simultaneous movement. The same mannerisms were in her outdoor games, a second service at tennis often following a faulty first so rapidly that her opponent would sometimes be almost unaware that more than one ball had been played.

Selwyn's original feeling of exasperation mel-

lowed to one of genuine pity in contemplation of her solitary life—a life directed by a restless energy that only grew in intensity with the deepening realisation of her purposelessness. Yet she was so confident in her bearing, and so capable of foiling with repartee any approach of his, that he contented himself with a studied politeness that was no more personal than the grief of an undertaker at a funeral.

(Continued on page 184.)

LEAVES FROM A CATALOGUER'S WALLET.

II.—THE MYSTERY OF TWO HOPPNER PORTRAITS.

By W. ROBERTS.

I.

UNDER the will of Miss Julia Crokat, late of 9 Chester Place, Hyde Park, London (who died on November 4, 1914), two charming little whole-length portraits by John Hoppner, R.A., were bequeathed to, and accepted by, the National Gallery. One, the elder child, Frederick Van Diest, is standing in a landscape, and is dressed in old gold breeches, which come nearly up to his arm-pits and partly hide his dark coat; in his left hand he is holding his large felt hat, and in his right a toy riding-whip. The sweet, bonny-looking little girl, Louisa Anne Van Diest, is also standing in a landscape, by a shallow brook. She is dressed in white, and is holding flowers in both hands, a fold in her pinafore being thrown over her left arm.

There was no record of Hoppner (or indeed of any one else) having painted these portraits; but that is not remarkable, seeing that every portrait-painter of the day painted many portraits which passed directly from the studio to their homes without any kind of publicity, and remained entirely unknown for generations, except to members of the family. As Reynolds and Romney kept full records of their sitters, we know pretty well who sat to them; but Hoppner, with many others, kept no such record—or, if he did, it has not been preserved. And so in the matter of attribution we have to be guided partly by tradition, and partly by the portraits themselves. Tradition is not always to be relied upon, and even appearances are not always convincing; for, executed at the same time and influenced by Sir Joshua Reynolds, the work of Hoppner, Beechey, and Owen, to mention only three justly esteemed artists, is very much of a type, especially in the case of children, with whom the fashions in dress are less likely to help as to period than in the case of adult men and women. But there is no reason for questioning the Hoppner attribution concerning the two portraits of Master and Miss Van Diest, which were generally acclaimed as welcome and attractive additions to the

national collection. Coming into the possession of the National Gallery early in the war, they were for some time hung in Trafalgar Square, and have now been removed to the Tate Gallery.

The point regarding the two portraits, however, was a matter not so much of artist as of identity. Who were the Van Diests? The name is clearly Dutch. A century ago (as to-day) a large number of merchants and others with the Dutch prefix of Van could be found in London Directories, and even in Boyle's *Court Guide*, but Van Diest has not been found amongst them. These two children are obviously, one might almost say aggressively, British, and the portraits evidently date from the early years of the nineteenth century. Rightly or wrongly, it has always seemed to the writer that a portrait without any biographical details loses two-thirds of its interest, sometimes indeed the whole of it, if the portrait is an indifferent one. The lives of all prominent men and women have been written more or less fully, somewhere and at sometime, and in such cases details are not difficult to find. It is with people of by-gone times who were neither eminent nor notorious, but only good citizens, that a difficulty is often experienced in obtaining definite biographical details. Generally speaking, the people who sat for their portraits to Reynolds and his contemporaries and followers were of some mark in the world. When not titled folk or wealthy commoners of whom details are readily accessible, they were prosperous business or professional people whose deaths would almost surely be found recorded in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

II.

When it was desired to obtain some biographical particulars respecting the little Van Diests, there seemed to have been almost a 'conspiracy of silence.'

It was known—or perhaps it would be better to say understood—that the little boy and girl were the children of no less a person than H.R.H. Frederick, Duke of York (1763–1827),

but that was not much of a clue, for the Peerages do not as a rule recognise the children of the sinister side. The *Sunday Times* of June 14, 1917, under the heading 'Ninety Years Ago' (1827), reprinted the following paragraph: 'It is not generally known that the Duke of York left two natural sons, who are now grown up.' Perhaps for 'two sons' we should read 'two children.'

The Duke of York was the second son of George III. He was elected Bishop of Osnaburg, in Germany, when a year old, and in due course became Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. Like his elder brother the Prince of Wales, the duke led a somewhat hectic life as a young man, and, also like him, seems to have regarded himself as above and beyond the moral obligations and restraint which good citizenship connotes. The royal brothers were patrons of all forms of amusements and dissipation, and the famous Vauxhall Gardens were frequently 'honoured' with their august presence. It may only be a coincidence, but, as we shall see presently, the Van Diests lived at Stockwell, less than a mile from Vauxhall Gardens, and there also, and at the same time, resided Bryant Barrett, the chief proprietor of the celebrated Gardens. In Germany, where he acquired his military knowledge, the Duke of York appears to have become famous for his pleasure-loving propensities. Mirabeau, who was in Berlin in 1786, described him as a '*puissant chasseur, puissant buveur, rieur infatigable, sans grâce, sans contenance, sans politesse,*' who '*ressent une espèce de passion pour une femme mariée à un mari jaloux, qui le tourmente et le détourne d'un établissement.*'

We need not concern ourselves too fully with the duke's love affairs. The most notorious of these was the entanglement with Mary Ann Clarke, which began in 1803, and which brought about his resignation as Commander-in-Chief. There was a much earlier one, of which an account appeared in that *chronique scandaleuse* of the time, the *Town and Country Magazine*. In the issue for February 1788 there is the story of 'The Memoirs of the Military Bishop and the Convenient Wife.' It is illustrated with 'a striking likeness' of the former, and a 'beautiful profile' of the latter. There can be no possible doubt as to the identity of the 'military bishop,' whose intrigue with the 'convenient wife' was revealed to her husband by a servant, who, for his pains, was, as we are assured, thrashed with a cane 'from the drawing-room down to the parlour,' where he was stripped of his livery and dismissed. The husband, nevertheless, went to his wife's apartment, and breaking open an India-wood cabinet, found letters which left no doubt on the subject of the truth of the servant's information. The wife, on her return home, was confronted with the evidence, 'and the result was that the interests of the husband should be

promoted through the medium of the wife. . . . Our hero was written to—an English jury was mentioned . . . and a promise of service was given.' Of the nature of this 'service' there is apparently no trace. And whether there was any connection between this little affair recorded in 1788 and the Van Diest children it is impossible to say. There may have been none at all, and it is certain that the two children were not born until some years afterwards.

III.

Two generations of the Van Diests lived at Stockwell Common, which was until well into the first quarter of last century a hamlet of a few houses, and which many years before had come suddenly into the limelight of publicity with 'the Stockwell ghost,' of which the story has been told many times. It was here, on April 17, 1814, that George Van Diest died; it was here also, on January 10, 1831, that Mrs Anne Van Diest, 'otherwise Hart,' passed away at the age of sixty-eight; and yet here again that the death occurred, on July 9, 1848, of Frederick George Van Diest, Esqr., who (doubtless after having gone through various grades of public service) had been gazetted a Gentleman of the Privy Council on January 7, 1833, and who had, when a child, sat, or rather stood, to John Hoppner for the portrait now in the national collection.

We can help to piece together, in part at least, the fragments of the story of the two children from the various wills at Somerset House, where so many romances lie buried. George Van Diest describes himself as of Middlesex and Surrey, and so he may have been engaged in commercial enterprises in London. He was a man of considerable wealth, and must have kept up a good establishment at Stockwell, for in his will he speaks of his carriages and horses. We have the first revelation of a little romance in George Van Diest's reference to 'my beloved friend Mrs Ann Hart, with whom I have lived on terms of affection for near thirty years, she living as and commonly called Mrs Van Diest,' but, 'for particular reasons known only to ourselves, never united in wedlock.' We have another revelation in his generous bequests to Frederick George Van Diest, 'who has been brought up and adopted by me as my son,' and Louisa Ann Van Diest, 'likewise in the same manner adopted as my daughter.' Certain moneys were to be handed over to them on attaining the age of twenty-one, which in the case of the boy would be on June 19, 1821, and of the girl August 17, 1823. Thus we have the dates of the respective births as June 19, 1800, and August 17, 1802. There were various other specified bequests, notably one of a shilling to his 'very worthless' brother John.

It might be assumed from this that the chief *bénéficiaire* under the will, 'my beloved friend Mrs Ann Hart,' was the mother of the chil-

dren. But this is not so, and it may be assumed that the real Mrs Van Diest, if there was one, had left her husband many years before. It is interesting further to note that the intimate friendship which had existed between George Van Diest and Mrs Ann Hart for 'near thirty years' takes us back curiously close to the time of the episode related by the *Town and Country Magazine* of February 1788. This, like the proximity of Stockwell to the favourite resort of the royal princes, Vauxhall Gardens, may be a mere coincidence. The 'Mrs Van Diest, otherwise Hart,' left in possession also made a will, and this she signed with a X, which suggests that she may not have been an educated woman. Her language, or that of her lawyer for her, is exceedingly explicit. She bequeathed her property to 'Frederick George Van Diest and his sister Louisa Ann Crokot'—the latter evidently having married in the interval between 1814 and 1831, probably the Charles Crokot who is recorded in Boyle's *Court Guide* of 1831 as then living at 14 Connaught Square, London. It is obvious that, had she been the mother of the two children, she would have specifically named them as such; but nothing whatever is said of their parentage on either side. In his will, Frederick George Van Diest describes himself as of the Treasury Chambers and Stockwell, and his eventual heir was Charles Frederick Crokot, 'son of my sister Louisa Ann Crokot.' It thus makes no great demand on the intelligence to see how the two Hoppner portraits came into the possession of the late Miss Julia Crokot, who left a comfortable little fortune of over £36,000, and made a number of charitable bequests to public institutions, but whose memory will be best perpetuated by her gift of the two Hoppner portraits to the nation. It is this public bequest which justifies the piecing together of the fragments of a little royal romance which has not

hitherto been told. Objection may be urged against the retelling of old and often unsavoury stories of the private lives of those who have passed beyond defence, and many of whom were exposed to temptations entirely unexperienced by ordinary folk. But time has softened down many of the asperities of the social life of a century or more ago; and in the case of these two charming portraits, the story had to be told as far as it could be, or told not at all. Even now there are missing links in the chain of evidence; but we know exactly the dates of birth of the children, and their father's name and station. We can only suppose that their mother was the legal wife of George Van Diest. Perhaps her story may be a tragedy of which the text is the old familiar one of 'Put not your trust in princes.'

That Hoppner should have been asked to paint the two portraits is not surprising. He was the official portrait-painter to the Prince of Wales, and most of the Carlton House set sat to him at one time or another. He exhibited two whole lengths of the Duke of York at the Royal Academy, one in 1791 and another in 1792; in the latter year also one of the Duchess of York with her ladies-in-waiting—all of which are well known through the engravings by Hodges and Dickinson. Curiously enough, Hoppner himself was reputed to be a natural son of George III.—a rumour which Hoppner himself never troubled to deny, and which is a treasured legend in the family even down to our own time. Hoppner's putative father does not anywhere come into the story of his life, but there seems to be no reason to suppose that the painter was the son of George III., with whom, as a boy, he was a favourite. About Hoppner's early life, as about those of his two sitters, Master and Miss Van Diest, there are mysteries which even time, and wills, and church registers will probably not solve.

HENRIETTE DE BEAUVALLON.

PART II.

I.

BUT all this has been a digression from Monsieur le Général, the French prisoner-of-war on parole at Dulbury, whose advent caused such a flutter of excitement in the peaceful little village.

Monsieur le Général was invited here, there, and everywhere, until his captivity seemed like to turn his head. All were charmed with his foreign grace and liveliness, and though so lately a deadly enemy, he was voted a decided acquisition to society in Dulbury.

But Monsieur le Général belonged to the New Régime. Though he had learnt all that appertained to the art of war, his education in social

matters had been overlooked in his youth, and he had never had time to remedy this omission in his strenuous years of campaigning under Napoleon. In short, he had never learned to perform the elegant dances of genteel society. What was more natural, then, than that he should present himself as a pupil to his exiled countrywoman?

But Mademoiselle Henriette de Beauvallon (whose ardent democracy had faded somewhat with the wear and tear of life as an *émigrée*) belonged to the Old Régime. She could not bring herself to countenance a so-called general of the upstart Corsican. She had never even allowed her eyes to rest upon him. If she espied him in the distance as he swaggered

about Dulbury, she quickly made tracks to avoid coming to closer quarters. She had not lost the pride of the De Beauvillons, though she had lost all else. So, when Sally, Widow Watkin's niece and helper, burst into her parlour, round-eyed and rose-cheeked, with a 'If you please, mamselle, 'ere be the French general sendin' compliments, an' would you be so good as give 'im lessons in dancin'?' it is not surprising that Henriette de Beauvallon drew herself up stiffly, and looking round upon Sally with an air of great haughtiness, replied majestically, 'Tell monsieur that Mademoiselle de Beauvallon cannot be instructress to one of Bonaparte's supporters.'

Whether the refusal reached Monsieur le Général's ears in exactly the same words may be doubted, but the gallant officer did gather enough from Sally's rendering of 'the message to understand that he need not hope to repair his neglected education under 'Mamselle Vallong.'

II.

There was a short, sharp snowstorm after the spring had seemed fairly set in, and all Dulbury lay under a thick white mantle. It was evening and full moon, and Henriette was returning to Widow Watkin's after giving her usual lesson in deportment and the French language to the young ladies at Fairfield Manor. She was crossing the common which lay between the manor and the village by a narrow pathway that had been trodden down in the snow by wayfarers. The brilliant moonlight, reflected by the glistening snow, rivalled the light of day, and by its brightness Henriette descried the not-to-be-mistaken figure of Monsieur le Général on the pathway several paces before her. For a few moments she was under the impression that his face was turned towards the village; but presently she perceived that it was not so—that he was coming towards her, that unless she turned and walked back she must face him. For an instant she thought she would turn, rather than have to pass him in such close proximity as the narrow pathway would make necessary. But almost as quickly the old pride of her race rose strong within her. Was she, a De Beauvallon, to give way before one of the new order? So she boldly kept on her way, her head high, her heart high too, tripping daintily on the trodden snow in her little black satin boots, her skirts held up as only a Frenchwoman can hold them, so that the general recognised her for his countrywoman while he was yet too far off to discern a single feature of her face.

No thought of flight occurred to his mind—not because it would have been unbecoming in a man and a soldier to entertain such a craven idea, but because he was at once consumed with a lively curiosity, and felt that the opportunity so long denied him of seeing this aristocratic but elusive *émigrée* was come at last.

They approached. The path was too narrow

for two to pass abreast. Monsieur le Général courteously made way, stepping aside into the deep snow, and saluting as he did so. The moonlight gleamed brightly upon the buttons and badges of his military cloak and fell bewitchingly upon his well-cut features, but Mademoiselle de Beauvallon's dark eyes looked steadily into space. She bore herself with all the defiant pride and grace that the women of her order had shown in mounting the guillotine.

But the moonlight that fell upon the handsome face of the young soldier fell also upon hers, accentuating the ugly, dark-red scar upon the clear pallor of her cheek, rendered yet more pallid by the filmy light.

His eye fell instantly upon the cicatrice. The sight of it caused his heart to give a strange throb, and wrung from his lips a cry of surprise: 'Mademoiselle Henriette!'

At the sound of his voice she drew up sharply. Who could have called her by that familiar name? One, surely, who belonged to those past scenes in her life. She turned and retraced a step. 'Have I the pleasure of monsieur's acquaintance?' she asked formally in their common tongue.

'Do you not know me, mademoiselle?' he said with eagerness, standing stiffly to attention. 'Have you forgotten Marcel Raimond?'

'Marcel Raimond!' she exclaimed in astonishment. 'Marcel Raimond! Is it possible?'

She held out her little gloved hand with aristocratic graciousness, and he stooped and kissed it, not peasant-like, but elegantly, as befitted an officer and a gentleman.

'I little thought that Monsieur le Général of whom they speak in Dulbury was an old acquaintance, else'—She stopped. Politeness forbade confession that her shunning of the Corsican's officer had been deliberate.

'Nor I that'—He too broke off abruptly. '... That the dancing-mistress of Dulbury was Mademoiselle Henriette de Beauvallon,' were the words that were on his tongue, but he could not utter them.

'I am glad to have seen you again,' she pursued, rallying herself with effort from the shock of the encounter. 'I should never have known you,' she went on, looking him up and down as he stood before her in the snow in his smart cavalry uniform and graceful swinging cloak, trying to reconcile this fine figure of a man with the rough peasant youth she used to know long ago at Beauvallon.

'This is unfamiliar to you,' he replied, placing his hand upon the breast of his military tunic, resplendent with ribbons and lace.

'It is of the New Régime,' she remarked, and was at once conscious of a note in her voice, involuntary, but coldly disdainful; then, forcing herself to graciousness, she added, 'but it becomes you well!'

'Thank you, mademoiselle,' he responded,

bringing his hand up smartly in a salute. 'You are generous!' His eyes dwelt appraisingly upon her shabby little figure. 'But you were ever generous, Mademoiselle Henriette. I have not forgotten.'

She smiled, and a faint flush of pleasure rose on her pale cheek, though he could not see it. This little allusion to their former acquaintance touched her deeply—so deeply that she felt overcome by it. There was much she would have liked to say to him, but could not. Emotion choked her utterance, so that she could only hold out her hand, murmuring, 'I must bid you good-evening, monsieur!' then added, half with patronage, half with desire, 'We shall no doubt meet again.'

'Mademoiselle is kind! It will indeed be a pleasure,' he assured her with warmth, taking the proffered hand and hoping she might yet linger a while.

But she withdrew it at once, and, without another word, dropped him a stiff little curtsy and went on her way.

As for Monsieur le Général, he stood like a sentinel in the snow watching the little figure wending its solitary way across the common until he could see it no more.

III.

That meeting in the snow marked another scene in the life of Henriette de Beauvallon which was to remain as vivid as all the earlier scenes. It was the first in a new Act. The snow cleared away. The moonlight gave place to sunshine and the sweet loveliness of an English April. To Henriette the springing green of those English trees and hedgerows was ever to be associated with the green uniform of Bonaparte's officer. Did she walk abroad between the green-tipped hawthorn-hedges, by strange chance Monsieur le Général beguiled his captivity by strolling in that very lane, and counted himself happy when he received the distant and stately bow of Mademoiselle de Beauvallon. Never did she cross the common to give her lessons at Fairfield Manor but Monsieur le Général would be posted at some point to salute her as she passed, or, when mademoiselle deigned to permit, to escort her to the gates.

These occasions made red-letter days for Marcel Raimond, and gradually they became more frequent as the pride of the De Beauvallon slowly melted beneath the warmth and constancy of his devotion.

It was a devotion as reverent as that he had been wont to accord to the daughter of the marquis, but had none of that abject servility which had so distressed her democratic soul at Beauvallon. Rather did it draw her back to the serene and pleasant intimacy of childhood when they had been happy brother and sister together, sharing each other's joys and griefs as if there was no gulf between.

Little wonder, therefore, that a feeling of utter forlornness came over the heart of Henriette de Beauvallon when the news reached Dulbury that there was shortly to be an exchange of prisoners, and that Monsieur le Général would be repatriated. She felt as if she were again to be uprooted and torn away from the comfortable security that had been wrapping her about these summer days, with Marcel Raimond ever ready to carry her satchel of lesson-books, or offer his help at the wayside stiles; to open and close the gates of fields and paddocks, and ward off the unwelcome attentions of the cattle while he escorted the mistress of French deportment to the homes of her pupils in the manors and the farmhouses round Dulbury. Ah, how comfortable and pleasant had been his protective presence!

But with the proud courage of her birth and blood she braced herself to rejoice with the prisoner-of-war on his good fortune when, meeting her on the common in the late afternoon on her return from Fairfield Manor, he confirmed the dread rumour.

'How glad you will be to see France again!' she said with sweet sympathy.

'Yes,' he replied. 'And yet my captivity has been far from bitter. I have learned to like England.'

'It is a kindly land,' she murmured, looking away across the green-sward, which appeared all dark to her tear-stung eyes, although the sun shone golden.

He agreed cordially. 'I did not know the English before. I regarded them only as our hereditary enemies,' he went on. 'Now I understand them better, and can appreciate and admire their many good qualities. There are, in fact, some English customs I wish with all my heart we had in France.'

He spoke with such a sudden fire of energy, and slashed so fiercely with his cane at a clump of marguerites growing by the pathway, that Henriette turned to him in mild surprise.

'Which custom in particular, Marcel?' she asked.

He gave a little, short, embarrassed laugh, and took out his handkerchief to wipe his brow. They had reached the ancient beech-tree that stood in the centre of the common. Round its giant trunk ran a rustic bench, comfortless, but cool and shady.

'The sun is warm to-day. Will mademoiselle not rest a while?' he suggested.

Never before would Mademoiselle de Beauvallon have condescended to occupy this common seat, but remembering that the days would be numbered now in which she might walk and talk with her friend and countryman, her pride consented to solace her pain.

'But you have not told me, Marcel, which English custom you desire to introduce into our France,' she reminded him when she had settled

herself with aristocratic grace upon the rude bench, and Monsieur le Général stood by her side fingering his cane.

He laughed again with an embarrassed air, and shifted his position uneasily. 'It is their manner of betrothal, mademoiselle,' he confessed. 'Here in England a man may ask the lady he loves to be his wife without any formality. In France'—He shrugged his shoulders expressively. 'You know how it is!'

She assented, thinking all of a sudden of her own betrothal in those far-off days, and gave a little shiver as she recalled the image of the Marquis de Lafère.

'Mademoiselle,' began Monsieur le Général, after a few moments' silence, looking downwards and scratching the toe of his shining Hessian boot with his cane, 'do you think that, being in England, I might venture to use an Englishman's privilege?'

He raised his head and looked straight at her with an eager light in his eyes, and a deep flush rose on his bronzed face.

'Have you lost your heart to an Englishwoman?' she asked, with an assumption of lightness she could not feel.

'No,' he answered gravely, with his eyes lowered again and his two hands clenched firmly upon his cane. 'I lost my heart years ago, Mademoiselle Henriette, to—to you.'

'Marcel Raimond!' she exclaimed, and her eyes fixed his with a strange look in them that filled his heart with fear.

'Mademoiselle—Mademoiselle Henriette!' he cried imploringly, holding out his hand. 'Forgive me! I have dared too greatly.'

'I had no thought of this, Marcel,' she murmured gently; 'no thought. And yet—ah, my friend—my dear friend—I think—nay, I know—that you have all my heart!' And she put out her hand and drew him down on the bench beside her.

IV.

Thus the curtain drops upon a love idyll. There is one more scene, however, in the strange whirligig of life through which Henriette de Beauvallon passed.

The negotiations for the exchange of prisoners were completed, and Monsieur le Général was to depart from Dulbury on the morrow, *en route* for France.

When he met her at their trysting-place on the common, Henriette observed at once that he was possessed by an unusual excitement.

'I have something to tell you, mademoiselle,' he began, with an embarrassed air, as though he would make a confession.

'Am I not Henriette to you, Marcel?' she objected.

'Ah, yes, forgive me! Henriette, the emperor has honoured me!'

'Then I am honoured too,' she responded, smiling brightly and taking his hand in hers.

'But, mademoiselle—Henriette—he desires to create me Comte'—he stammered confusedly, the blood rushing to his face—'Comte de Beauvallon!' And his voice broke upon the words.

'Comte de Beauvallon!' she repeated slowly, her eyes widening, and her clasp tightening upon his hand. 'Comte de Beauvallon!'

'I shall not accept the title if it pains you, mademoiselle,' he declared hotly. 'I shall refuse it, though the emperor frown.'

'But why should it hurt me, Marcel?'

'You are of the old *noblesse*,' he reminded her gently. 'Can it please you that I, a son of the people, should bear the great old name?'

'Yes, Marcel,' she made answer, looking at him with loving pride in her soft dark eyes. 'It pleases me much, because you bear by right a better title—one that no emperor can bestow or mob-rule take from you. You are what the English call "a gentleman."'

THE END.

THE PIRATES OF THE POOL.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

IT was 10 P.M. by Summer Time. Supremely peaceful the little valley lay, a land of shadows, filled with the sleepy rush of water. A pool of blood among the clouds marked the place of the sun's death, and the burn, which at this point issued from the cañon's depths, shone like a path of burnished gold amidst the sweet, damp shadows. Here it passed under the rustic footbridge, swerved to the left, and, half-encircling the level lawns, tumbled over the dam in a cascade of purest, sweetest crystal. Just below there, so festooned and draped with

nature's camouflage that it seemed a part of its rocky setting, stood an ancient mill; while high on the northern hill, high above the wild and unkempt terraces of rhododendron and syringa, towering aloft through a fairy haze of pines, stood the stately castle.

It was an infinitely lovely place, infinitely peaceful, and all these things—the burn, the mill, the woods, the lawns, the very hills, indeed—all these priceless incomparable riches belonged to the old man at the castle, whose estate was known to be the poorest property in all the range!

There was no breeze to-night, and even had there been it could scarcely have reached that

sleeping dam, nestling so deeply in the wooded bowl of the mountains. Then suddenly the mirror-like surface broke at its very centre—broke into a thousand racing ripples. Something was cleaving the surface, something that twisted and turned and doubled back on itself; yet no living thing was visible—merely the arrow-head of light, a crimson wedge, pursued by an army of glancing, bloody swords. The fire-play ceased, the crimson slashes died, and slowly the dam resumed its sphinx-like external calm.

Under the northern bank, under the sweet syringa-bushes, where an old and slippery log lay half-submerged, there was a suggestion of movement. One felt, rather than saw, that a shadowy form left the water at this point, deep among the shadows, though it made never a ripple in doing so. Then there sounded a startling scream, short, piercing, and so high-pitched that it could best be described as a whistle. For the merest fraction of time it filled the whole little valley with echoes, then left one wondering whether it had ever occurred, wondering if one's sense of hearing had played a trick!

Five seconds elapsed; then from somewhere up the burn there came an answering call—not the same sound, nothing like it, yet unmistakably an answer. It came from the stagnant depths of the cañon-mouth—a shrill, sharp 'Kerr-r-k,' not unlike the 'false alarm' note of a moorhen, yet seeming of immense volume in this valley of stillness.

Five seconds, ten seconds, passed. The hiss of water seemed to enhance, rather than break, the quietude. Then again a crimson arrow began to speed across the dam, widening, flashing, pursued by a thousand glancing swords. Straight to the submerged log it went, and there followed a bedlam of strange unearthly sounds. It was as though, in the twinkling of an eye, the silent place had become peopled by an army of hobgoblins, pixies, strange folk of the shadowy nooks, call them what you choose.

What did it mean? There was something sinister about the whole affair—the breaking of the mirror-surface by some unseen and darting form, the breaking of the sleeping air by a sudden mad chorus of grunts, chirps, snorts, hisses, screams, and whistles. What did it mean? It meant just this—that a male and a female otter had united after a spell of twenty-four hours apart. It meant that the first had swum, just under the surface, to the submerged log, mounted it, and called his mate. She had answered from the cañon-mouth; she had come instantly in response to his call, ready to roll and gambol with him, for, no matter how pressing other matters may be, an otter has always time for frolic.

There, on the submerged log, amidst the scent of the syringa, the two sat, or, rather, rolled and embraced each other, rubbed their faces together, twined their long, soft bodies in and out till none

could have told which head belonged to which tail, and then slid silently into the water, disentangled, and began to indulge in the strangest aquatic contortions one could imagine.

Surely these were not warm-blooded, fur-clad things? No; they were serpents—serpents that rolled and dipped and twisted and writhed, creating scarcely a ripple in the process. Both would come to the top; they would clench, grapple, and vanish, one back downwards, writhing and twisting as they went, to separate below, then rise again.

II.

Suddenly the pin-wheel broke apart, and the crimson arrow-play began again. One otter shot off to the right, the other to the left, and between the two there suddenly arose, from the very centre of the dam, a great, silver, flashing body. It broke the surface with a roar, shot upwards for a sheer two feet in a slashing, lashing leap, then fell back into the flood with a sound to be heard from the hill-tops on either side.

This was a salmon, fresh from the sea—the first of the season, for it was yet early May—leaping to rid himself of the sea-lice; twenty-two pounds of darting, flashing fishhood, the fittest of all the dwellers of the deep.

The otters had seen him as he rose for his leap; hence the sudden abandonment of their game and the quick assumption of battle array. The salmon had not yet seen them, but sinking back into the pool, he was not long in doing so. He had passed a thousand perils on his inland voyage, perils that scooped up his fellows to left and to right, till he voyaged on alone, the sole survivor of a whole battalion; but those perils—the drift-net, the tail-net, the weir, the lure—he simply did not recognise as things of death. *This* death he understood. He saw a shadowy form moving swiftly towards him, a form that swam like nothing else save a leech, for it twisted and rolled in the water, seeming to use its entire length, from the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail, as a means of propulsion. The salmon swerved. His dorsal fin stood on end; he became at once a fierce and terrible monster of the deep; but unwaveringly his dark opponent came on.

In the ace of time the big fish turned, flashed like an arrow in the opposite direction, but only to find himself confronted by the second otter. Downwards he plunged, down and over, then up, to dash across the surface at tremendous speed, then down again, heading up-stream, as a hunted salmon always does.

The otters simply followed. They were not so swift as he, but there was this difference—that whereas the big fish flashed to and fro in lightning rushes, the otters kept up one steady speed, never pausing, never diverging, and heading always straight at the mark. It is in this way that the weasel outruns the hare and the mink outswims the beaver, and even had there

been but one otter, that salmon's fate was assuredly sealed.

Systematically they quartered to left and right, far below the surface now, yet working together like two well-trained greyhounds. The salmon had made his choice; he had headed up-stream, and thither he should go—on and up into the shallow water. There was no turning back, and precious little chance of outmanœuvring, for now the dam was narrowing, becoming shallow.

The big fish saw the peril. He made for the top again, and with a roar of water doubled back between the two otters, leaving a train of phosphorescent foam.

Exactly how things happened one cannot say, but suddenly the rush ceased, and there rose to the surface at that place a gleaming silver body, perfectly still. Once only, for the space of a second, it lashed the water into foam, but the foam was stained with brown, for from the neck of the salmon, his most vital part, a piece was missing—a piece the size of a breakfast biscuit, bitten clean out, as though it had been chipped by a giant round-edge chisel. The otters dragged him out on to the moss-covered rocks, and there they left him while they rejoiced—rejoiced over a worthy prey, the fittest of the fit, outmanœuvred on his own ground, and beaten at his own game. They rolled and plunged and pin-wheeled across the dam and back again. The old man at the castle heard them, and wondered; the old man at the mill heard them, and *knew*.

Soon the otters went back to the salmon and ate a little of it. They did not eat much, because they were not hungry; and presently they dragged the fish back into the water, rolled over it, swam around it, and left it to drift with the blossoms whither the current willed.

Some hours later the two otters separated, the male to wander off as his restless spirit dictated, the female to manage her own affairs, in which he played no part. Sometimes a night, two nights, would pass without her seeing him; but always he turned up in the end—never was he very far away. Up-stream to the moorland-edge he would go, and there, by a certain rock, where the roe-deer stooped to drink, he would set out through the heather, away over the watershed to the burn that flowed down the adjoining valley. Always he followed the same trail; always, indeed, he trod in his own footsteps; and so, passing down the neighbouring stream, he would gain a point at which it forked, and a twisted pine-tree stood. This was his recognised boundary. Here the reserves of another otter began, and respecting his neighbour's rights, he would leave the water by the pine, and cross through the woodlands and over the moors by the beaten trail that ended in the home stream.

And the female? At the mouth of the cañon, just above the rustic bridge that spanned the burn between the castle woods and the lawns, she had her den. It was high up in the

bank, well above the highest water-line, but the one and only entrance and exit was a foot below the lowest summer surface—a narrow hole in the sandy bank, amply screened by fibrous roots. The hole ran steeply upwards from its mouth, and ended in a spacious chamber, lined with moss and grass; and here, in the silence and darkness, where even air was none too plentiful, she nursed her tiny kits.

III.

Next morning the old man at the mill was astir very early, and dothed his way across to the grid through which the racing waters passed to the mill-wheel. His old eyes sparkled when he saw what awaited him there—twenty pounds of fresh-run salmon carried by the tide, and practically untouched by his friends the otters! Of course, the salmon really belonged to the castle, but the old man at the mill had his own ideas about fish that come from the sea, and, anyway, he chose to regard the contents of the drift as rightful pickings.

A few hours later the old man from the castle came sauntering down. He met his keeper on the bridge. 'M'Queerie,' said the laird, 'I think I heard otters in the dam last night.'

'And that you did, sir,' replied the keeper, restoring his pipe to its accustomed place between his jagged molars. 'I'm thinking it won't be long, sir, before I shift them brutes.'

The old man looked up keenly. He rather liked the wild things in his half-hearted way, but generally he bowed to the keeper's superior knowledge in such matters.

'Why?' There was a tone of defence in the old laird's voice as he snapped out the question.

The keeper removed his pipe again and spat into the pool. 'Because there won't be a fish [salmon] in the dub, sir, so long as them things is about,' he answered. 'I wouldn't trust them with pheasant chicks neither—an otter's nothing but a big weasel, you know, sir.'

Just then the old man from the mill came sauntering up. 'Well, M'Nab,' said the laird, 'you've lived by the water longer than any of us. What's your opinion about otters?'

M'Nab looked up keenly, then scowled an unveiled scowl at the keeper. 'I reckon they're the nicest animals we get about here, sir,' was his whole-hearted opinion.

'And do you think they kill salmon and game-chicks?' asked the laird.

The miller's eyes were open very wide; then he uttered an exclamation of disdain. 'I call to mind when I was a lad there were a hundred salmon for every one to-day,' he said. 'And otters—why, sir, I've seen this yer dam fair stiff with them! We reckoned they came here for the eels and the frogs; but salmon—tush!'

'And I agree with you, M'Nab,' said the old laird; and so it was decided, to the keeper's chagrin, that the otters should be left alone.

IV.

That day the four otter kits fully opened their eyes. They were now seven weeks old, but as yet no ray of light, no breath of heaven, had entered their dwelling. In the tomb-like stillness and darkness of the den they had grown and matured, and to-day they showed for the first time a desire to escape from their prison.

Thereupon the mother-otter set to work to construct a back entrance. She dug almost vertically to within an inch of the earth's surface; then, when darkness fell, she completed the tunnel, emerging in the centre of a willow-bush twenty feet from the water's edge. Now she carried out her kits, and during the silent, moonlight hours of the nights that followed, she allowed them to grope their way back and forth through the twisted stems of the willows.

On the fourth night the male otter turned up, and seemed anxious to view his family; but his wife forbade him to go anywhere near them. On the fifth night the mother picked up one of her cubs, and placed him on her shoulders, where he hung on eagerly with his tiny forepaws round her neck. Thus she took him to the water's edge, and gliding in, began to swim, at which the kitten squealed in terror and promptly lost his hold. Once in the water, panic seized him, and he might, indeed, have drowned had not his mother nosed him gently ashore.

That night each of the kits received its baptism, and none of them liked it any better than the first. The next night the female took them a tiny eel, and though they were greatly interested in its wriggling efforts to regain the burn, none of them possessed the haziest notion of eating it. In vain the mother took it up, dropped it, mouthed it over, and dropped it again by one, then another. At length the strongest kit, following her example, took the eel by the head, and it wriggled out of sight. The cub looked much surprised—he had eaten his first fish, though I don't believe he knew it! Before dawn each of the cubs had made the same desirable mistake, and the following night much of their fear of the water was gone.

From that date onward the training of the kits developed rapidly. Each night now they accompanied their parents in the pool, swimming from one to the other, and climbing aboard a parental back when tired or afraid. The male otter shared almost equally in their upbringing, but it was long before any of the youngsters would follow the example of their parents by diving below the surface. This came by degrees, inch by inch; and once again the parents added the necessary stimulus by showing the cubs that a delightful feast of miller's-thumbs and crayfish was always obtainable in the shallow water for those who chose to dive.

Thus, step by step, the schooling proceeded, till the kits had learnt to corner and catch the

flashing trout and salmon-par, to dig their heads in the sand of the dam-bed and grope for lurking eels, or even to lend a hand in the rounding up of a kingly fish. Weasels they may have been, yet how different from the musk-bearing weasels of the land these restless, darting, playful things! Life was a great joy to them, and in their dispositions there was none of that murderous, vicious, snarling sin that characterises to the very core their nearest cousins. Certain it is, moreover, that they rejoiced in their angling as much for the sport of the game as for the food it provided.

V.

Under the rustic bridge there basked throughout these sultry days a mammoth trout. The old laird had watched the fish closely, and now he remarked to his keeper, 'I think there must be something in the old miller's belief about otters living chiefly on eels and frogs. That's the best trout in the pool, but they haven't harmed him yet.'

'Just happens they haven't come across him, sir,' growled the keeper. 'But you mark my word. One morning he won't be there.'

The old laird pondered. 'In that case we shall know the otters spoil the fishing,' he answered, 'and you can get to work with your otter-traps.'

The keeper counted on this, and the big trout might, indeed, have disappeared but that it was never there when the keeper passed with his gun. Then fortune played an unexpected card into the man's hand. One evening he and his employer were standing at their accustomed place on the rustic bridge, when suddenly an otter reared up from the centre of the dam, looked all around, then silently sank again. A second later the mother wild-duck who had sat her eggs patiently on a mossy bank above the pool for an endless string of days, essayed to lead her newly hatched brood across the dam.

The old man was overjoyed to see them. He had striven for years to induce the wild-fowl to become resident here, and now, at last, he saw a gleam of hope. 'Nine!' he exclaimed. 'All hatched but one. Do you think they will remain, M'Queerie?'

'No-o, sir!' growled the keeper. 'I think them otters will take the whole brood before they're three days old.'

Scarcely had he spoken when there was a mighty swirl in the centre of the group of ducklings, and when it had subsided there were only eight. Again a swirl, and now there were only seven—each paddling for dear life after the desperately anxious mother.

'What did I tell you, sir?' cried the keeper, with something that suggested triumphant gratification. 'That's an otter, and there won't be a duckling left by morning!'

The old laird thumped the rustic rail with a force that hurt. 'Then get to work with your

guns and traps!' he roared. 'Get to work at once, and let's be rid of the otters.'

The keeper went his way content—happy chiefly in the achievement of having triumphed over old M'Nab.

VI.

That night the she-otter came down from her den, and slew the mighty trout beneath the bridge, eating only the choicest part, and leaving the rest to drift away. Presently she called her cubs, and led them off to the shallow water on another joyous crayfish-hunt, but scarcely had she set her feet on the gravel bank when—'Clank!' A steel trap held her fast.

In vain she fought and wrestled with the hateful thing, while her cubs swam back and forth, whistling, clucking, screaming, snorting. Her mate was high up the cañon, fishing on his own; but at that very moment he turned his head homeward, and a strange, unreasoning panic fell upon him. Over the weirs he came, through the crystal, foam-flaked pools, sliding, gliding, between the rocks, downwards, over, and on, swifter, even, than ever before. So he reached his mate, and tried to call her away; but she would not come. He splintered his splendid teeth upon the trap, gnawed at it, snapped at it, rolled on it, tried to bury it; he whistled and screamed and snorted; he bit at the tree-roots in his uncomprehending fear; but the awful night dawdled by, and the beautiful creature in the trap remained a prisoner.

Next morning the old miller was up early, for from the activities of the otters he pictured his drift full of kingly fish. The old man at the castle also was up early, for the otters had kept him awake, and he wanted to see what had happened. But earliest of all was the keeper, and he took his gun.

He found the she-otter lying still, her poor imprisoned foot all torn and bleeding, but her wonderful coat unruffled. He took his place under the trees, his shot-gun ready, for he knew that ere long her mate or her kits would come back to her. And waiting coolly thus, a foot-step suddenly startled him, and he turned to see the laird approaching.

The lonely old man from the castle looked down at the lovely creature in the trap, lovely even in its fear and resignation—looked at those cruel toothed jaws that held the pulped and bleeding flesh, and swore solemnly under his breath. He turned on his keeper, and for once the weak chin was squared, the expressionless gray eyes bore some expression.

'Why don't you kill her?' he inquired with awful brevity.

The man rose somewhat shamefully. 'Waiting to shoot her mate, sir,' was all he said.

The laird bit his lip. 'You sit calmly there and let her torture to death'—he panted out; then words suddenly failed him. He clenched

his hands and turned away. 'Kill her!' he cried. 'Kill her now.' And he turned to watch it done.

The keeper took up a club and approached the trembling, watching, little mother of the woods. On the banks the syringa bloomed; the scented breeze of the summer morning seemed to say that the world was clean and new. In a second the awful deed would have been done, another lovely and gentle creature of God's own making done to death—shattered out of existence because man has taken to himself the things God gave that creature as its birthright. Another second, and the club already raised would have driven the lustre from those waiting eyes; but now, in the very ace of time, a bent and tottering figure appeared upon the bridge, holding aloft a giant trout. It was M'Nab!

'Here, hold on! hold on!' he cried, shuffling into an awkward run. 'Here's the chap that took the ducklings! I found them inside him, and here they are! He'd have killed the whole brood if the otters hadn't killed him first.' And the miller uttered a crazy laugh.

The laird looked at M'Queerie. 'Open that trap and let the otter go,' he ordered.

The keeper sullenly obeyed. The otter moved slowly away and slid into the water. Then the old laird spoke. He spoke at some length concerning steel traps and the way men use them, and at length he finished up: 'We'll leave the otters alone, M'Queerie. If any man on this estate raises a finger against them—that man goes.'

And while the keeper strolled sullenly away, the old man from the mill, still holding triumphantly aloft the giant trout, grinned with such a grin of conquest that M'Queerie could feel it, though he could not see it.

Late that night the she-otter mounted the slippery stump, and showed her bruised and bleeding foot to her mate. He seemed disturbed and anxious. Away up-stream he went, calling to her, calling the cubs; and into the secure cañon-mouth they went, rolling and splashing, their pains and sorrows forgotten as the friendly shadows closed upon them.

OUR HILLS OF DREAM.

THE morn is sad and still;
Cold winds drift from the sea;
Yet o'er you purple hill
Larks carol cheerily.

So dwells within my heart
The clean glad thought of thee;
So, when hot tear-drops start,
Our love sings joyfully.

Though sad this world may seem;
Though winds drift from the sea;
Yet o'er our Hills of Dream
Love sings eternally.

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE INNER CIRCLE.

By LLOYD WILLIAMS.

PART I.

I.

THIS story concerns three people—her ladyship, her ladyship's daughter, and the kennel-maid. There is also a man in it.

Her ladyship was one of those gentle, placid women who appear to have no force of character, but who yield nothing. She was a little over forty years of age, and inclined to be stout in spite of 'treatment.' At the close of the Victorian era she was a 'beauty,' and she still had a claim to good looks. She was fair and round-faced; her hair fluffed, and would probably go on fluffing even when she was gray; and her manners were everything that manners ought to be.

But she happened to be one of those women who learn nothing from life. Marriage and motherhood had passed over her, and left her just where she stood before—a person of small, narrow opinions, founded on sheer convention, and apparently totally incapable of expansion.

Even the war had not touched her. She had 'worked' according to the fashion, and had paid an enormous sum in income-tax without complaint; but now, when the war was over, she believed that she and the world still stood exactly where they did in July 1914.

The Honourable Gladys Lucy was different.

She was only eighteen, and had all her mother's claims to beauty, and something added, of which her mother knew nothing. There was an eager wistfulness in her young eyes, that longed to know the wide world into which she had been born.

Gladys was as ignorant of life as her mother, but for a different reason. The Countess of Deal had had a chance of learning something from the great book of experience, and had obstinately refused to believe a word of it. Her daughter had never been allowed to turn a page.

She had never been to a school, because she was an only child, and was considered too precious to mix with common clay. Her young mind had been moulded by a succession of governesses, and through their eyes she had caught peeps, as it were, of life and the world outside.

Finally, there was the kennel-maid, a person who, in the eyes of Lady Deal, was of no importance whatever.

It was her duty to look after Don Juan II. and III., Forward Beauty, Princess Charming, and a Noah's Ark full of Pekingese quadrupeds, together with their offspring.

Helen Smith occupied a small cottage, which stood about a quarter of a mile from the Hall. Adjoining were the kennels where the Pekies lived. They were like delightful dolls' houses in an elaborately-built-in house, with a tiled floor. A good many human beings would be thankful to find themselves in such comfortable quarters.

One morning Smith, the kennel-maid, was exercising the 'establishment' in a paddock near the kennels when Gladys strolled past. Smith knew her place, and did not offer to speak, though the girl stood by the rail watching the small dogs and their attendant with dreamy eyes.

Gladys was not at all an aloof young person. On another occasion she would have entered into animated conversation with Smith; but, like many girls of eighteen, she had moods of dreaminess. She might, for instance, have been thinking about the cut of a new frock while she stared at the dogs. Smith, attending to her own affairs, would have been surprised had she known that Gladys was thinking to herself, 'What a wonderfully capable sort of person Smith is! I wonder if she understands humans as well as she understands dogs, and could help me.'

Smith was a woman of, perhaps, sixty. She was tall and slender, with a thin, dry, rather hard face. Her eyes were gray-blue, and at odd times there was a hint of shrewd humour in them. She knew her place, and never in any way pushed herself forward; but she did not make friends with the other servants, and lived her life in quiet seclusion.

There was something about Smith that held Gladys's inquisitive young mind. She dressed with a kind of tasteful sobriety that seemed to mark character, and the girl sometimes wished she could see the inside of her cottage. She had a notion that it was different from what you might expect a kennel-maid's cottage to be.

However, Gladys was not in a talkative mood at the moment, and she turned away with a faint sigh, and went up to the Hall.

II.

'Busy, mother?'

'I'm always busy, my dear.'

This was true. The countess was invariably 'busy' with something that was hardly worth while, but she was entirely convinced that no one else in the world could do it as satisfactorily as herself. Just now she was arranging carnations in various vases. Before luncheon the head parlour-maid, who was far more skilful than her mistress, would rearrange them. But the countess would be oblivious of the fact.

'Mother, I want to ask you a question.'

Her ladyship frowned. 'I have no time to waste, Gladys. What is it?'

Gladys was always asking astonishing questions, and her mother was always evading the answers. It did not occur to the woman that in suppressing a young girl's thirst for information she was running a grave risk.

On this particular morning the girl opened up an entirely new field of discussion. She had exhausted so many that her mother often wondered what 'put such things into her head.' The countess herself had never read what could fairly be called a 'book' in her life; but Gladys read everything she could get out of the *Times* library, and the countess would have been astonished at the width of her daughter's inquiries if she had kept her wits about her.

'What happens, mother, when a woman marries out of her station?' asked the Honourable Gladys suddenly.

'Women of our class never marry out of their station,' said the countess firmly.

This was a lie; and the girl knew it was a lie. It was one of mother's favourite devices to deny a truth flatly, and so persuade herself that it was a figment of the imagination.

'I think you are wrong, mother,' said Gladys. 'There was Lady Frayne, who married her motor-man, and Sybil Smyth, who ran off with an actor. Of course'——

'Women of that sort are not in our station,' said the countess. 'And I prefer not to discuss the subject. Be so good as to go to the conservatory. You will find Rolls there. Tell him I want another dozen carnation-blooms.'

The girl walked away with a faint curl of scorn on her lips. She was as honest as young people are apt to be, and her mother's talent for stifling honest inquiry was winning her hearty contempt. If a child asked you what the sun was made of, it would be a poor answer to reply, 'There isn't a sun.'

Gladys gave the order, but did not wait for the blooms. On her way back to the morning-room she passed through the little gallery, and here by some chance a particular picture caught her eye.

The Lucy family had always had a passion for having their portraits painted, and successive generations of wives had done nothing to miti-

gate this distressing malady. The result was that the main gallery was already overcrowded with ladies and gentlemen in different periods of fancy dress, and present-day members of the family were driven to the little gallery.

'In another century or two we shall be hanging our portraits in the stables for want of room elsewhere,' Gladys had been known to observe. 'And a very good place for some of us, too.'

There were several portraits of her mother in the little gallery, but the girl did not glance at them.

It was a small portrait in a darkish corner that held her attention that morning. Beneath was a label: 'Honourable Seymour Lucy.'

To judge by the costume, the Honourable Seymour must have been a young girl in the early 'eighties. Perhaps it was not exactly a beautiful face; some men might even have declined to pass it as 'pretty;' but for Gladys it had always held a fascination. Oddly enough, there was a look of herself in it (though the Honourable Gladys was far better looking than her father's eldest sister had ever been), a wistful look of inquiry, that seemed to be asking what this strange world had to offer a girl.

Her ladyship's daughter stood in front of her aunt Seymour's portrait for quite a long time, frowning as she had a way of doing when perplexed. Then she went to her mother with a new question on her lips—a question that she had never yet ventured to throw into words.

'Mother, there's something I want to ask you.'

'What is it?' asked the countess.

'What did Aunt Seymour do that can't be talked about?'

There is a dark cupboard in almost every family, even the highest, and the ghost of Aunt Seymour inhabited the Lucys' cupboard. It was an unwritten law that her name must not be mentioned, and Lady Deal stared at her daughter out of those babyish unintelligent eyes.

'I don't know what you mean,' she said.

'I think you do, mother,' said her daughter.

'Where is Aunt Seymour? Is she dead?'

'Not that I know of.'

'But what did she do that mustn't be spoken of? Did she run away with—with any one?'

'I decline to discuss the matter,' said her ladyship with some dignity. After all, this was a most effectual way of stifling tiresome inquiries. 'A girl of your age would not understand such things.'

The girl smiled. She had read many books, and pondered over many queer things; she had picked up ill-guarded tittle-tattle from maiden governesses, and fancied she knew a great deal, as young people so often do.

And she declined to drop the subject.

'Have you ever seen Aunt Seymour?' she asked.

'Never; and I have no wish to. She ran a—— She disgraced herself before I knew your father.'

'But what does she live on?' asked the girl.

'Has she any money?'

Here her mother stared at her in contempt. What a silly question to ask! There had never been a Lucy, male or female, who was not amply provided with money.

'Your aunt would naturally have her own private fortune,' she said coldly. 'Be so good as to ask no further questions. I can hear Holbrook coming.'

III.

A parlour-maid entered with the carnation-blossoms given to her by Rolls, the head-gardener, and Gladys glided away with a sigh of discontent. It was always the same. You must never discuss anything that mattered—religion, politics, social problems were all flatly forbidden.

But you might talk about downright silly things by the hour—fashions, vapid novels, the discontent and ill-behaviour of the villagers, and sundry other purely artificial subjects.

Her mind was still full of the portrait of her aunt Seymour; she thought of that strong, thoughtful, wistful little face with the deep eyes. Was Aunt Seymour baffled at every turn when she tried to understand the life she was living? Was that why she became a skeleton in the family cupboard?

Presently a footstep sounded on the gravelled path below. Gladys was standing at the top of the steps beneath the portico, leaning against one of the columns, and forming a prettier picture than she knew. She had not heard the step, and did not move.

Smith, the kennel-maid, had come up to the Hall, and stood there for an instant, looking at the drooping figure of the young girl with a faint smile.

What followed could not have happened in different circumstances.

'Will you give a message to her ladyship, Miss Gladys?' said Smith. 'Don Juan the Second doesn't seem to be well.'

The dreamy, preoccupied girl did not, perhaps, hear the actual words, but her eyes sought Smith's face, and suddenly her graceful young figure came to life. She advanced down the steps slowly, and as she descended Smith's face gradually flushed, so that it looked younger than her sixty years. Smith retreated a little. But Gladys had reached her now, and had seized her by the shoulders.

'You are my aunt Seymour,' she said under her breath.

The moment she spoke Smith recovered her cool manner. 'That is quite true, my dear,' she said. 'I recommend you to keep the information to yourself for the present.'

With that she turned away, and the girl stared after her with puzzled, wistful eyes.

IV.

Here was a delightful mystery for an inquiring mind. Gladys Lucy tried to rearrange the facts of her existence.

Hitherto the world had consisted of a ringed enclosure, within which she and her mother, the royal family, the House of Lords, and a few score of equally select mortals moved about and had their being, and—the people outside the ring.

The people who were outside the ring had always interested the girl enormously, far more than the people inside the ring. She had had delightful peeps at their lives. There were cottage folk, railway servants, and up in London there were miles of streets inhabited by people who were also definitely outside the ring. Then, too, there were the soldiers. During the war she had managed to secure a good many shy peeps at the soldiers. In London a female cousin had taken her more than once to a hospital where she worked as a V.A.D.

It was no end of a mix-up. She had seen a Tommy who was the grandson of a duke, and inside the magic ring, although he chose to be a Tommy, and swore in the most horrifying way in delirium; on the other hand, she had sat by the bedside of a lieutenant-colonel whose mother kept a boarding-house in Russell Square, and was definitely outside the ring.

And now her own aunt was outside the ring. She was a kennel-maid, and lived in a tiny cottage belonging to the Lucy estate. She had 'done something' that placed her beyond the pale, something that could not be mentioned to a 'young girl.' To be sure, her portrait still hung in the little gallery; but that did not go for much. When the Lucys had once succeeded in hanging a portrait, they never took it down again. Nothing short of an earthquake would dislodge the thing.

The point that interested the girl at the moment was, 'Did Aunt Seymour climb over the ringed fence, or was she pushed out?'

There was another point.

'Suppose I climbed out?'

That thought brought a puzzled frown and a shy blush to her face. But it did not prevent her taking tea with Aunt Seymour at the first opportunity; indeed, it urged her to it.

And the inside of Smith's cottage was remarkable.

Although the owner was outside the ring, the cottage looked, somehow, as if she were still inside. It was utterly delightful; everything was right and appropriate. Aunt Seymour had not furnished her little home as if it were a sham mansion; it was a cottage, but the most perfect, lovable, delicious place in the world, with old oak cottage furniture, and choice little prints on the walls, and the most delightful curtains at the tiny windows. And the dresser—there was a real dresser instead of one of your pretentious sideboards—was hung with blue china that made Gladys want to dance with joy, for she knew a little of its value.

'Come and sit down, my dear,' said her aunt. 'I have to do all my own work, but you shall

make some toast, if you like. One of the charms of living the simple life is that you are not troubled with maid-servants. I wonder what made you jump to the conclusion that I was your father's sister.'

Whereupon Gladys told her of the picture that hung in the little gallery.

v.

For a long time they talked of inconsiderable trifles. They were like wary fencers, watching for an opening, each shy of lowering her guard first.

It was not till tea had been discussed, and Aunt Seymour could take her seat opposite to her niece by the fire, that the buttons were removed from the foils.

'Your eyes are asking me a thousand questions, my dear,' said 'Smith' with a smile; 'and the first of them is: What is my story? I shall tell it to you, though I dare say a good many people would not consider it suitable for a girl. Once upon a time'—

She told her story, with a light accurate touch, without sentiment, and yet without concealing its inner meaning. There were no tears in her eyes, but curiously enough there were tears in the girl's.

'And you have lived a lonely life ever since, auntie?' she whispered.

'Ever since. That is the way a woman pays. I have seen something of the world, but as old age creeps over one, one begins to long for kith and kin. I thought of you, though I had never seen you. Your father was my favourite brother, though there were nearly twenty years between us. I had a feeling I should like to see my niece blossom into womanhood, and here I am.' Aunt Seymour paused and smiled. 'I left the enclosure to which I belonged, and now I belong to the outside world.' After another pause, she added, 'It is really quite an instructive story, my child, and I wonder if confidence begets confidence. What would your mother say if she knew you were here, for instance?'

'Mother's a fool,' said the girl coldly.

The slim, elderly woman on the other side of the hearth stiffened a little.

'We don't say those things, my dear, even if they happen to be true,' she remarked. 'I broke one commandment, but I still have a respect for the fifth.'

The girl sat back in her chair with a set face. 'Mother has never grown up,' she said. 'She is still a child in the middle of Queen Victoria's reign. I cannot talk to her.'

'Could you talk to me?'

The girl looked across at the narrow, earnest face wistfully. 'I think so, but'—she covered her face with her hands—'you will laugh.'

'I think not, dear. People who have lived stories—even though they are not pretty ones—seldom laugh at other people's. Suppose we sit closer.'

She took a chair by the girl's side and insisted on holding her hand.

vi.

Yes, it was a strange story, perhaps the last story that one might have expected. Perhaps, too, it was laughable, but the listener did not laugh.

There was a young man in it—naturally. His name was John Merriman, though he was spoken of as Jake. He had been a 'Tommy' in the war. Gladys had made his acquaintance in a hospital when she was visiting a V.A.D. cousin, and in some wonderful way shy exchanges of confidence had ripened into affection.

'We are engaged,' said the girl quietly. 'But I don't wear a ring openly because of mother.' She touched the bosom of her blouse, and added, 'When he is ready, I shall go to him.'

The Honourable Seymour Lucy looked at her niece for an instant and was silent. She would do what she said she would do. It was a constitutional infirmity of the Lucys that they kept their promises. Their motto was, '*Dixi*.' Aunt Seymour was silent, because she knew she might as well invite the west wind to blow from the east as request the girl to think it over. The Lucys never 'thought things over' until afterwards.

'What sort of young man is he, my dear? Is he quite impossible?'

'Quite,' said the girl frankly. 'It's no good to talk about it. It sounds laughable. But that makes no difference.'

'Well, we'll laugh together. What is his calling?'

The girl turned reddish, but her eyes were defiant.

Mr John Merriman was an assistant in a grocer's shop.

Some things are too absurd for daylight discussion. If he had been a bank clerk or a stock-broker, a schoolmaster or a mechanic, it would have been 'impossible'; but one might have discussed it. But there was something dangerously near to the ludicrous in the Honourable Gladys Lucy proposing to marry a young man who wore an apron, and cut up bacon in Clutton's shop at Little Westering, and—

But no, it wouldn't bear talking about. We are a nation of shopkeepers, but we are mysteriously ashamed of our proclivities.

Gladys rose and put on her toque.

'Thanks for having me, auntie. May I come again?' she said in the even tones that come of generations of good breeding. 'I'm not going to ask you not to tell mother, because it might only create ill-feeling, and make no difference in the long-run. I'd love to kiss you.'

'I sha'n't let you go until you do,' said the Honourable Seymour Lucy with a smile.

(Continued on page 201.)

ANOTHER CHAPTER FROM THE DIARY OF A JOURNALIST.

By Sir HENRY LUCY.

LADY RIDLEY.

March 22, 1899.

THE death of Lady Ridley, the latest victim to the plague of influenza, has saddened London society. She was one of the sweetest-natured, prettiest-mannered of the ladies who adorn it. In every way the most richly endowed hostess in London, she, from the opening of the season, looked forward to excelling herself. A day or two before she was stricken down she sent out cards for an unusually prolonged series of festivities. 'Lady Ridley at home,' the invitation runs, 'Saturdays, February 18 and 25, and Saturdays in March.'

To-morrow is the third Saturday in March, and truly sweet Lady Ridley is 'at home.' But there is only one guest.

The day is fixed that there shall come to me

A strange, mysterious guest;
The time I do not know; he keeps the date;
So all I have to do is work and wait,
And keep me at my best,
And do my common duties patiently.

So we pass out, my royal guest and I,

As noiseless as he came;
For naught will do but I must go with him,
And leave the house I've lived in closed and dim.
It only bears my name;
I've known I should not need it by-and-by.

The profoundest sympathy is felt with the Home Secretary. Those privileged to know Lady Ridley as a friend can most nearly, but only vaguely, feel the immeasurable, irreparable loss to the closest companion of a long and happy married life.

NO. 5 JOHN STREET.

45 MECKLENBURGH SQUARE, BLOOMSBURY,
April 5, 1899.

MY DEAR LUCY,—It is very good of you and Mrs Lucy to show such friendly interest in the success of my book [*Number 5 John Street*]. I must say that though I had hopes at the beginning, I ended with fears on the eve of publication, and that the result was as great a surprise to me as it has been a delight to my friends. The papers have been more than kind; the publisher has now ordered his seventh thousand. What more can I desire than that the public may continue in the same laudable frame of mind long enough to give me my place among the writers of the day?

Yes, there is still something left to wish for, and that is an equally favourable verdict from America, where the Century Company has purchased the copyright. Good luck all along the

line may have precious results for me.—With kindest regards to *chère* Mrs Lucy, very sincerely yours,
RICHD. WHITEING.

TOM ELLIS.

April 14.

The funeral services in connection with the death of the late Liberal Whip, Tom Ellis, testified, alike at Bala and at Westminster, to the sterling worth of the man. His career was one that did honour to himself and credit to the system of public life that made it possible. In an ordinary way the post of Parliamentary Whip is one of the appanages of the peerage. On both sides it has been the custom to promote to vacancies either the younger sons and brothers of peers, or scions of great territorial houses still ranking with the commonalty. Tom Ellis was the son of a tenant-farmer. When invited to contest the county of Merioneth, he frankly said he had invested his patrimony in his education, that he was willing to give his services if they were called for, but some one else must find the money.

On those terms he was elected, and in surprisingly short time made his way to a position in which he became the confidant of Cabinet Ministers, the trusted agent of a great party. His death at the age of forty is a calamity to his friends, an irreparable loss to the Liberals. Not so for him. After all, there is some recompense in dying before you have had time to make a mistake or be met by adversity.

As one of his colleagues finely said by the graveside among the Welsh hills, 'Tom Ellis died in France last week. He will never die in Wales.'

JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD.

April 20.

At the inauguration of the Great Central Railway at Marylebone Station to-day I came across John Hollingshead. After a life of varied labour and experience equalled by few, he might pass in a crowd for a man just turned fifty. But he recollects quite well how, sixty years ago, he made his first railway journey. He travelled as a third-class passenger, and having taken his ticket, was shown the way into an open truck, which when not in use for passenger traffic carried coals, cattle, or anything going its way. For the convenience of the passengers one side of the wagon was let down, making a gangway by which they entered the van. When the train was about to start the side was lifted up, more or less securely hooked, and the train rumbled off at fully twenty miles an

hour, third-class passengers jolting on springless wheels.

If it snowed, or rained, or blew the stout north-easter that Kingsley (comfortably writing in his study) greatly loved, they had just to put up with it to their journey's end. There were no means of shelter. Sitting in one of the sumptuously appointed third-class carriages of the Great Central Railway, hearing a man recall these early experiences, brought more vividly to the senses the enormous strides made by railway enterprise during the last half-century than would the study of innumerable tomes of history.

MR COURTNEY.

May 2.

Henry Fawcett, who, in spite of his blindness, lived to be Postmaster-General, from time to time amazed and interested the House by *tour de force* in the way of speech-making. He could, with apparent ease, speak for an hour—of course, without the assistance of notes—on the most abstruse subject. Since he disappeared from the scene nothing so marvellous has been achieved till Courtney spoke to-night on the Budget. All is not absolutely dark to him, as it was to Fawcett. He can walk about unaided, and recognises his friends and acquaintances. But he cannot see to read or write, and is unable to count upon the assistance of notes in making a speech. To a practised debater that, on ordinary occasions, would not greatly matter. When it comes to dealing with the Budget statement notes are indispensable, even to a Gladstone.

To-night Courtney met the difficulty in a fashion that adds to the marvel of his success. He brought his speech fairly written out in the handwriting of his wife. He handed the manuscript to Hobhouse, who sat next to him below the Gangway. As he spoke Hobhouse followed the manuscript, prepared to prompt him if necessary. For an hour and twenty minutes Courtney went on, dealing with a mass of figures and conducting an elaborate argument. Only once, and that after an hour had sped, did he hesitate and turn to his prompter to get his cue.

As a feat of memory this is even more remarkable than Fawcett's everyday doings. He studied his subject; then, out of the sometimes fatal fullness of his vocabulary, he made his speech. Courtney dictated his speech in his study, probably had it once read over to him, and recited it with an accuracy only once at fault.

DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

May 4.

Last night met the Duke of Cambridge at a private dinner given by the high sheriffs of Surrey in the storied hall of one of the city companies. The duke is now in his eightieth year, and would perhaps be better quietly dining at home. But he shrinks from the prospect of absolute retirement. So he goes out dining still,

a pathetic figure with his bowed back, his blue ribbon of the Order of the Garter, and his mechanical method of walking round a room when he enters it, and shaking hands with people he thinks he knows.

He made a speech in response to a friendly toast, a kindly loyal speech, telling us all to be true to the interests of the Empire. There was danger of his breaking down when he referred to the army and his being no longer responsible for its command. But he brisked up again when he went on to affirm, what it is pleasant to know he fully and firmly believes, that the present efficiency of the army is entirely due to his personal initiative and exertions, and that his successor can scarcely be expected to maintain it.

GLADSTONE.

May 17.

Leaving the House of Commons at close of sitting to-day, I came upon a pathetic sight. In Palace Yard, in front of the entrance to Westminster Hall, stood a wagon to which were harnessed two heedless horses. On the cart lay a great mass covered by a white cloth, showing the outline of a gigantic human figure lying helpless on its back. It was, the policeman told me, the statue of Gladstone on its way to the pedestal in the central lobby, where to-morrow it will be unveiled.

I thought of the many times I had seen him walking with springing step past the place where the great dumb figure lay prone on the cart. Almost exactly two years ago I stood there among the bareheaded crowd watching the coffin borne out of Westminster Hall to be carried to its last resting-place in the Abbey. Already two years gone! And in the meanwhile the world has plodded on pretty much as it did.

ARTHUR BALFOUR 'A DUFFER AT GOLF.'

May 19.

Arthur Balfour is just now the hero of a little story which no one enjoys more than himself. He makes a habit, broken through only for imperative State reasons, of spending Saturday to Monday with friends in the country. Last Sunday he was one of a house-party at a well-known place where the park encloses a golf-links. A game was proposed in the afternoon. He demurred, on the ground that, whilst he saw no harm in the exercise, it might give public offence if news went abroad of how he had spent his Sunday afternoon. Assured that he might enjoy the exercise without fear of being observed, he joined in the game.

Presently there appeared on the scene a group of villagers exercising their immemorial right of passing through the park. Balfour was much annoyed, lamenting the hard case of a public man who ever paid the penalty of his position by forfeiting the rights of privacy common to the

humblest citizen. If he were plain Mr Balfour, of the city or the suburbs, he might take a little desirable exercise on a Sunday afternoon, and no one would be the wiser or the sadder. The case was different with the First Lord of the Treasury, Leader of the House of Commons, one of the most prominent men in public life.

He was consoled by a fellow-guest who, standing near the group of onlookers, overheard the conversation.

'Who's 'e?' one asked, pointing to the future Premier.

'Don't know,' replied the other. 'Anyway, he's a duffer at golf.'

CHAMBERLAIN AND THE REFORM CLUB.

May 31.

Looking up Mr Chamberlain's record in the indispensable volume *Who's Who*, I find it stated that he is a member of the Reform Club. Many years ago he resigned his membership in circumstances that make the incident memorable. When his brother Richard was elected Member for West Islington, standing as a good Liberal, he was, as a matter of course, put up as a candidate at the Reform Club. The animosity towards 'Joe,' which that strong personality has in all the varied circumstance of public life succeeded in evoking, found expression in more than sufficient black balls to keep the new M.P. out.

Mr Chamberlain, incensed at this rebuff, forthwith resigned his membership, and has never since entered the stately hall of the Reform. It was said at the time that this incident, rankling in his mind, had something to do with his secession from the Liberal Party, which followed within the space of a few months. One sometimes sees his son Austen at the Reform. That is a chance visit, paid on the occasion when the Devonshire is undergoing its annual cleaning, and its members are temporarily housed at the Reform.

FR WALLACE, M.P.

June 7.

Last night Dr Wallace, Member for East Edinburgh, died almost in presence of the House of Commons. The tragedy is infinitely deepened by the circumstances that attended it. Occasionally there appear in the reports of coroners' inquests accounts showing how the police have been hopelessly in doubt on the question whether a man picked up in the street was drunk or dying. Poor Wallace, stubbornly struggling in the grip of death, was for some moments regarded by the House with the angry impatience reserved for one who has too freely dined. He had long established himself as a prime favourite in debate. He had a style and humour entirely his own, a sarcasm made more mordant by his stolid attitude, his deep, rolling voice, and his grave countenance. When, towards half-past eleven, he rose, the House, worn out with

long debate and eager for the division, immediately assumed an attitude of pleased expectation. There was sure to be some fun with Wallace on his feet.

As usual, he had prepared notes of his good things, and at the outset got on well enough. At the end of five minutes his voice broke. Members, looking up to see what was the matter, observed him groping in futile search of his eye-glasses. His body swayed to and fro. He seemed as if he would fall over the bench by which he stood. Indubitably drunk was the general conclusion. Members sitting near attempted to assist him to resume his seat. One hastily handed him a glass of water, spilling it in passing it over the shoulders of Harcourt, seated on the Front Opposition Bench, who was naturally exceedingly angry that the vagaries of a diner-out should incidentally subject him to this annoyance.

In other parts of the House resentment was felt and expressed only in less open manner. It was all very well, by no means an unfamiliar thing, that at this time of night, especially in sultry weather, after-dinner effects should manifest themselves in debate. But, really, for a man to get up, catch the Speaker's eye, begin a speech, and then become incoherent, even tottering, was too much. Meanwhile, amid angry cries of 'Order! order!' Wallace sank back on the seat a huddled heap, to be carried out, practically a dead man, in the arms of stalwart John Burns.

It was a pitiful ending to the tragedy of a lifetime. There are few men in the House of Commons who could compete with Wallace in pungency of debating power, fewer still in depth and scope of scholarship. He might have won his way to the highest position. Having filled more than one of high renown, he sank to the level of the applicant for a coronership.

His nearest parallel in intellectual capacity to be found in modern times is Robert Lowe, whom in his parliamentary gifts and attitude Wallace much resembled.

FROM SIR JOHN LUBBOCK.

June 29, 1899.

MY DEAR LUCY,—Many thanks for your note.

It is as you say. When I found that the contest on municipal trading was likely to turn in part on the telephone, I sold my shares.

I was rather sorry to do so, as I have always felt some pride in having taken a part in introducing the telephone and the electric light into this country. I hesitated, as I thought no one could suppose that the trifling difference which the Bill might or might not make on a few shares could influence one's judgment.

However, on the whole it seemed better to sell, and I need not say that I am now very glad I did so.—Yours very sincerely,

JOHN LUBBOCK.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER IX.—*continued.*

v.

ONE evening, after dressing for dinner, Selwyn found that he had half-an-hour to fill in, and as the smell of grass was scenting the air, he sauntered from the house and strolled across the lawn to a path which led to the trout-stream.

His mind was drowsy with a thousand half-formed thoughts that lazily lay in the pan of his brain waiting the reveille of thought. A skylark twitted earth's creatures from its aerial height. A cow, munching in endless meditation on its unfretful existence, emitted a philosophic moo.

Selwyn smiled, and let his mind wander listlessly through the fields of his impressions. He thought of Britain, and wondered what there is in the magic of that little island that fastens on one's heart-strings even while the brain is pounding insistent criticism. For the first time the insidious beauty of Roselawn's tranquillity was cloying the energy of his mind—a mind that never gave him rest, but was always questioning and seeking the truth in every phase of human endeavour. The peacefulness of the twilight hour was lulling his mental faculties, and the perfumes of summer's zenith were stirring his senses like music of the Nile.

As though he were picturing inhabitants of another world, he conjured to his vision the feverish traffic of New York, deluged with human beings belched from their million occupations into the glare of lunch-hour. It gave him a strange sensation of being among the gods to be able to look at the lowering sun and know that at the same moment it held New York in the pitiless heat of midday. . . . And he wondered dreamily why people lived such a mockery of existence as in its towering streets. The pastoral atmosphere was so perfect, so completely soothing in its cool fragrance of evening, that he thought if he could only remain there, away from the conflict of the world, he could write of such things as only poets dream and painters see.

He had reached the stream, and was about to retrace his steps, when he heard the rustle of a dress, and coming round a bend in the path he saw Elise Durwent. She was in an evening gown that looked oddly exotic in those surroundings, and, still in a haze of reverie, he stood in perplexed silence until she stopped opposite him.

'Have I interrupted the muse?' she said.

'On the contrary, you have awakened it. I was just thinking how vivid you looked with that setting of overhanging bushes and the background of fields. I—I think it must have been

your gown that gave such a quaintly incongruous effect.'

'And, of course, there is nothing incongruous in a dinner-jacket near a trout-stream? If I were an artist I should paint you, and call the picture "Despondency."'

'Well,' he smiled, 'that would be an improvement on most Academy titles. An ordinary artist would simply name it "Young Gentleman by Trout-Stream." Haven't you often gone through a gallery picturing all sorts of dramatic meanings in paintings, only to have your illusions shattered by the catalogue?'

She nodded. 'You have expressed no surprise at my coming,' she said abruptly. 'Are women in the habit of tracking you in this way?'

'I'm sorry,' he answered, lazily thrusting his hands into his pockets. 'As a matter of fact you are never very far from my thoughts. Perhaps that is why I felt no surprise.'

'How are you enjoying your visit?'

'Tremendously.'

'How do you like the guests?'

'Is this a catechism, Miss Durwent?'

She shrugged her shoulders and pulled a leaf from a bush. 'I was wondering,' she said, 'whether they bored you as much as me.'

'Why,' he said with a slight laugh, 'to be frank, people never bore me. The moment they become tedious they are of interest to me as a study in tediousness.'

'Just the same,' she said quickly, 'as when a woman interests you she becomes an object of analysis. I wish I could detach myself like that.'

'And yet,' he said gently, wondering at the intensity of her eyes, 'I should have thought you possessed the gift of detachment to a greater degree than I. You always seem separate and distinct from your associates.'

She said nothing in reply, and as if by tacit agreement they started back along the path. He did not break the silence, feeling that words might be provocative of a retort that would dispel the growing feeling of mutual confidence.

'No,' she said, after a long pause, 'I do not possess the power of detachment. It's just that I don't mix well. Have you read Robert Service's poem about the men that don't fit in?'

'Yes.'

'Well, it's far worse for the women who don't. A man can go out and try to find some place for himself. We have simply to stay and endure things.'

Half in compassion he watched her from the corner of his eye, but again refrained from saying anything. He felt intuitively that she was trying to break down the barrier of impersonality, but

he knew that she must do it in her own way of timid starts and quick withdrawals.

Although her movements were more restricted by her gown than when she wore ordinary walking-garments, her vitality and limitless energy lent a lilt to her step, and even touched the shoulders with a suggestion of restless virility. When she walked there was an imperious tilt to her head; but no matter how carefully planned her toilette, or how cleverly her coiffure might have been arranged by her maid, there was nearly always some stray bit of colour or carelessly chosen flower that combined with her nature in a suggestion of outlawry: the same instinct of rebellion that had dominated her brother Dick during their childhood. Inside the house she would sometimes look, in her quickly changing moods, as if she were some creature of Nature imprisoned within the walls.

Selwyn wondered if heredity, in one of its strange jests, had recalled the spirit of the smuggler ancestor and recast it into the soul of the girl.

They were nearing the house, when, emerging upon a clearing, they came to a rustic bench looking across a short field lined with shrubbery.

'Let us sit down a minute,' she said. 'We can hear the dinner-gong from here.'

He took his seat beside her, and dreamily watched the yellow rays of the sun casting their receding tints along the bushes opposite them. It was strangely quiet, and the hum of insects seemed like a soft orchestral accompaniment to the crickets' song.

'It is not very sporting of me, Mr Selwyn,' she said softly, but with her old staccato mannerism, 'to force my mood on you like this. I did it once before—that dreadful night at the Café Rouge—and I know that you must think it is just selfishness on my part that makes me so unhappy. But—you know I never had a real friend—except little Dick—and I felt to-night as if I had lost all my courage about life. That's why I followed you. I knew you would be patient and kind.'

'My dear girl,' said Selwyn gently, speaking almost listlessly for fear the smouldering power of retort should be fanned into being, 'for months I have been hoping that some day we should be able to talk like this, as friends. Perhaps it was my fault, but there always seemed a sort of third-person-singular attitude in our talk, as if we were speaking *at* each other, which served to block our friendship from becoming anything of value to each other. Naturally I have seen that you are not happy, though there have been moments when you were the very personification of light-heartedness, and I have known for a long time that the motif of your whole nature is resentment. Believe me, Miss Durwent, if I could be a friend—and I mean that to the last ditch—I should be deeply grateful for the privilege.'

'Thanks,' she said simply, and placing her hand in his, let it remain there.

The hot blood of his impressionable nature mounted to his cheeks, and his heart was aflame with a sudden intoxication of desire. But chivalry told him how much it had cost this girl, whose whole being rebelled at the thought of being physically conquered, to show such a mark of confidence. And reason warned him that any triumph he might obtain would be only for the moment. He watched the flight of a hawk in the sky—and his lips were parched and hot.

'For a long time,' she said, 'I have had a growing sensation of suffocation in life. It's stifling me. When I look ahead and see nothing but this kind of life—visiting, visiting, entertaining, entertaining, listening to that endless talk in London—well, I think I understand why some women go to the devil. At least there's something genuine about sin.'

A rabbit leaped from a bush opposite as though it had seen something terrifying, and scampered madly across the field to some burrowed refuge by a great oak. Selwyn felt the hand in his tighten convulsively.

'Look!' she cried. 'Austin—look!'

Her face blanched with sudden alarm. He sprang to his feet.

'What is it?' he cried.

'The bush—there—where the rabbit darted out.'

He looked at the spot indicated by her trembling hand, but the dwindling sunlight had just passed it, and he could see nothing but a clump of shrubbery.

'It was a man,' she said, her voice shaking querulously. 'I saw his face. He was crouching there and watching us.'

Selwyn frowned. 'Some poacher fellow,' he said, 'that's all. At any rate, I'll make sure.'

He started for the bush, when, with a tearful laugh, she stopped him, her hands clinging to his arm.

'No—no,' she said swiftly, 'it's nothing. It was just my nerves. There is no one there. The rabbit startled me.'

He hesitated momentarily, then, turning to her, gripped her arms with his hands. A great feeling of pity for the high-strung girl welled up in him, and he wished that it were possible to impart some of his own strength to her. 'Elise,' he began hoarsely, his whole being in a cloud of passion through which his brain slashed its lightning shafts of warning—'Elise.' . . .

The hall gong, growing in a clamant intensity rang out on the quiet air. With the lightness of a fawn she released herself from his grip, and gathering her skirts in her hand, moved towards the path. 'Come along,' she cried; 'we shall be late for dinner.'

He followed her slowly, his hands in his

pockets and his mind besieged with countless thoughts. As he crossed the lawn he looked up.

From a window in the tower of Roselawn there was shining an angry, blood-red reflection of the sun's dying moments.

VI.

It was a few minutes after midnight when the party at Roselawn retired to their rooms. There had been an impromptu dance, following some spirited bridge, and there was more than the usual chaffing and laughter as the guests dispersed to the various wings of the house.

Tired with the many events of the day, the American quickly undressed, and soothed by the comfort of cool sheets, lay in that relaxation of mind and body which prefaces the panacea of sleep. With half-closed eyes and drowsy semi-consciousness he heard the sounds of life growing less and less in the roomy passages of Roselawn, as his mind lingered over the burning memory of Elise's proximity a few hours before. He felt again the perfume of her hair and the radiant freshness of her womanhood, with its inexplicable sense of spring-time. And memory, with its power of exquisite torture, recalled to his mind the questioning eyes and the trembling, beckoning lips.

The soft chime of a clock downstairs sounded the passing of another hour. Its murmuring echo died to a silence unbroken by any sound save that of the summer breeze playing about the eaves and towers of the house.

Minutes passed. His thoughts blurred into the gathering shadows of sleep.

Of a sudden he was awake, his eyes staring into the dark, his whole body nervously, acutely, on the alert. He had heard a cry—of a night-jar—but so strange and eerie that it made him hold his breath.

The call was repeated. An owl answered with a creepy cry of alarm. Selwyn muttered impatiently at the trick played upon him by his nerves, and turning over, was about to settle again to slumber, when he heard a door softly opening. Light footsteps passed in the hall, stopping at each creaking board as though suspicious that some one might hear; then their sound was lost in the thick carpet of the stairway.

For a minute there was complete silence. He heard from below the cautious opening of the side-door leading to the lawn.

Wondering what mischief was on foot, he rose from his bed, and peering through the window, tried to penetrate the gloom. A sullen sky kept the stars imprisoned behind deep banks of clouds, and only the trees, by reason of their solid blackness, were discernible in the darkness of the night. Slipping on a dressing-gown, he stealthily left his room, and creeping downstairs, found the open door. Emerging on the lawn, he looked quickly about.

Beneath a near-by tree he saw a woman in

white, and the figure of a man pleading for something. Suddenly Selwyn saw the woman take some article from around her neck and hand it to the man. The fellow took it, and seemed to be turning away, when, with a suppressed sob, she caught him in her arms, murmuring incoherent endearments through her tears.

The black scudding clouds left the sky clear for a moment overhead—and Selwyn felt a contraction of pain in his heart.

The woman was Elise, and the man—her brother Dick.

CHAPTER X.—GATHERING SHADOWS.

I.

BREAKFAST at Roselawn was a studiously inconsequential meal. Places were set as usual by the servants, but the viands and the paraphernalia necessary for their preparation were placed on a separate table in the alcove by the great window overlooking the lawn. Having performed this duty, the servants did nothing more; but one could not help feeling that they were just outside the door, like a group of prompters, ready to render instantaneous assistance should the amateurs falter.

Lord Durwent made a kindly and efficient supervisor of the commissariat table, and—there was no question of it—could boil an egg with any one in the county. And the guests plying between the source of supply and the breakfast-table proper created a vagabondish camping-out air of geniality that did much to dispel the natural stiffness of the morning intercourse. As the meal had no formal opening, every one arrived at any time during the breakfast period, and though constant apologies were offered for the frequent interruptions to Lord Durwent's own meal, it could be seen that his enjoyment of buffet proprietorship was almost a professional one.

Lady Durwent's part in the function was to supervise the coffee, and ask each guest how he or she had slept, expressing regret that the night had not been cooler, warmer, calmer, or fresher, according to the polite customs of social dialogue at breakfast.

At nine-fifteen the papers used to arrive from the village, always causing a flutter of excitement. The sense of solitude at Roselawn made the outside world something so remote and apart that there was genuine curiosity to discover what the deuce it had been doing with itself during the house-party's retreat.

Lord Durwent read the *Morning Post* as a sort of 'prairie oyster' or 'bromo-seltzer.' It settled him. There was something about that journal's editorial page and its dignified treatment of events that made Roselawn seem the embodiment of British principle. Being a man who prided himself on a catholicity of viewpoint, he also subscribed to the *Daily Mail*—

that frivolous young thing that has as many editions as a *débutante* frocks, and by its super-delicate apparatus at Carmelite House can detect a popular clamour before it is louder than a kitten's miaow.

As a concession to the ladies of the household, he took, in addition, the *Daily Sketch* and the *Daily Mirror*, those two energetic illustrated papers, which, benefiting from the remarkable geographical fact that every place of consequence in England is exactly two hours from London, are able to offer photos of riders in Rotten Row,

bathers at Brighton, boat-races at Oxford, and foreign monarchs walking at Windsor, the very morning after all these remarkable persons have astonished the world by riding, bathing, racing, and walking.

But to Lord Durwent these papers and the *Daily Mail* were but interludes. The *Morning Post* was the real business of life, and after reading through its solid columns of type, he enjoyed the sensation of somehow having done something for his country.

(Continued on page 196.)

THE HUB OF FILMLAND.

By P. R. GORDON.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA is famous, amongst other things, for its matchless climate, and as being the hub of the moving-picture world. Turquoise skies, perennial flowers, and soft balmy air act as a magnet, drawing thousands of people annually to this land of enchantment and romance.

When cinematograph production was in its infancy, alert far-seeing men saw in this smiling land, and the priceless quality of the sunlight, tremendous possibilities for the development of picture-play photography to its highest degree. Miniature cities, devoted entirely to the production of moving-pictures, sprang up like mushrooms within a few years; now the studios and other buildings have increased to such an extent that many acres of ground are required to hold them. Thousands of persons of both sexes are employed throughout the year by the powerful film-companies whose headquarters are in and around the city of Los Angeles. At the present time the cinematograph industry is one of the most important of all the industries of Southern California.

A decided novelty a few years ago, it is now quite a common sight to see groups of picture-players, attired in all kinds of strange costumes, engaged at various points in the production of moving-pictures.

It was the custom, not long ago, for picture-players—motor-car loads of them—to set out in search of the most suitable locality for the production of the particular scene to be enacted; and frequently the greater part of a day would be spent in this tiresome, expensive, but very necessary business before the desired setting had been discovered. By this time most of the players would be tired, hot, and bad-tempered, and in some cases would decline to act until it suited them, with the result that one would see the unedifying spectacle of the director of the production pacing up and down a barren stretch of parched alkali land, tearing his hair and raving like a madman at the delay.

Now it is different; everything is run on a

thoroughly organised system. All the leading picture-companies have on their staff men—technically known as 'location scouts'—whose duty it is to scour the country in search of locations. So efficiently have these men done their work that it is now somewhat difficult to find new locations, as there is scarcely a nook or corner in the whole western country, stretching from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific coast, that has not been looked over (photographed in many cases) and properly classified by these scouts. All the data in connection with the different locations are recorded in the location-office of each company, and are available for immediate reference at any time. The location-office is constantly in touch with the various scouts stationed at all the principal locations. Once it is decided to film a photodrama in one of the distant locations, a telegram is despatched from the office to the representative of the company at that point. By return comes a telegraphed statement regarding the climatic conditions; whether or not the location is available; whether any changes have been made in it; together with complete information concerning transportation and the cost of using such a location.

So varied is the scenery of the country surrounding Los Angeles that a most suitable location for almost any kind of play it is proposed to film can be found within a few hours of the city. Rocky Mountains, Canadian woods, Sahara deserts, Tyrolean Alps—all can be had at a small rental per day.

In this connection a good story is told of a producer, very much in the public eye at present, who required a suitable location for the purpose of filming a cattle round-up—in other words, a 'cow-country.' He sent one of his scouts to Montana to find the necessary location. In a few days the scout telegraphed: 'No typical cow-country here. Better cow-country near Los Angeles.' The picture was, therefore, made at a big ranch owned by a prominent film-company, a few miles from the city.

It was at the same ranch that many of the most terrible battles in picturedom were fought and filmed.

Los Angeles itself is the scene of many well-known and popular photo-plays. Producers find it difficult at times to enact scenes in the streets of the city, especially at midday, as crowds gather round the players and endeavour to get a place in the scene being photographed.

As a rule locations are easily secured in and about the city, as many of the wealthy residents are only too willing to allow the picture-makers the use of their beautiful homes and grounds at a nominal fee. Directors and players alike exercise every care over any property they may be temporarily using. This is not always the case, however, as the following story shows. A beautiful mansion, situated in one of the most select parts of the city, had been leased to a picture-company for a trifling sum. The owner, on his return, was exceedingly annoyed to find a dirty gang of ragamuffins—employed as 'extras'—lounging all over the well-kept lawn and the spotless porches, eating sandwiches and fruit-pies, and throwing scraps of food in all directions. Even the front-door had not escaped their attention, as the remains of a pie, smashed to smithereens, showed. In another case—a magnificent country estate this time—the director of the film-company had caused a grave to be dug on the front-lawn. These are exceptional cases, however.

Some of the smaller towns in Southern California are used regularly by the film-companies for special kinds of pictures, as these towns are recognised as being typical of certain sections of the country. The natives of these places look forward to the coming of the players; their visit usually means a little diversion and a good many dollars.

A story is current of one of these towns to the effect that the officials there actually refuse to do any repairs in the way of rebuilding the wooden side-walks, straightening the fences, or even painting the houses, because they fear the place will be ruined for picture purposes, with consequent financial loss to themselves.

Another story in illustration of the effect picture-making has on the natives of some of these small towns is told by a well-known player. The buildings in this particular place were all painted white—a colour that was much too bright for the purpose of the producer. By spending a few dollars judiciously, permission was obtained to transform the glaring white of the buildings into rainbow colours, by the use of water-colour paints. When the men of the village returned at the close of the day from their employment farther afield, they were astonished to find the change that had taken

place in their homes. Their astonishment, however, was nothing compared with their bewilderment when they returned the next day and found their buildings a spotless white again, the colours having been washed off during their absence.

As is well known, all types and races of people are employed on various occasions in the making of different kinds of pictures, and in this connection the following story is told of a prominent producer who used some Chinese in one of the scenes of a certain picture. The incident occurred before a store in a street in Singapore. One of the Chinese suddenly pointed to a sign, hanging over a doorway, which announced in Chinese the entrance to a tea-garden, and shouted in tones of great excitement and in very indifferent English, 'Bad—velly bad.' The Chinese interpreter attached to the company had been sent into the city on an errand, and the producer, after many vain and futile attempts to discover what was wrong with the sign, decided to have it painted afresh, and sent for a sign-painter, meantime keeping the entire company waiting for the interpreter to return. That imperturbable gentleman arrived after an hour or so, looked at the sign, and smiling his inscrutable smile, curtly remarked, 'Have it turned over; it is upside-down.'

Another story of the same producer would seem to indicate that it is not always necessary to work in order to earn money. The producer had been hunting for a location in a park, and had discovered quite a good one, but found a couple of ne'er-do-wells leaning against a tree. They were asked to go away, but refused. Finally the producer had to pay them five dollars each to move on.

The ingenuity of some producers in overcoming difficulties in making certain pictures is shown in the following account of a rainstorm that was made to order. By authority of the police and the fire department officials, one of the residential streets in Los Angeles was recently closed all night to allow a picture-company to film a scene in which the heroine, riding a motor-cycle, was pursued through a rainstorm by a racing car in which were the villains of the play. The street, to a distance of one-fifth of a mile, was roped off and patrolled by police. Hundreds of spectators lined the street during the first hours of the 'storm,' but dispersed before morning. To illuminate the street for photographic purposes thirty arc-lights were mounted on fifteen-foot platforms; two 140-ampere spot-lights and an apparatus known as 'lightning scissors' were also used. 'Rain' was supplied direct from the water-mains, and so great was the water-pressure at the hoses that six men were required on each of the four nozzles.

A GOOD WORD FOR MACBETH.

By JOHN FOSTER, M.A., Author of *A Shakespeare Word-Book*, &c.

IT has been remarked that in a literary court of libel many historical characters in fiction and the drama might conceivably bring competent actions against their creators for having unjustifiably held them up to public odium and contempt, or wrongfully represented them as the incarnation of malignity and cruelty. Macbeth, whatever blame he might attach to the early chroniclers, would, in all likelihood, issue a writ of summons against the great Elizabethan dramatist to whom the world owes its conception of the character of this Scottish monarch. And, in the end, the finding of the court would doubtless be that the protagonist of the play had made out a good case against its author for having weighted him with an unwarrantable and irreparable wrong.

In comparing Shakespeare's work with Scottish records, critical investigators have discovered that there is great divergence from ascertained historical fact. They have also shown that the story on which the framework of the play is based agrees in very few particulars with the reality, and that the character of Macbeth is of a very different complexion from that under which it is usually represented. It is impossible, therefore, to get anything like a faithful portrait of him from the dramatist, whose main purpose seems to have been to capture an audience by holding the king up to reproach in a series of intensely thrilling scenes.

The material for this play, as for others connected with the histories of England and of Scotland, was drawn from the *Chronicle* of Holinshed, who was indebted for his account to the twelfth book of the *Scotorum Historiæ* of Hector Boece, the first Principal of King's College, Aberdeen; and he, in turn, followed Fordun, canon of Aberdeen, and author of the first five books of the *Scotichronicon*. Holinshed's story is supposed to be largely mythical; and when to the unreliability of the narrative on which the play is based there is added the fact that the dramatist makes frequent deviations and excursions even from his authority, the historical value of the tragedy becomes still more negligible. These Churchmen of the Middle Ages were idealists, and described things as they thought they should have been rather than as they were. With an easy habit of mind they seized upon traits different from those of the times they knew, and these they regarded with disfavour and aversion. The chroniclers' minds being thus emancipated from the petty perplexities associated with strict and accurate inquiry, legends necessarily loom large in their records. Their narratives are what Charles Lamb would call 'shadows of fact'—verisimilitudes, not verities.

The consequence is that, by tampering with historical events, these annalists have held up to obloquy the name of a sovereign possessed of many kingly attributes which they ignore.

It is now accepted that Macbeth did not violate the sacred laws of hospitality by murdering Duncan in his own castle of Inverness; nor did he aggravate the crime by committing it in the threefold relationship of kinsman, subject, and host. Even the existence of a castle with the architectural features and amenities suggested by the play is put by the dramatist at a wrong chronological period. If Macbeth possessed an abode of any kind in Inverness, archæology refuses to concede to it the accessories of a princely feudal structure. The times would rather require it to have been of the nature of a 'rath,' a primitive set of buildings constructed of wattle-and-daub, and fortified by a circular rampart of earthworks. But, as a matter of fact, the scene of the murder was not in a castle at Inverness at all. The outrage was committed at Bothgowan (Gaelic for a *smith's bothy*), a place near Elgin in the territory of Moray, over which, in virtue of his marriage, Macbeth as steward exercised the office of royal deputy. It is supposed that advantage was taken of the presence of Duncan in this neighbourhood, when on his way northward to suppress one of the numerous revolts that were features of a reign of great incompetence.

The mystery as to whether Macbeth was the principal actor in the murder, or merely accessory to it, is never likely to be resolved, and in this matter we are left upon an uncharted sea of doubt and guesswork. Both he and his wife had motives for the crime. In those far-away times the law of royal succession was as yet irregular and unsettled. The successor was often a powerful collateral relative who became king through the operation of the ancient law of Tanistry, according to which the right was hereditary in the family, but elective in the individual. The purpose of this arrangement seems to have been to convey the right to rule to the strongest in the family and the most worthy of the blood. In short, subject to these limits, it came to this, that *he was king who could*. Macbeth was possessed of many endowments and qualifications for the office. He was of the royal house, and, like the king, was grandson of Malcolm II., whom Duncan succeeded. He seems to have been a forceful and attractive personality. Even in the play Macbeth is the embodiment of chivalry—his manner is frank and engaging; his courage is exceptional; he is kindly and warm-hearted; his bearing commands

respect; his repute is in every one's mouth. Such a strong character must have won remarkable ascendancy over the people, and romance would soon gather round his name.

On the other hand, Duncan appears to have been lacking in those qualities necessary for the proper discharge of the duties of his office. Whatever may have been the cause of the numerous revolts against his authority, he was evidently without the firmness and resolution to suppress them. Swayed by no lofty dominating control, he failed to exercise rigorous authority over a turbulent people, whom a strong ruler should have been able to keep well in hand. Besides, his life seems to have been directed by no sovereign principles. He is characterised by Andro of Wyntoun, the most reliable of the early chroniclers, as a vicious, blood-thirsty, selfish tyrant, who satisfied his lust by the most unscrupulous methods. Under such conditions and in such times, with other political susceptibilities involved, it can well be imagined that Duncan's occupancy of the throne would be held on a very precarious tenure. It was, therefore, in the ordinary course of things for a man with the characteristics of Macbeth to dream fancies which would transport him 'beyond this ignorant present,' and it would have been no irregularity or matter for surprise if Duncan had named him as his successor, especially as the king's sons, owing to their youth, were not fit to rule. One can then conceive the keen disappointment of Macbeth at seeing the airy castle of his dreams topple down, when he learned that Malcolm, an illegitimate son of the king, was named Prince of Cumberland, a title which carried with it the promise of succession. And there is little cause for wonder if forthwith he cherished thoughts of attaining the object of his desire by the use of the foul methods of the period, when fair ones were seen to be likely to fail.

Lady Macbeth's wrongs were far more impelling than any of the prettexts of her husband. They might well be reckoned to fill her 'from the crown to the toe topfull of direst cruelty,' and to render her unsparing in her vengeance. If the theory holds good that two collateral branches of the royal house took rule by turn, then Duncan, grandson and immediate successor of Malcolm II., might rightly be considered a usurper; and, with the succession open to the female side, Gruach, wife of Macbeth, would naturally feel that she had full warrant for taking the ordinary measures of those rude times to establish her claim as the real heiress. From a later incident it would appear that Gruach actually did claim to be queen in her own right, for, after Macbeth's death, the contest for the crown with Duncan's family was continued in favour of Lulach, son of Lady Macbeth by a former husband. But, besides, she had several other indignities to give her cause for revenge.

Her grandfather, Kenneth IV., was killed by Duncan's predecessor, who is said to have also murdered a brother of Lady Macbeth to remove him from the succession. The incident, however, that would most contribute to whet her spirit of resentment would be the burning of her first husband, the maormor of Moray, with fifty of his followers in his own castle. These circumstances and the habits of the period being considered, it may be possible in some measure to palliate the execution of such a dire revenge as followed, and to modify considerably the popular notion with respect to one who has been represented as the most ruthless and implacable of women.

With the scene of the murders definitely shifted from the imaginary buttressed castle of Inverness to the humble smith's bothy, one is spared the necessity of accepting as true the account of the murder of the grooms in the king's sleeping-apartment. The facilities for a royal retinue to exercise all its customary functions would, in the circumstances, be of the most inadequate nature. It is probable that the episode is entirely fictitious, and is based upon a historical incident to which Shakespeare imparted the vital glow by means of that marvellous power which he possessed of seizing upon any particular occurrence and adapting it to his own immediate purposes. There is sufficient likeness between the incident as depicted in the play and the murder of the Earl of Gowrie and the Master of Ruthven in what is known in Scottish history as the Gowrie Conspiracy, to warrant the conclusion that the keen-eyed instinct of the dramatist made most of this incident to give his play an added tragic tone. The report of the conspiracy was well known in London in 1600, and it must doubtless have fallen into the hands of the poet, ever on the outlook to appropriate such stirring episodes for stage purposes.

It was a pretty conception on the part of Shakespeare, and one fitted to strike the imagination, to attribute to Banquo the source from which the royal house of Stewart was to trace its proud descent. The pregnant announcement of the witch to Banquo in the play, 'Thou shalt get kings though thou be none,' was calculated to suggest to Macbeth, as he mused on the future, subsequent dynastic troubles for himself. He foresaw in its fulfilment an unlucky turn to the future politics of the Court, and 'horrible imaginings,' dallying with ambitious thoughts, at once pointed to the means for preventing its accomplishment. But the whole of this fanciful idea savours pre-eminently of the witches' cauldron. Of the murder of Banquo by Macbeth's instructions and the frustrated assassination of Fleance there is no historical record, and authorities decline even to recognise persons with whom these characters can be identified. Their very names are mythical. Holinshed

alone among the chroniclers entertained the idea that the home of Banquo lay in Lochaber, over which province he is supposed to have ruled as deputy for the king. But this theory is a mere invention, and may at once be dismissed from consideration, inasmuch as the inaccessible fastnesses of the Western Highlands were not yet included within the domains of Scotland's king. For that reason there could be no thane of Lochaber for whom was reserved an honoured place among Scotland's nobility at the royal banquet.

What in the play, perhaps, most makes the minds of men reel with horror is the motiveless cruelty shown in the massacre of Macduff's family. Can any palliation be offered to gloss over this infamous butchery? Various reasons are given for the existence of an embittered feeling between the king and Macduff. It is recorded by Wyntoun that Macbeth's displeasure was incurred during the building of a royal castle on Dunsinane among the Sidlaw Hills. In this undertaking the thane of each shire was expected to assist in turn, and when the time came in course for Macduff to do his bit, one account avers that he sent all needful provision of men and animals, but declined to countenance the operations personally, as the other thanes had done. According to another report, the oxen sent by the thane were in such poor condition that they failed to haul the loads of timber. Whatever may have been the delinquency, Macbeth was discerning enough to rate at its proper value any evidence of courtly shabbiness or indifference. In the height of passion he therefore made Macduff the object of his fury, and was heard to threaten that he would yet ride the thane with a snaffle. This menace did not fail to reach the ears of Macduff, who forthwith resolved to take what seemed the most prudent course of the time, and made a hasty flight to England. His intention, however, was not unknown to the king. Even in those days it was not easy to defeat the vigilance of the intelligence service. In the domestic policy of the period a turn for espionage seems not to have been an unknown feature, for we read that the king 'had in every noble mans house ane slie fellow or other to reveale all that was sayd or done within the same.' To intercept Macduff's flight, Macbeth hastened to the thane's castle in the south of Fife. But his pursuit was useless. The quarry had escaped; and Lady Macduff, in the course of an interview with the king, cunningly contrived many excuses and delays until she saw her husband's boat well out of reach on the Firth. By this manœuvre Macduff escaped, to the bitter chagrin of his pursuers, no doubt. But there is again no historical evidence that an appallingly ruthless vengeance was practised upon his family. With insufficient information an open mind

must also be kept on this episode. If one may give wings to fancy, however, and hazard a conjecture based on positive knowledge, it might be concluded that Macbeth would not glut his fury against a defenceless household to the extent represented. Circumstances would rather suggest a conclusion dead against this view. As head of the Clan Macduff, the thane of Fife had given Macbeth very material aid at the time of his accession, and, in return, there were conferred upon Macduff's house certain distinctions and privileges which are known to have been continued into several of the following reigns. These included the command of the van of the royal army, and the right to place the king in his chair at his coronation. It is not difficult to imagine that this cause of friendship would be potent enough to moderate, at least, any feelings of drastic resentment. And it is unreasonable to think that, in all the circumstances, a family hitherto so greatly favoured, and known to be soon again in high repute, could be the object of such a reckless revenge.

Before the play closes, a perfect orgy of ruthlessness, assigned to Macbeth's brutal activities, is conjured up in the mind, when 'each new morn new widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows strike heaven on the face.' It is a period of storm and terror. Nothing on earth can more resemble the powers of evil let loose than this vision of the wreck of homes and the ruin of families, with their waste, their woe, their heart-throbs, and their tears. Everywhere, one would expect, would be traced the trail of brutality which everywhere would lead to the spectre of desolation. In ordinary circumstances such enormities must have proved disastrous to any economic development, agricultural or commercial, the country was capable of showing at the time. Yet there are no signs of this. The reign was no failure. Macbeth exercised sway over domains wider than those administered by any former Scottish sovereign, and hitherto Scotland had enjoyed no more plenteous and prosperous times than those of the reign of this powerful personality. Wyntoun remarks:

All his tyme was gret plente
Habundande bathe on lande and se.
He was in justice richt lauchful,
And til his legis al awfulle.

Macbeth, it may be allowed, was no Nathaniel either in precept or in practice, and his several vices, the exact complexion of which is not revealed, would in all likelihood be traced in some of his executive measures. But history is once more silent with respect to this dreadful tale of woe.

Nothing, perhaps, in Macbeth's life became him like the leaving it. He is great even in death, and dies a warrior in the flush of battle. Macduff, when he fled to the English Court,

joined there the exiled sons of Duncan, to whom he submitted a scheme for the overthrow of the king. Malcolm, a bastard, harbouring designs to step over his own elder brother, had no hesitation in listening to the proposal. Supported by Siward, Earl of Northumberland, with strong forces, they invaded Scotland, where it was evident there was now no lack of inflammable material, and overcame the king at Dunsinane. But this was not the end, although the dramatist, following, it may be, the tradition of the neighbourhood, represents the death of the king as an incident in this encounter. The battle was inconclusive. Macbeth, retreating northward to Deeside, made his last stand two years later at Lumphanan, in Aberdeenshire, and on Perkill his enemies bore him down and killed him. A cairn, still pointed out as Macbeth's Stone, marks the spot where his body is supposed to have been buried. Wyntoun's *Chronicle* gives an account of the tragic end, and tells how—

Our the Mounth thai chased hym than
Til the wode of Lwnfannan,

Thus Makbeth slew thai than
In to the wode of Lunfannan.

It may be of little value to attempt to conciliate hostile prejudice raised against Macbeth by the wild legends so skilfully woven into the drama, and those dusty times are so remote that a passive public may be apathetically disposed to leave undisturbed the gravestone of a buried past. In the interest of fair-play, however, if not of historical truth, one has no right to let the dead hand of a long-standing injustice interfere with the plain duty of removing, so far as possible, any infamy that has been hitherto wrongly attached to the king's name. The whole subject is obscure, and it is unreasonable to assume a pontifical attitude either way. But, from the reports of those who lived nearest to his time, Macbeth appears to have employed his executive powers in a resolute but even-handed manner. He was a man of passionate patriotism, and gave of his best to the service and the material well-being of his country, his main object being to usher in and encourage a spirit of reaction against English influence, which had repeatedly obtruded itself in affairs of State.

It may be mentioned, whatever the value for the present purpose, that Macbeth was the first king noticed in ecclesiastical records as recognising the activities of the Church, and as assisting its operations by means of considerable benefactions. Too much need not be made of this. It was a medieval practice, encouraged by many monks, to represent a gift to the Church as an instrument for gaining remission of punishment for terrible wrong-doing, as well as for securing an entrance to eternal felicity. And there has been in all ages a calculating type of person, with a strain of piety and policy, who, when he

observes that godliness is profitable in all things, straightway proceeds to do what he thinks is a religious act as a salve to a jaded and troubled conscience. In whatever way Macbeth was actuated to win distinction for early liberality to religious enterprise, whether by the lofty motives of the pious donor or by the mean impulses of the pietistic worldling, it is safe to say that, in the latter event, his action was not prompted by a sense of remorse for anything but a fraction of the sum of blood-stained cruelty attributed to him in the play.

Granted that the misrepresentations contain even a small measure of truth, on the whole the king emerges from the somewhat tangled and fragmentary history as a ruler, if not any better, at least no worse in talents and character, than most of the potentates of those misty times. But 'how his audit stands who knows save Heaven?' In all probability his case will never come to maturity in process of time; for Time is not always the Father of Truth, notwithstanding the familiar saying of Rabelais. There may, therefore, never be any final verdict by the world. Let his memory, then, be lightly handled, and let him, without prejudice, have the benefit of any reasonable doubts to which he is rightly entitled.

SEPARATION.

My heart cries South, and your heart North,
Across the weary miles between;
But ere we meet, the rowans green
In scarlet pomp will blazon forth;

The beech-woods round your lonely stead
Will sigh while some October gale
Bestrews dear Avon's gentle vale
With half their mellow bronze and red;

The faded green of sun-tired downs
Will shimmer with November dew;
Or blackened dahlias counsel you
To lavender your summer gowns.

Ah, could we find a further sense,
Above the five of commonplace,
Immune to laws of time and space,
Our souls to knit in conference;

That we might each, in exile, feel
An interchange of life and thought,
A reciprocity in aught
Of moment to our common weal.

Fond hope this world may scarce fulfil!
Then let us thank what powers there be
That somewhere waits for you and me
Our own warm hearth below the hill.

These gray, sad months that laggard move
Are but the price that life demands;
And, lo! beyond its quittance, stands
The vision splendid of our love

A. T. CORKE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, Yesterday.

WHAT may be needed to stir again the jaded emotions of mankind to a degree of interest and excitement will be afforded during this year by the aeroplane. Those who glance upon daily newspapers and perceive how persistent and remarkable is the development in flying-machines and the human handling of them, how a little is added to the effort and the progress continually, how scarcely a day is allowed to pass without the record of a new forward step, and how these notes and articles all bear upon discovery and intention with a force of mind and a good enthusiasm to support them, can have little doubt that a subject now so dominating will dazzle the human fancy again, strike a shock upon the senses when no other performance of man at present within the scope of our imaginations could do so much. Another world war, more terrible than the one we have endured, could scarcely move the mind of the present generation to any other emotion than one of sickness. War may be an instinct of the human race, but, on balance, progress is a stronger one; were it not so there would speedily be an end of things. Inventions and discoveries in the mechanical and scientific way may please us by the advantages and the conveniences that they afford, but they are as the continuation of an old story which was being told even before our own individual times. These things are excellent; they are needed, demanded, but they are as matters of course. The average man, he of the street, pays little heed to them. Yet he never fails to turn his gaze aloft when he hears the now familiar droning in the air. He is not astonished that by the telephone he in London can hear a voice in Paris; he does but complain that the telephone service possesses not the perfection he thinks it should. He might with disdain reject the offer of a passage upon an ocean steamship on discovering that it was not equipped with a wireless-telegraph service by which the old abysmal solitude of a human mite upon vast waters, tossed amid tempests on tearing seas hundreds of leagues from land, was ended. Now such mite may communicate at ease with other mites in different oceans, and with persons on receding and nearing continents. No longer does he marvel. The opening romance

of radium that may lead to a transformation of the world and of life does not stir him. It seems to him that he has heard something of this kind of thing before. He accepts the principle that the crude matter he sees about him no longer constitutes or suggests that measure of finality which had been attributed to it through all the ages until not long ago. He realises that only a beginning is now being made by an imperfectly but sufficiently developed human investigating instrument upon the limitless labour of scientific discovery, and that at the heart of the universe there must be millions of wonders now beyond his grasp as beyond his comprehension. So far we have but chipped a few granite splinters from the guarded entrance to this hall of nature's mystery; the piles of gems are beyond the view within. In far-on ages they will be discovered. The manner, the quality, the appearance of life will have become much changed by then. Men and women will surely not be the same as now; they will differ in thoughts and looks. The discoveries will have caused a change, have led on rapidly to a new development of the species. This is merely a matter of common progress as we know it. From the time of the application of steam and electricity to our human purposes, the spirit of progress has seemed to overcome finally the initial resistance by nature to human curiosity which had been but indifferently exerted. Thenceforward progress gained in momentum every hour. So new discoveries are mostly taken by people almost spoiled with gifts (applying them now-days to the most evil purposes) as all in the day's reward for the simple exertion of existence.

* * *

But human beings do not become accustomed to the aeroplane and its achievements in flight; there is something about it, apart from the progress it accomplishes almost every day, that fixes an instinct in them that this mechanical bird, on whose back they may soar the air above the eagles, marks the utmost change in the habits and the possibilities of man, sets quite a new era before him in which all life may be transformed, every occupation, habit, arrangement be affected. The human person from his first evolution has been a crawler on the earth; with certain difficulties and hesitations he has

accompanied the fish in the sea, a hampering and restricted medium for movement, but one which circumstances make necessary for employment. The sea and the land are as of the earth with all its limitations; but the air, although it also belongs to the world, is of a different consideration. Even though man alive must cling to earth, yet to fly above it, pierce the clouds, flash through the skies to distant lands in the shortest space of time and in the most agreeable manner, gain that extraordinary sense of emancipation that comes from such flight, is a change in the scheme of existence, something newer and greater than anything we have known. There is the proof of that in this refusal of the mind or instinct to become accustomed, as we say, to the aeroplane in flight. Many years have passed since once, late on a spring afternoon, standing on the railway platform at Monte Carlo in the depths below the casino, I heard a strange humming in the air, and, looking up, perceived for the first time an aeroplane in flight. They were very new at that time, yet, nearly miraculous as they seemed, they were hardly more wonderful then than now. One had then the sense of the crashing of a new epoch into time and the beginning of a revolution in the way of human life. Seasons have passed, war has been fought in the air, romance of battle conflict has been enlivened by more extraordinary pages than ever it embraced before, the aeroplane in peace adds and gathers new distinctions daily, and yet it is as wonderful as ever, and not less impressive. Even those who themselves have flown afar, and have witnessed aeroplanes making their history in various lands and in strange circumstances, when in latter days in the heart of London they hear the hum of planing somewhere in the air outside, suspend their task and open the window wide for yet another glance at this most wondrous thing. It compels attention most insistently; there is an instinct in us for this homage which indicates its transcendency. In the old war-time we would hear the aeroplanes overhead, though we did not see them, on nights of expected raids, humming in swarms until their witches' music swelled like the diapason in full organ flood. Who that heard it will ever forget that weird music?

* * *

Having conquered a new world, or something rather bigger than a world, it should perhaps, after all, not be a matter of wonderment that the human creature with his new engine should achieve something more that is new and, in a manner, still more wonderful almost every day. He and his flying instrument leap at every opportunity with a sparkling imagination. They dazzle with their resource. The men of the railways, in their bad mood, forsake the trains, and the nation is in a predicament. But for the affairs of journeys and transportation which

matter most there is the aeroplane again. In greatest urgency it carried men and women, newspapers and things, long aerial distances, and it bore hundreds of letters a day from London to the provinces. Let the railway and those who are concerned take note that, while in non-striking days we must post our letter, in one of the scarlet boxes in London, by five or half-past in the afternoon if we would have it delivered up in the north on the following morning, such a delivery could be gained by aeroplane even though we enjoyed another night's repose before writing the epistle. During the railway strike of last October the aeroplane made a magnificent justification of itself as a cardinal instrument of peace. About the same time there was a strange coincidence. Never was travelling through the streets of London and out towards the suburbs a more difficult matter than in these days. Congestion and confusion, crush and discomfort, with disappointment often—it is harder for the people in general to move about with comfort and convenience than ever it was in London before. Systems of transportation have broken down, and the minds of controllers appear to have boggled at the crisis. So one day the executive committee of the London Labour Party issued a protest against the proposals of the Select Committee on London Traffic, and on that very day of all days, being the first on which civilian flying to France was permitted, an aeroplane crossed from London to Paris in the morning, and came back to town in the afternoon, punctually to its scheduled time. Since then there has been the regular and uninterrupted service. Day by day the planes have flown in each direction; they have kept their times, on the whole, perhaps a little better than the railways. Now and then they are here or there before the minute that was appointed. Gales do not matter; they fly serenely on all occasions, and take their passengers and parcels in safety. So to Paris, so to Brussels, and so to other places. We may go to Paris and back in less than six hours. It is not only that in such a matter we may beat the railway and steamboat system by a day or so, and thus add a day and the conservation of some energy to life, but that it is proved in experience that thus our air post defeats even the telegraph-wires themselves! And it is a passage of ease. When speeding through the air at a hundred miles or more in the hour from England to the Continent one may recline in comfort in an easy-chair, read a novel, take luncheon, do a little work with a pen, or sleep a while. There are strong emotions for the novice, but for those of a little experience it is a simple thing. It does not appear that in our time, at all events, there will be any end to these advances. Years ago, when flight was young, I remember Captain Robert Scott, who reached the South Pole by the crawling way along ice and snow, discussed with me, on the

ave of his last journey, the future possibilities of getting to the Pole by aeroplane. He had been nearly tempted to a trial; but then the machines were too little tried and too unreliable, and, again, he had the traditions of explorers in his soul, and wished to reach the Pole in something of the old way and with a conquest of all the historic difficulties. Yet he almost took an air-machine with him.

* * *

But now, come June, and what Scott just faintly fancied is to be attempted. The British Imperial Antarctic Expedition which, under the leadership of Mr John L. Cope, is to make a start this summer will endeavour by the use of the aeroplane to accomplish by a flight of twenty or twenty-five hours what otherwise might involve a tortuous journey lasting many months. Leaving England in June, Mr Cope and his men intend to sail for Wellington, in New Zealand, and then proceed to Macquarie Island, where a geological survey is to be made. Then they proceed to Scott Island and establish wireless and meteorological stations there, and next move on to New Harbour, where headquarters will be fixed. Thus, says the leader, with his boat and his aeroplane carrying wireless equipment and these stations established, they will be in wireless touch with civilisation wherever they may go. In London, indeed, we may perhaps exchange a message with our man at the very Pole itself. Here is a concentration of achievement for the mind to play with! 'The distance of the Pole from the base from which the aeroplane will start,' says Mr Cope, 'is about seven hundred and fifty miles. We shall, of course, be compelled to take a sledge and extra provisions and so forth to enable us to get back in the event of the aeroplane breaking down; and with the weight of all these things it will be necessary to cut down our fuel to the minimum, or "taking-off" will be very difficult, and lifting the plane for crossing the mountain-ranges impossible. We propose to set off with as much petrol as we can, and then, half-way on the outward journey, just before we get to a range of mountains that we have to cross, to dump half of it, and pick it up again coming back.' The presentation of such details of intention, this tranquil consideration of flight across a polar mountain-range, the dropping of petrol at some lonely spot deep in the Antarctic Circle, and the picking it up again on returning—the assurance of it all—these truly betoken new times. But even more remarkable aerial enterprises are afoot. Recently the Americans, reaching daringly without delay to the maximum, announced that they would hold an 'International Air Derby' round the world, and that prizes to the extent of \$1,000,000 would be offered for the same. At once a committee was commissioned to make a tour round the world to arrange routes and landing-places. It was declared that competitors

would be permitted to use as many machines as they liked in the race, and might employ dirigibles for the whole or any part of the course. In addition, they would be allowed to adopt any other means of transport for making connections between aircraft to the extent of one-tenth of the total distance covered. Alternative routes would be given to competitors for crossing the Atlantic and the Pacific. If in these permissions there seems to be some lapsing from the ideal, it needs to be remembered that round-the-world constitutes the farthest journey possible in the one direction, that it is a long way, that even yet our flight bears imperfections, and that American intrepidity is often qualified with reasonable caution.

* * *

So a new road, the biggest, grandest, widest, most splendid road, the airway of the world, has been opened up for traffic. Soon the planes may be jostling each other upon it; in a small and accidental way they have done as much already. But it is a roomy road, and there is space above for all. Man in these days is always quick with his organisations—a little too quick and thorough, as it has seemed at times, and too spendthrift. Let there be new labour of any kind, and the bureaux and the bureaucrats sniff the scent of it and prepare. The organisation of the airway has begun in a certain manner, and there will soon be much of it, but the preliminary work at least was indispensable. Rules for the air have been needed. They seem to stand for a new law for man under new conditions. The first world air code has been drawn up, and the rules regulating the international traffic set forth. The representatives of thirteen Allied Powers sitting solemnly at the French Foreign Office by the Quai d'Orsay signed the International Aerial Navigation Convention. It is the fashion in these topsy-turvy times to pretend that thirteen is lucky as well as otherwise, and only on the supposition that those thirteen Allied Powers had such a thing in mind could one explain their haste to sign when even the United States and Japan (who were coming later, and would make fifteen) had not done so. The business of Authority, as it seems always, is to interfere and make restrictions, to restrain the individual from the doing of things that it appears he would like and is well qualified to do. Only the necessity of existence, the fear of revolt, and a sense of the ridiculous prevent Authority from interfering with and restricting nearly everything, and would prevent it in this case from laying down special injunctions upon the new airmen, restraining them, as some would say, from approaching Saturn between the rings or landing on the moon. It seems sometimes to be the special business of Authority to anticipate and to make provision for the vanishing impossible. With some enthusiasm it has started here upon a fine new field. Immediately

it has laid restrictions upon the young men who, in search of pleasure and adventure, would go gallivanting along the strange and distant by-roads of the aerial world. They must not be permitted to do as they like in the air; at ten thousand feet, gliding perhaps round peaks of the Himalayas, they must feel it within their bones that there is dusty Authority, with its old quill pens scratching away in gloomy chambers down Whitehall way, ever thinking of restrictions and limitations, and from there exerting its marvellous influence and power upon the bird-men in the upper reaches of eastern atmosphere. By the International Air Code it is established that all pilots who would a-touring go away from their own, their native, land must possess a brevet, which will be granted only after practical tests and an examination dealing with special knowledge of the regulations as to lights and signals, air traffic, air legislation, and so forth. Authority works to new and strange effects sometimes in this hurtling world of ours, and it may be depended upon that the air laws and penalties will be fine things for forensic argument and judicial determination when once the little difficulties of the international airway begin to arise.

* * *

If the pilot is one who takes parties with him in scampers through foreign spaces and is engaged in aerial transport, he must pass harder, severer tests and more complicated examinations. His technical knowledge must be high, and it is ordained that he must be able to fly by night. The new air code is concerned with the nationality of aircraft of all descriptions, and lays down conditions on which certificates of air-worthiness will be delivered. One cannot recall that, the King apart—and this is not a matter of the King—'G' has ever been a capital of special significance to us before, but in

the international airway it stands for the British Empire. It is our initial. France has taken 'F,' and Italy adopts 'Y,' but the United States shows a pretty independence with her choice of 'N.' It is ordained that logs shall be regularly kept for every voyage. But the new Authority, lording it over movement in the air, will in its graciousness do something else than hinder and restrict. International aeronautic charts will be published, and guiding signs be established either on the ground or on roofs. It may come to pass that a sign will be laid on the desert sand and a pointer put on pyramids. An International Meteorological Service is also mentioned, and a new set of forms, the beloved of bureaucrats, will be made for reports, and a code set forth for the transmission of observations. But do not think that, with all these rules well satisfied, the airman may depart for foreign spheres when and how he listeth. Authority must witness him at the beginning and the end. It is a matter of Customs. Outgoing craft must start from aerodromes specially indicated by the Customs administration of the country, which establishments will be known as *aéropacers douaniers*, and aircraft coming in from foreign parts must land at such. It is provided that frontiers shall be crossed only at fixed points indicated on the international chart. A bill-of-lading model has been prepared like unto those that are in use for voyages on the sea. Neutrals, we are told, will abide by these conventions; and as for those who were the enemies of the victorious Allies, they must suit themselves to it. Here is the law of the air; some may see in it a peculiar presumption. But, Government recognising it and treaties directing it, we may feel that the air is more real now than it used to be, that it is at last taken into our great civilisation, and is a part of our most carefully ordered system.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER I.—continued.

II.

IT was just before the arrival of the morning papers that Selwyn descended to the dining-room. Helping himself to porridge, he answered Lady Durwent's polite conventional questions.

'And *how* did you sleep?' asked his hostess, putting into the inquiry that artistic personal touch which made it seem as if this were the first time she had asked the question, and he the first guest to whom it had been propounded.

'Lady Durwent,' he answered, smiling, 'I haven't the faintest idea.'

'Then,' said his hostess, triumphantly explaining the obvious, 'you must have slept well.'

Selwyn thought that when he answered Lady

Durwent's query a quick look of relief had passed across the face of Elise. It was for her peace of mind he had lied, as into the hours of dawn he had lain awake, trying to unravel the meaning of the nocturnal scene. He knew that her prodigal brother had been forbidden the ancestral home, but it was hardly necessary that he should lie in hiding like a negro slave dreading the hounds upon his track. And yet, as he recalled the sudden glimpse of Dick's face, Selwyn remembered that there had been a hunted look in the dark-shadowed, luminous eyes. Vaguely he felt that this new development would hinder the understanding reached by Elise and himself during the evening. If only he could go to her and offer his help or solace;

or if she would come to him frankly and let him share the unhappy secret, whatever it was, it might prove a bond of comradeship instead of another element to deepen her consciousness of aloofness.

Still churning these various thoughts, he smiled his greetings to her, and affecting an easy unconcern, took his part in the fashionable agricultural conversation which marks the morning intercourse of country-living gentlefolk. If it had not been that the pigs mentioned were Lord Fitz-Guff's, and the cabbages Lady Dingworthy's—and the accents of the speakers beyond question—Selwyn could have imagined that he was sitting around Hank Myer's stove in Doanville, N. Y., listening to the gossip of the local Doanvillians on earth's produce.

'Ah,' said Lord Durwent, sighting a messenger from over the egg-timer, 'here are the papers.'

Directly afterwards the butler entered with the four morning journals, solemnly presented them to his master (with a little more dignity than a Foreign Minister displays in handing the ambassador of an enemy country his passports), then made his exit with his eyes sedately raised, to avoid noting more than was necessary of the 'behind-stage' aspect of his domain.

'Hello!' said Lord Durwent, perusing the *Morning Post*; 'what's this? Austria has delivered an ultimatum to Servia.'

'What!' cried one of the ladies; 'over that unpronounceable assassination!'

'Dear me!' said the woman who kept record of retired royalties, 'that will upset my dear friend Empress—'

But her voice was lost in the clamour, as every one, deserting breakfast, crowded about Lord Durwent, and half in jest demanded to know what the ramshackle empire had to say for itself.

In a voice that grew tremulous with anger, the host read the details, point by point, and as the seriousness of the thing broke upon the hearers, even the very lightest tongues were for the moment stilled.

With a frown the nobleman looked up as he reached the end of the ultimatum, in which one nation, for its pride, demanded that another should hand over its honour, debased and shackled.

'It is infamous,' said Lord Durwent.

'I tell you what,' said a bland youth named Maynard, who was always in high spirits at breakfast, bored at lunch, 'frightfully bucked' by a cup of tea at four, and invariably sentimental after dinner; 'it would do these nasty little Balkans a lot of good to hold 'em all under water for about three minutes—what?'

'But this is more than a Balkan quarrel,' said Lord Durwent.

'Balkan quarrels always are,' said the youth amiably.

In a chorus of quick questions and answers, in which surmise and conjecture played ducks

and drakes with fact, the party divided into two camps, the majority taking the stand that it was a local affair and would lead to nothing; the minority, led by a retired army captain called Fensome, reading a dark augury for the future. In the midst of all the chaffing Selwyn noticed, however, that the placidity of decorum had been dropped, and both men and women were leaning forward in the unaccustomed stimulus of their brains rallying to meet a new and powerful situation.

The men did not lose that note of easy banter which seemed the rule when women were present, but in the faces of the little group who contended that danger was ahead he could detect the stiffening of the jaw and the steadying of the eye which come to those who see events riding towards them with the threat of a prairie fire driven by a wind.

'But, good heavens!' said Selwyn, in answer to some one's prophecy that war would result, 'surely the big nations can stop it. Germany and you and America—we three won't let Austria cut Servia's throat in full daylight.'

The retired army captain turned a monocle on him. 'You have been in Germany, Mr Selwyn?'

'Yes, just recently.'

'Did you ever hear them toasting *Der Tag*? My friend, it has arrived.—Durwent, old boy, if you will excuse me, I think I shall go to town at noon. If my old bones aren't lying, the thing which a few of us fossils have been preaching to deaf ears has come to pass, and there may be a job for a be-livered old devil like me yet.'

'But,' cried Lady Durwent, whose easily roused theatrical instinct gave her the delightful sensation of presiding at a meeting of the Cabinet, 'what have we to do with Austria and Servia?'

'Hear, hear,' said the bland youth. 'Let 'em hop aboard each other if they like. I think it would be deucedly splendid for us to have another war; we're all fed up—aren't we?—with just enjoying ourselves. But I don't see how we can intrude into those blighters' little show.'

'Exactly,' said Selwyn; 'it's an isolated incident in European affairs. In what possible way can it lead to a rupture between Britain and Germany, as Captain Fensome here predicts?'

The officer referred to shrugged his shoulders. 'It's fairly simple,' he said. 'If, as I think, Germany is behind all this, Servia will appeal to Russia; and remember that the Great Bear is mother to all the Slavs. There will, of course, be jockeying for position, bluff, bravado, and all the rest of it, but France is bound to act with Russia, and with all that explosive hanging around it will be strange if some spark doesn't fall among it.'

'But what has that to do with England?'

'Nothing and everything. The greatest hope of maintaining peace lies with Great Britain. If we had the army we should have, I don't think

there would be a war; but, thanks to our ostrich temperament, we are reduced to a handful of men and our action is robbed of everything but merely moral strength.'

'But that is a tremendous factor,' said Selwyn.

'Yes,' admitted the other dryly; 'but I prefer guns.'

'Then you don't think Britain powerful enough to steady the situation if it comes?'

'N-no. Not unless'—The monocle dropped from the speaker's eye, and with annoying coolness he paused to replace it. 'Do you think America will swallow her doctrine and throw in her lot with us?'

Selwyn bit his lip to keep himself from too impetuous an answer. For the first time he felt an envy for the cool imperturbability of the Island Race.

'If you ask me,' he said, 'whether America will plunge into war at the bidding of a group of diplomats who shuffle the nations like a pack of cards, then I say no. If you older nations over here allow this thing to come to a crisis with a rattling of swords and "*Hoch der Kaiser!*" and "*Britannia Rules the Waves,*" count us out. But should the occasion arise when palpable injustice is being done, and the soul of Britain calls to the soul of America that Right must be maintained, then the Republic that was born—if you will permit me to say so—born out of its resentment against injustice will act instantly.'

'Supposing,' said the other, 'that Germany invades Belgium?'

'But—I understand that Germany has guaranteed Belgium's neutrality.'

The ex-officer showed no signs of having heard him, but shook his head impatiently as one does when annoyed by a fly. 'Supposing,' he repeated, 'that Germany invades Belgium.'

'In that case,' said Selwyn sternly, 'America will be the first to protest.'

'To protest?'

'And fight,' said the American, swallowing a desire to hurl a plate at the monocle.

'You will pardon me,' said Lord Durwent, 'but I do not think we can expect America to become mixed up in this thing. She has her own problems of the New World, and it is too much to hope that she is going to come over here and become embroiled in a European conflict.'

'But, dad,' said Elise Durwent, speaking for the first time, 'if, as Mr Selwyn says, it is clear that a wrong is being committed, America will insist upon acting.'

'Oh, I don't know,' broke in the youth who was always lively at breakfast, but who was beginning to be bored; 'it's one thing to get waxy about your own corns, and quite another when they're on some other blighter's foot—what? I mean, you chaps over there got awfully hot

under the collar when dear old Georgius Rex—Heaven rest his soul!—tried to jump down your throat with both spurs on and gallop your little tum-tums out. But the question is, does it hurt in the same place if old Frankie-Joseph of Austria pinks Thingmabob of Serbia underneath the fifth rib—what, what?'

'Is Britain great enough for such a situation?' asked Selwyn, repressing a smile. 'Would she accept Belgium's crisis as her own?'

'Oh, that's another thing,' said the young man a little uncomfortably. 'We've signed the bally thing, and of course we'll play the game, and'—

'As Maynard says,' interrupted the former army man, 'it's a bigger thing for America than for us. Mind you, I don't say we need America to help us make war, but we do need her help if war is to be averted; and any move of such a nature on her part demands what you author fellows would call "a high degree of altruism." How's that, Durwent, for a chap who never reads anything but the *Pink Un*?'

'Oh, well,' said Lady Durwent complacently, 'it's probably all a storm in a teacup, anyway. Some Austrian diplomat has been jilted for a Servian, I suppose. Isn't that the way wars always happen?' and she sighed heavily, recalling to her mind the classic features of H. Stackton Dunckley.

'That's what I say,' said the bright youth of the morning splendour. 'Why make a horse cross a bridge if it won't drink? Here goes—heads, a European war; tails, another thousand years of peace.—Ah, tough luck, Fensome, old son; it's tails.'

'Then let's begin the thousand years with some tennis,' cried Elise, whose eyes were sparkling, 'immediately after breakfast.'

'Shall us? Let's,' cried the talkative Maynard. 'So lay on, comrades—the victuals are waiting—and "damned be he that first cries, "Hold, enough!"'

III.

With an animated burst of chatter the house-party had given itself over to a thorough enjoyment of the remainder of breakfast. Ultimatums and the alarms of war vanished into thin air, like mists dispelled by the sun. The serious face of the ex-officer and the unwonted air of distraction on Lord Durwent's countenance were the only indications that the morning was different from any other. Tongues and hearts were light, and airy bubbles of badinage were blown into space for the delectation of all who cared to look.

It was during a fashionable monologue of the Court-Circular lady that Maynard, the man of moods, who was sitting next to Selwyn, leaned over and whispered, 'Get hold of the *Sketch*. It's on your right. Pretend you're looking at the pictures. I've got the *Mirror*.'

Wondering what asinine prank was in the young man's mind, but not wanting to disturb the monologist by untimely controversy, Selwyn reached for the *Sketch*, and assumed a deep interest in the very latest picture of London's very latest stage favourite who could neither sing, dance, nor act, and was tremendously popular.

'Excuse me, Lady Durwent,' said the gilded youth when a lull permitted him to speak, 'but would you pass the *Daily Mail*, please?'

'My dear Horace,' said Elise, 'you haven't taken to reading the *Mail*?'

'No, dear one. Heaven forbid! I merely write for it.'

'What!' There was an ensemble of astonishment.

'Ra-ther. I sent their contributed page a scholarly little thing from my pen entitled "Should One Kias in the Park?" If it's in I get three guineas, and I'm going to start for Fiji to escape old Fensome's war.'

'Mr Selwyn,' said Lady Durwent, passing the journal along, 'you have a rival.'

With an air of considerable embarrassment the fair-haired contributor to newspapers opened the pages of the *Daily Mail*, but protesting that he was too bashful to endure the gaze of the curious, he begged permission to retire to the library, there to search in privacy for his literary child.

'I say, Selwyn,' he said, 'you come along too if you're through pecking. Nothing like having the opinion of an expert, even if he is jealous.'

With a promise to return immediately and read the effort aloud, the two men left the table and adjourned to the adjoining room. With a frown of impatience Selwyn was about to demand the reason for his inclusion in the silly affair, when the other stopped him with a gesture and closed the door.

'Quick!' he said. 'Grab that knife—here's the *Sketch*. Look through it for anything about Dick Durwent.'

Seeing that the other was serious, Selwyn spread the paper before him and hurriedly searched its columns.

'Great Scott!' he cried. 'Here it'—

'Sh—sh! Hurry up and cut it out. Right. I'll fix up the *Mirror* in the same way. Now skim through the *Mail*. Got it? By Jove! damn near a whole column. Here'—Maynard ran the knife down the side of the column. 'Now then, old Fensome has promised to get the thing out of the *Post*, and to tell Lord Durwent before he goes to town. But he mustn't hear of it this way, and those women are not to know a word about it while they're in the house.'

Selwyn nodded and looked at the ragged clippings in his hand:

'ATTEMPTED MURDER IN WEST END.'
'WELL-KNOWN NOBLEMAN ATTACKED
BY PEER'S SON.'
'QUARREL OVER DEMI-MONDAINE.'

'Gad, those are juicy lines, aren't they?' said Maynard. 'Won't some of our worthy citizens lick their chops over them, and point to the depravity of the upper classes? Do you know Dick Durwent?'

'I have seen him a couple of times.'

'Awfully decent chap. Screw loose, you know, and punishes his Scotch no end, but a topping fellow underneath. I don't know who the bit of fluff is that they're fighting about, but you can wager a quid to a bob that Dick thought he was doing her a good turn.'

'I wonder who the nobleman is.'

'Can't say, I'm sure. Probably he can't either just now, seeing what Durwent did to him. Of course, it's a rotten thing to say, but if the blighter's really going to die, I hope he's one of the seventeen who stand between me and the Earldom of Forth.'

There was a knock at the door, and an inquiry regarding the newly discovered author.

'Coming,' called Maynard, reaching for the *Daily Mail*. 'Shove those clippings in your pocket, Selwyn, and for the love of Allah help me to select something here that I can pretend to have written. Fortunately I can play the blithering idiot without much trouble.'

(Continued on page 214.)

KAMEHAMEHA II'S BEARS.

By V. POLIAKOFF.

AMONG records of great historical importance, but arid of human interest, the patient student sometimes discovers accounts of really humorous episodes—curious happenings and quaint adventures, quite unimportant, but so amusing! Some time ago I stumbled upon one such—the story of an expedition sent to Russia by a Polynesian monarch in quest of—bears! The whole truth, probably, will never be known, but sufficient facts have been brought to light to make the reconstitution of the story possible.

One afternoon in the first week of July 1822 a beautiful clipper entered the harbour of Peter and Paul in Kamchatka. She flew a flag which to the watchers on shore was absolutely unknown: blue, white, and brown. She seemed to be full of men, and saluted the fort with seven guns. In those days Petropavlovsk was practically the only Russian port on the Pacific, for the Amur River belonged as yet to the Chinese, and Vladivostok was still a desert.

The arrival of any ship in that God-forsaken

port was a rare and great event, much more than that of a vessel so mysterious. The whole population—about three hundred souls—gathered on the foreshore. All the authorities were there, with the Governor at their head. This was Captain Ricord, an English naval officer who, with numerous compatriots, was in the Russian service, and had received, after many adventures, the governorship of Kamchatka as a reward for his distinguished services. It must be remembered that in those days the Colonies did not represent a large field for the enterprise of adventurous men. Russia got many of these, and the trace of their doings is to be found everywhere in the commercial records, and especially in the naval history, of that country.

A boat got away smartly from the newly arrived ship. It was manned by dusky sailors. An officer sat in the sternsheets—a European in naval uniform with much gold braid on it, as well as on his cap. Arrived at the landing-stage, the officer jumped on shore, saluted the group of notabilities, and singling out the Governor, reported that he was Captain John Bowles, commanding the clipper *Sunbeam* of His Majesty Kamehameha II., King of the Sandwich Islands. The *Sunbeam's* cargo consisted of salt, intended by His Majesty as a present to the Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, in return for which His Majesty hoped that his 'dear brother' would send him animals fit to be bred in His Majesty's islands—and especially *bears*!

The reader will remember that the Sandwich Islands, discovered by that famous explorer Captain Cook in 1778, were united (by 1795) into one kingdom by Kamehameha I., who has been compared to Peter the Great of Russia. We know that Vancouver helped him to organise an army and collect a small fleet, officered by Englishmen and manned by natives. In 1819, after some internal strife, the throne passed to his son Kamehameha II., who continued in his father's footsteps, but does not seem to have had his great administrative talent. He died in 1824 during a visit to England. We do not know what prompted him to send this extraordinary expedition to Kamchatka, but the fact remains. We may conjecture that, the fauna of the Sandwich Islands being relatively poor, the king hoped to enrich it with specimens from the Czar's domains.

Captain Ricord was very much embarrassed. Here was one monarch communicating with another. How easy to commit a *faux pas*! On the other hand, it was impossible to ask for instructions. In those days the telegraph had not yet come to relieve anxious administrators of their responsibilities. A despatch-rider needed two months to reach Irkutsk, the residence of the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia. More than six months were necessary to send

a report to St Petersburg and to receive an answer! Russian couriers travelled extraordinarily swiftly. From Moscow to St Petersburg, nearly 500 miles, they often went in forty-eight hours; and the record from St Petersburg to Petropavlovsk, on the Pacific, about 10,800 miles, was one hundred and five days. The reindeer, the dog, the horse, and the canoe were all employed by the despatch-rider.

Captain Ricord took counsel with Mr Dobell, another Englishman, at that time Russian Consul-General for the Pacific coast. This Dobell, a very shrewd fellow, had been a merchant in China. He had helped the ships of the Russian navy in every possible manner. His business, in consequence, had been ruined by the Chinese out of revenge. To recompense Dobell and to make up for his losses, Alexander I. had given him the post of Consul-General. Dobell took the matter coolly. First of all, he remarked that Bowles had not a written confirmation of his mission. True, his cargo of salt was very welcome to the colony, and it could be easily arranged to find for him some animals in return, but there was no need to take him too seriously. Ricord accepted this advice, made arrangements with Bowles for unloading the cargo, and promised to have a collection of animals prepared for the return voyage.

Unluckily, we have no information as to what animals were sent to His Majesty of the Sandwich Islands; but we know that amongst them there were a couple of Siberian bears. All this necessitated some delay. Bowles meanwhile became an honoured and much-fêted guest of the Governor and of all the other notabilities. There was quite a little English-speaking colony in the town—the Governor and the Consul-General with their families, the three officers from the *Sunbeam*, and an American merchant residing in Petropavlovsk with his family. There was yet another Englishman in the place—a Cockney who had been valet to some dignitary in Moscow, had stolen his master's valuables, had been caught red-handed, knouted, and exiled to Kamchatka. There this gentleman seems to have been not too badly treated, the 10,000 miles distance from the place of his crime probably helping considerably to throw a veil over his antecedents.

In August there came to Petropavlovsk an interesting personage—John Cochrane, Captain, R.N. To his journal we are indebted for most of the details of this story. Cochrane, finding that in England his craving for adventure could not be satisfied, and being refused by the Admiralty permission to undertake exploration in Africa, decided to cross the whole of Russia to the Behring Straits, and passing these, to come back through the wilds of America—an enormous undertaking in those days, especially as Cochrane had decided to execute the journey on foot! Let us say here that he never got much farther than

Kamchatka, and that his 'pedestrian' journey resolved itself very quickly into using the means of locomotion graciously offered to him by the Russian Government.

Cochrane has left us an exceedingly amusing journal of his wanderings. He mentions meeting the Sandwich expedition in Petropavlovsk. Its members probably attended the ceremony of his marriage with the daughter of the local priest, a young damsel of evidently inordinate

attractions, who captivated the heart of the young Englishman. We can find no trace in Cochrane's journal or in any of the official reports of the date when the *Sunbeam* sailed back to King Kamehameha with the bears and other animals with which good Captain Ricord repaid the salt. Did the bears reach Honolulu? Were they let loose in the mountains to breed? Or did they sink rapidly in the tropical isles? Mystery!

THE INNER CIRCLE.

PART II.

I.

CLUTTON'S in Little Westering was an airy, prosperous shop, where real provisions were sold as distinct from faked imitations. Mr Clutton did not regard you as a customer unless you owed him at least £100.

At the bacon counter a young man was cutting up 'back' with a knife. They despised mechanical bacon-cutters at Clutton's.

A slim, old-maidish, countrified-looking lady entered, surveyed the scene with an impartial eye, and walked at once to the bacon counter, guided only by instinct.

'Can I speak to Mr Merriman?' she said.

'That is my name, madam. What can I do for you?'

'I am Miss Lucy—Gladys's aunt;' and she held out a hand.

If the young man behind the counter had been a prince in a fairy tale, he would have behaved with that calm, distinguished courtesy which princes always display in fairy tales and occasionally lack in real life. Being a plain, stiffish-built young man, Mr Merriman, it pains the historian to state, turned red, looked sheepish, and—wiped his hand on his apron.

'I want to have a frank talk with you,' said the Honourable Seymour Lucy. 'Where can we meet?'

Jake Merriman pulled himself together creditably, and said that if Miss Lucy would do him the honour of taking tea in his lodgings, No. 5 Church Lane, they could talk as frankly as she liked. It was early-closing day.

The first part of the 'frank talk' followed well-worn lines. Mr Merriman cut a far better figure in his own home than he had done behind the counter. He was well set-up, had presentable manners, and an air of ingenuous good-humour that was disarming. He begged his visitor to do the honours of the teapot, and knelt before the fire, making toast, just as Gladys did when she visited the kennel-maid's cottage. Miss Lucy noted the wholesome signs of the room with approval. She picked up a book, and glanced at the back of it. It happened to be Bernard

Shaw's *Candida*, and she was surprised. It had not occurred to Miss Lucy that a grocer's assistant might have a cultivated mind. In the same way, it did not occur to the German General Staff that a grocer's assistant might make a 'topping' soldier.

But she opened fire at point-blank range.

'Mr Merriman, I know more about you than you think,' she said. 'Shall I summarise my information about your career? You were educated at Maidenhead Grammar School, and came out third in an open scholarship examination for Oxford. You were apprenticed to Clutton's at seventeen, joined the army at twenty, and you did well at the front. Your colonel has made a most friendly report. You were recommended for the V.C., and they gave you the M.M. You might also have had your commission twice, but declined it. Why did you do that?'

'I'm afraid I preferred the company of the Tommies to that of some of the officers,' he said with a smile. 'I dare say it was a foolish prejudice.'

'I fancy it was,' said the lady grimly. 'Now you propose to marry my niece, but you have your way to make. I can't help thinking that with a good round sum like, say, £5000, you might'—

'Shall I deal with that point at once?' he asked, still keeping a wary eye on the toast. 'Forgive me for interrupting, but we shall enjoy ourselves so much better if we understand one another. The proposal is that you give me so much money, and that I write to Gladys telling her that "henceforth we are strangers," or something like that.' He looked over his shoulder with a cheerful smile. 'I'm not blaming you for making the suggestion. If our positions were reversed, probably I should do the same. Only, I can't discuss the matter on those lines. I loathe talking sentimentally, but Gladys is the girl of my choice, and she declares I am the man of hers. So, you see, we can't discuss it on a commercial basis, can we? I'm going to butter your toast while it's jolly and hot.'

'Good!' said Miss Lucy composedly. 'I hoped

you would answer like that. So we'll consider that hypothesis dished, and get down to the real problem. Perhaps it will clear the air if I tell you that, although I am Gladys's aunt, my real profession is that of a kennel-maid. I was born inside the ringed enclosure, but I—well, I am now outside it. Any gossip will tell you my story—with the most amusing variations. I mention this to show that you and I are both "outsiders," and can see eye to eye. It makes things easier. Don't you think so? Do you take sugar?'

II.

Broadly speaking, Miss Lucy proceeded to play the part of 'heavy father' in a light, genial way. Gladys would inherit a considerable income when she was one-and-twenty, but what did Mr Merriman propose to live on in the meantime?

Mr Merriman's answer was definite. Mr Clutton was a widower with one daughter; according to the rules of romance, Mr Merriman ought to have fallen in love with her, but, unhappily, Miss Clutton was marrying the son of a bishop. In short, the social scheme was being knocked upside-down, and Mr Merriman confessed that circumstances were embarrassing. But there would be no difficulty as to ways and means. Mr Clutton was taking him in as a partner in about six months. In three years the business would be his own, but in the meantime Mr Clutton would expect his junior partner to live over the shop. He admitted that this was a drawback, but it could not be helped. Gladys knew all about it, and appeared to be resigned.

'You make better toast than my niece does,' said Miss Lucy. 'When I call on her I shall insist on your yielding the toasting-fork yourself. Now, let's look at the thing closely. Thirty years ago I stepped out of the ringed enclosure for a man's sake, and you are asking Gladys to do the same thing—only in a different way. You are asking a fresh-water fish to make itself as comfortable as possible in the sea. She has been brought up in one sphere of life—no, please don't interrupt. I'm not saying it's a better sphere. I only say it's different. She has grown accustomed to daily intercourse with people who are rather indolent and ignorant, and she will mix with people who are by training industrious and competent. She will be out of her element.'

The kennel-maid paused for breath, and Mr Merriman launched his counter-attack briskly.

'May I say this? I was brought up to a peaceful, commercial life, with nothing more exciting than a game of cricket on early-closing day. I found myself transferred to the trenches. No change of element could be more striking, but I managed to make a fair "do" of it. I hold that if people are

young, and have a due share of pluck, they can stand a change of element. There is another thing. I have already pointed out all this to Gladys, and if she has the courage to face it, you can hardly expect me to funk, can you?'

'Light your pipe,' said Miss Lucy abruptly. 'And if you have a cigarette—thanks! So far the argument is level pegging, but I have something up my sleeve. Thirty years ago I sacrificed everything for a man, and it turned out unhappily. It isn't good for all the sacrifice to be on one side. That is my point. No man can be quite worthy of it. No woman can sacrifice all without coming to wonder, sooner or later, if the game was worth the candle. We are only human beings, my lad. Made in the image of God, I grant you, but—made of clay. Do you see my point?'

'I do, indeed,' he said in a low voice. 'And I can't answer the argument, unless you answer it for me.'

'Come, that is talking like a man,' she said. 'If I had a son like you, my dear lad, I should not waste my energies looking after Pekingese spaniels. I should devote myself to a thoroughbred of a different kind. I have a remedy for our difficulty. It is an old-fashioned notion, but I hold that husband and wife should each bring something to the domestic pot. They must meet half-way on common ground. It isn't fair to expect a girl to step down all the way to you. Why not climb up to her?'

'How is that possible?' he asked dubiously.

'You might meet half-way,' said Miss Lucy. 'Suppose I held the ladder while you climbed it? Suppose you went to Oxford at my expense, and'—

'I couldn't accept help in the form of money,' he said quickly.

'There we go,' said his visitor with a laugh. 'My niece must sacrifice her pride, but you won't sacrifice yours. You can't accept a few hundreds from a foolish old woman, with no particular character, because that would be sacrificing your independence.'

Mr Merriman turned red. 'I take back what I said,' he replied. 'I will do whatever you tell me to do.'

'Then go to Oxford for three years, and do the best you can,' she said. 'It will be hateful, I know. You have been four years in the trenches, and you want to begin the sensible business of life. You don't want to go to school again. But your sacrifice won't last for ever—Gladys's will. Afterwards we will think of a profession. You will be eight-and-twenty, and she will be twenty-one—not such a bad age for marrying. And you need not be nervous. She will "stick" the waiting just as well as you "stuck" it in the trenches. That's my plan; it's only common-sense, after

all. A girl might marry a promising young barrister without feeling as if she had given up all for him. Think it over, my lad, and take your time about it. But I must be getting back. I have a kennel of pups worth their weight in gold to look after.'

III.

'Better let him do it,' said Miss Lucy. 'He has a truer hand for toast than yours. I know from experience.'

Two young people agreed to have a toasting competition, and knelt before the fire in Miss Lucy's cottage side by side.

Jake had been at Oxford for a term, and was permitted the high privilege of meeting the lady he adored on neutral territory.

A weekly letter had been exchanged, and Jake's effusions were addressed to 'Miss Smith, the Kennels.' Undoubtedly both he and Gladys had good reason to vote the Honourable Seymour Lucy a brick of bricks.

She was a merciful chaperon, for almost before tea was over she remembered that duty called her to her Pekingese charges, and warning Jake that he had but twenty minutes of paradise left, she quitted the cottage.

Outside, followed by a string of ungainly little dogs, she walked on the grass beside the carriage-drive, looking back now and again towards the lodge gates, as if she expected some one. Presently a victoria came in sight. The countess was returning from a charitable festivity in a neighbouring village. She had abandoned the use of cars during the war, and still clung to the victoria; it reminded her of that substantial period to which she really belonged.

The carriage was stopped when it came alongside the kennel-maid, and the countess beckoned with a royal hand.

'How is Don Juan, Smith?' she inquired.

'He's better, my lady.'

'Smith' held the little beast in her arms, and the countess condescended to fondle him in a way that ought to have made him feel quite well again.

'I will get out,' said the great lady.

'Very good, my lady.'

Don Juan was subjected to the indignity of standing on his four feet, while 'Smith' removed the carriage-rug and assisted her mistress to alight. The coachman was ordered to walk his

horses as far as the yew-tree and back, and the two women were alone.

'Are they inside?' asked the countess, and her voice was intimate and friendly.

'Smith' nodded.

'I wish you could see him, Jane,' she said quietly. 'You would be quite reassured. Has Gladys told you nothing?'

'Nothing. We are afraid of one another.' The poor lady looked troubled. 'I suppose it's my fault. I'm old-fashioned and behind the times.'

'And these two young people are a little in front of the times,' murmured 'Smith.'

'Her strange questions take my breath away,' said the countess, 'and I lose my head. She thinks me unkind, but if she only knew'—

'Some day she will tell her story to you frankly,' said her sister-in-law. 'And when she does, you must try to be very patient. Her heart is full of love, but she belongs to an age that has left you and me behind.'

The countess wiped her eyes hastily, for the carriage had turned round, and they were in full view of coachman and footman.

'I shall never be able to repay you for telling me everything,' she said. 'When are you going to claim your own position in the world? People have forgotten'—

'I shall never return to the ringed enclosure,' said 'Smith.' 'I like my spice of freedom; but your little girl'—

'Our little girl, my dear,' said the countess, laying a plump, smooth hand on the other's arm. 'She will always be yours as well as mine.'

'Thank you, Jane.' 'Smith's' face was crimson with pleasure. 'That repays all. I am quite content.' She glanced at a watch that hung on a somewhat shabby jacket, maid-servant fashion. 'But it is time I packed off that young man to catch his train. Some day our little girl will be a greater comfort to us than you think.'

The countess stepped into the carriage slowly and heavily, and the rug was drawn over her knees.

'You will let me know how Don Juan goes on, Smith.'

'I will, indeed, my lady.'

The victoria rolled sedately away, and 'Smith' took her charges back to their luxurious kennels.

'Our little girl,' she was murmuring.

THE END.

TEASELS.

TEASELS are closely allied to composite plants, but differ in each flower-head possessing a kind of outer calyx, and in the stamens, four in number, being free. In appearance teasels somewhat resemble thistles, and,

like them, have assumed a protective covering of prickles. The leaves afford a fine example of one of the methods whereby plants are preserved against drought. Every pair is so joined together at the lower part as to form a large

cup, where not only is rain collected, but the dews of night, by trickling down the leaves, give a fresh supply of water day by day, even in the hottest and driest weather. The whole plant is covered with hooks and prickles, and seldom is any of it gathered, except the flower-heads after the seeds have fallen out. These flower-heads are very stiff and hard. Called by country-folks barbers' brushes, they form, if not a good-shaped, at least a very penetrating, hair-brush. The prickles serve either as a protection against the attacks of animals or as climbing-organs. They have evidently been adopted by the teasels for defensive purposes, for towards the top of the stem the spines or prickles become more formidable. The flowers, too, are amply protected from the assaults of grazing animals by the long quill-like spine which projects from beneath each floret, as well as by a general covering of very long bracts, armed with spines standing up all around the head.

There are only three kinds of teasel in the British flora. The small one is not uncommon in England, but is absent from both Scotland and Ireland. The common or wild teasel is the best known and most abundant. It is the only species native in Scotland, but in many parts it has been introduced. It is certainly a native of Fife, where it has been growing for centuries along the northern shore of the Forth from Alloa to St Andrews. It is most abundant on the braes between Dysart and Wemyss, but coal-mining and increasing population are tending to its diminution. The plant is rare on the south side of the Forth. It is a biennial, and a rosette of stalked, coarsely toothed, lanceolate leaves is all that makes its appearance the first year. In the second year, with its tall, showy stem and pink flowers, it is a very conspicuous plant. The leaves are opposite and united at their bases, forming a cup as already mentioned. These leaves are among the finest examples of what botanists term a connate leaf. The quantity of water collected by a single pair of leaves is sometimes more than half-a-pint. The connate leaves have been to a certain extent adapted for the capture of insects, whose decaying remains are absorbed by the plant. The stems are everywhere armed with sharp prickles, except where covered by the water in the cup, and here they are quite smooth, so that no ladder of escape is afforded to the drowning victims. The water collected by this teasel has long been believed to be a cure for sore eyes and a beauty-wash for the face. Secretions of insectivorous plants are known to cure warts and corns, and those of the teasel have long been used for this purpose. The old herbalists called the cups of water Venus's basins, and country-people may still be seen, when the flowers are seeding, collecting the water, to be used either for cura-

tive purposes or for beautifying the faces of the village maidens.

The remaining species is the fuller's teasel, and is by many botanists supposed to be a mere variety of the wild teasel, from which it differs only in the scales of the flower-heads being hooked instead of straight. The flower-heads of this teasel form an article of considerable importance to the cloth manufacturer. They are used for dressing certain kinds of woollen cloth. Probably the wild teasel with the straight prickles was at first used until the variety with hooked spines was found to answer the purpose better. It has been cultivated for this use since the thirteenth century, and has been a regular article of commerce in cloth-manufacturing districts for centuries. Its cultivation demands constant attention and labour throughout the year. The heads are cut from the plant with a knife peculiarly formed, and are carefully dried by fastening them to poles, great pains being taken to prevent them getting damp after being cut. Every piece of broadcloth requires from 1500 to 2000 teasel-heads to bring out the proper nap, after which they are useless. Formerly the heads were set in frames so as to form a comb or brush with which to raise the nap, but now they are fixed in regular order upon cylinders, which rotate and perform the operation more rapidly and perfectly. They are made to revolve in such a manner that the hooks of the teasels come in contact with the surface of the cloth and thus raise the nap, which is afterwards cut level. Without this plant cloth manufacture could never have made the progress it has, as the purpose for which the teasel is employed has never been effected with equal success by the most carefully contrived machinery. Wire machines are very generally used, one of the latest being the 'Moser Raising-Gig,' but being less elastic than the fine hooked heads of the teasel, they are more liable to injure the fabric, and are used only for certain kinds of cloth. The teasel-plant is still grown in Yorkshire and other parts of England, but not to the same extent as formerly. French teasels, however, have been largely imported and used, because they are smaller and not so keen as the Yorkshire teasels. Raising-machines with wire cards have ousted teasels in a good many manufactures; but flannels, blankets, rugs, do-skins, beavers, meltons, milled worsteds, and all faced cloths are still raised by teasels. It is remarkable that such an ancient and apparently rude contrivance as the teasel should have held the field so long against mechanical invention and progress. The old poet's tribute to the teasel still holds true:

No skilful art a tool has planned
To match this gift of Nature's hand.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MACHINE FOR WEAVING WICKER-WORK.

THE weaving of wicker-work by power-looms will seem well-nigh impossible to many of our readers, yet factories in which this is being done are already established in the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. Mr Marshall Burns Lloyd, of Menominee, Michigan, U.S.A., is the inventor of a wicker-weaving loom which he has applied successfully to the production of baby-carriages, baskets, fire-screens, and other articles of wicker-ware. Needless to say, the machine is of a complicated nature, and in a written description it is only possible to give a general idea of the way in which it works. The apparatus, of which the writer has a very clear photograph, comprises in the first place a vertical cylinder having a steel-plate ring both at the top and the bottom. Between the rings are two rows of bars, placed about half-an-inch apart. Surmounting the cylinder is another framework of bars formed to suit the shape of the article to be woven. Let us suppose a baby-carriage of circular form, but converging towards the top, is being made. The upright sticks, or the weft, are placed in position round the upper frame by hand. The warp consists of osiers joined together in long lengths and wound on two spools, which are carried upon a fixed tubular frame projecting above the machine, and having a tension-wheel at the top of it. When the upper and lower frames are revolved, the warp, which has been previously threaded through the weft to the starting-point, is drawn down from the tension-wheel through a stationary shuttle placed at the level of the tops of the weft-sticks, which are pushed alternately to each side of the shuttle by a star-shaped wheel. In this way the warp, as it passes through the shuttle, is interlaced with the weft. It must next be pushed down until it lies neatly and closely in layers one above another. This is done by a series of studs projecting between the weft-sticks, and connected by rods to weights sliding between the bars of the lower frame. As the warp leaves the shuttle these studs are pushed out above it one by one, and the weights attached to them pull the warp down into position. Rollers are arranged under the weights, which are caused to climb up a stationary cam until they reach the shuttle, where another cam causes the studs to be withdrawn between the weft-sticks to allow them to pass the warp. Having done this, the studs then come out again, as already described. As may be imagined, very uniform work is produced by this machine, and it is accomplished thirty times as fast as it can be done by hand. Moreover, no skilled labour is required, any in-

telligent person being able to attend to one of these looms without previous training.

THE LARGEST BATTLESHIP AFLOAT.

If certain authorities on naval matters were to have their way, there is little doubt that H.M.S. *Hood* would be the last as well as the largest battleship ever built in this country. It is not in gun-power, however, that the latest super-Dreadnought excels—a similar armament being found in the *Queen Elizabeth*—but in the combination of great gun-power and high speed, the *Hood* having a designed speed of 31 knots, whereas the earlier battleship is only capable of steaming 25 knots. To obtain the higher speed it has been necessary almost to double the power, no less than 144,000 horse-power being required, against only 75,000 in the *Queen Elizabeth*, while the length has been increased from 600 to 860 feet, and the breadth from 90½ to 104 feet. With a draught of just under 30 feet—the same as that of the *Queen Elizabeth*—these dimensions give a displacement (weight of the ship) of 41,200 tons. The armament consists of eight 15-inch guns in four turrets, twelve 5·5-inch quick-firers, and four 4-inch anti-aircraft guns. Curiously enough the thickness of the side armour, as compared with that of the *Queen Elizabeth*, has been reduced from 13 inches to 12 inches. On the other hand, the protection for the barbettes is 2 inches thicker, and that for the gunhouses 4 inches thicker, than in the older vessel, being 12 inches and 15 inches respectively. The main-deck has been thickened also. As the *Hood* was designed after the battle of Jutland, no doubt these modifications are the results of experience. Protection from torpedoes is afforded by modified ‘blisters’ along each side under water, and by the division of the hull into an unusually large number of water-tight compartments. The vessel is propelled by steam-turbines, which drive the propellers through gearing, steam being raised entirely by oil, of which 4000 tons are carried. Originally four battleships of the *Hood* type were ordered, but the contracts for the other three were cancelled soon after the armistice was arranged.

A NEW ASTRONOMICAL MODEL.

In our issue for September 1917 we described a wonderful working model of the sun, the moon, and the earth, designed and made by Dr W. Wilson, F.R.A.S., for the purpose of instructing Chinese students. As this model, which works so accurately that with its help the dates of eclipses may be predicted, has now been placed on the market, a fuller description of it may not be unacceptable to our readers. The main feature of the model is a vertical

spindle carried by a heavy cast-iron tripod with levelling screws in the feet. At the top of the spindle, a gilded globe, six inches in diameter, represents the sun, this globe having an inclined axis, and being capable of rotation at the correct speed relatively to the movement of the earth round the sun. Near the bottom of the spindle is a sleeve which forms the bearing for the main arm to swing on. This arm has a balance-weight at one end, and near the other a vertical spindle which carries a model of the earth in the form of a Philip's 4-inch terrestrial globe, so mounted on an inclined axis as to rotate at the correct relative speed. The centres of the earth and the sun are at the same level, and the plane of the earth's orbit round the sun forms the basis for the adjustment of other features. The moon is represented by a 1-inch white ball having the side away from the sun covered by a black screen to represent darkness. It is mounted on a cross-arm on the spindle carrying the earth in such a manner as to give not only the correct inclination to its orbit round the earth, but also the retrograde motion of the moon's nodes, completing one sidereal revolution in 18·6 years, by means of which eclipses can be correctly predicted. All the motions are caused by driving cords running over fixed pulleys on the central spindle as the main arm is moved round. For some of the motions great accuracy is required—that, for instance, of the retrograde revolutions of the moon's nodes, one cycle of which occupies 18 years 11 days, during which time the moon goes round the earth 223 times. Concurrently the forward revolution of the moon's apsides (perigee and apogee) is shown accomplishing its cycle in 8 years 310 days. The model is thus capable not only of predicting solar and lunar eclipses for many years to come, but also of differentiating them into total, partial, and annular. In order to obtain the exact speeds demanded, the driving-pulleys are so made that they can be slightly expanded or contracted until the right size is found by experiment. The model is made chiefly of polished steel and lacquered brass, and it stands on a black cloth dial with white lettering for the months and other data. This dial is stretched tightly on a circular hoop of spring steel, under the centre of which is a thin steel plate with radial bars. The terminals of the bars project through holes in the cloth dial, and constitute an essential part of the earth's rotation mechanism. While the model normally represents the true motions of the heavenly bodies and their correct relative positions, it is advantageous for teaching purposes to be able temporarily to vary these motions and positions, and thus, by contrast, to bring out more clearly the causal relationship subsisting between the true motions of the heavenly bodies and the corresponding phenomena with which they are related. Thus:

(1) The earth can be made to revolve and rotate

on a vertical instead of an inclined axis, with the result that there would be no succession of the seasons, but, instead, a uniform temperature at any particular latitude throughout the year. (2) The earth's inclined axis, instead of being constantly directed to the pole-star, may be made to assume a constant direction toward the sun (as at the summer solstice), away from the sun (as at the winter solstice), or tangentially to the earth's orbit (as at the equinoxes), giving rise respectively to a perpetual summer, perpetual winter, or perpetual spring or autumn. (3) The moon can be made to revolve round the earth in the plane of the ecliptic instead of in a plane oblique to the ecliptic, resulting in a solar eclipse every new moon and a lunar eclipse every full moon. (4) The revolution of the moon's nodes can be put out of action, and the nodes, instead, made to assume a constant direction, resulting (as far as the nodes are concerned) in a yearly recurrence of any particular eclipse. Special cases are provided by the makers for the conveyance of the model, which has been favourably spoken of by many well-known astronomers and educationists, including the Astronomer Royal, Sir Oliver Lodge, D.Sc., F.R.S., Principal Morgan, and Professor Fleure.

DOORS WHICH ACCEPT PARCELS.

In our issue for January 1919 a 'service' door for hotel rooms was described. The essential feature of the device was a cupboard which formed part of the door, and which could be reached either from the inside or the outside of the room, and it was suggested that it might be applied with advantage to the outside doors of houses and flats. This has now been done in an invention known as the 'Receivador,' which has been specially devised to provide the benefits of the 'service' door for outside doors at which milk, groceries, and other household goods are delivered. In nine cases out of ten it is not at all necessary to see the person who delivers the goods, yet the messenger has to wait until the door is opened, while the individual who attends to it has to leave his or her work—perhaps at the other end of the house. And all this waste of time by two people is incurred because there is no place where the goods can be safely left. The difficulty has been entirely overcome by the 'Receivador,' which consists of two or more cupboards with doors at each side, these being built into an outside door in place of the usual panels. The handles on each pair of doors (outer and inner) are interlocked in such a way that when one is locked the other is unlocked, and *vice versa*. Moreover, when the handle of an outer door has been turned after a delivery has been effected, the door cannot be opened again from the outside until the goods have been taken out of the cupboard and the inner door is closed and fastened. An indicator worked by the door-handle shows whether any

cupboard is occupied or vacant. 'Receivadors' are obtainable with two, three, or four cupboards, and they can be applied to any ordinary wooden door. For houses in which no servants are kept, and which must, therefore, be left unattended at times, these doors should prove an unqualified boon. It may be added that those interested in the subject will find a description of an arrangement designed to serve the same end in the pages of a little book published some months ago, entitled *The Ideal Servant-Saving House*.

'MOVIES' FOR THE HOME.

Machines for showing moving-pictures in the home have been obtainable for some years past, but hitherto such devices have partaken more of the nature of toys than of instruments for giving serious entertainments. This position has been revolutionised by the advent of electrically driven machines which will show standard-size films, one of the best known being the De Vry Portable Cinema Projector. The working of this instrument is exceedingly simple, and the machine, when showing pictures, is boxed up in a case 17 inches square by $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep. Electric current derived from an ordinary lamp-socket by a flexible cord and plug serves to light the projector lamp of 400 candle-power, and to run a tiny motor which works the mechanism for passing the film through the projector beam. The parts are so designed as to reduce the risk of fire to a minimum, the film being completely enclosed in the case, while the lamp is contained in a separate metal compartment. Means are provided for varying the power of the lamp and the speed of the film without opening the case. Pictures can be shown with this projector from the size of a post-card up to 8 feet by 6 feet, and the results appeared to the writer to be fully equal to any he has seen at public entertainments. These projectors should prove invaluable for educational and advertising purposes, as well as for entertaining small parties of people, whether privately or in public.

A ONE-MAN AEROPLANE.

Many people have long wondered when the small aeroplane would be obtainable which would bear the same relation to larger machines as that borne by the motor-cycle to the motor-car. The one-man (or woman) aeroplane is now an accomplished fact, such a machine having been exhibited at the recent aircraft show at Paris, while another made its appearance at Hendon a short time ago. The former, known as the *Passé-Partout*, and said to be the smallest machine in existence, has a span of only a trifle over 18 feet, and with petrol and oil for a two-hours' flight it weighs just under two hundredweight. Although the motor develops only 10 horse-power, this machine has a speed of $68\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. When tested at Le Bourget in December, the capabilities claimed

for this aeroplane appear to have been fully demonstrated. The machine on view at Hendon had a length of just over 19 feet, and was fitted with folding wings, so that the width could be reduced to 8 feet. It was propelled by a six-cylinder Anzani engine of 40 to 45 horse-power, which gave a speed of 90 miles an hour. The net weight is 580 lb., and enough petrol can be carried for a flight of 180 miles. A self-starter is fitted to the engine, and among other advantages claimed for the machine are the low landing speed of 35 miles an hour, and a capacity for carrying 60 lb. of luggage, which is stowed under the pilot's seat. The price of this aeroplane is in the neighbourhood of £500. Another small machine to be seen at the Paris show had a span of 23 feet 4 inches, a length of 20 feet, and weighed, when empty, only 440 lb. It can carry a load equal to its own weight at 87 miles an hour, and land at a greatly reduced speed.

NEW TYPE OF FAST MOTOR-BOAT.

For many years past the speed of motor-boats has been gradually creeping up until it has now reached just over 70 miles an hour, the record being held by the small American hydroplane, *Whip-po-Will*. Quite recently a new type of craft has been developed at Baddock, Cape Breton Island, Canada, by the noted American scientist, Dr Graham Bell. This design of boat bids fair to establish a new record, as the model described in this note, which is only the fourth, is said to have run at well over 70 miles an hour, and substantial improvements will certainly be made in the near future. In appearance and general features the new type of high-speed craft closely resembles the flying-boat, the body, which is 60 feet long by nearly 6 feet in diameter, being similar in form, while it is fitted with wings having steadying pontoons at their outer ends. The wing area, however, is not great enough to lift the boat clear of the water, although the wings have a considerable lifting effect. Mounted above each wing is a Liberty motor of 350 horse-power coupled to an air-propeller, this form of propulsion still further accentuating the resemblance to the flying-boat. Under each wing at its forward end is a series of narrow steel planes known as hydrofoils. Like the wings of an aeroplane, these are slanted upwards in a forward direction, and their upper surfaces are curved. They are mounted on thin steel struts projecting downwards below the bottom of the boat, and, of course, passing edgewise through the water so as to offer the least possible resistance. These struts are sloped inwards towards the bottom, so that the lower hydrofoils are shorter than the upper ones; they are also narrower. Another important feature is that the hydrofoils are not horizontal, but rise slightly at their outer ends, having, in aeroplane parlance, a dihedral angle, the advantage of which is that each plane enters or leaves the water

gradually as the vessel falls or rises with variations in speed, instead of all at once, as it would do if the hydrofoils were horizontal. Almost at the stern of the boat are two similar sets of hydrofoils, but mounted in one frame, which is pivoted on a spindle passing vertically through the hull. These hydrofoils form the third point of support when the boat is planing, and they also act as a rudder. A big vertical plane is fixed at the top of this rudder frame, which gives steering control by the blow from the propellers when starting, before the boat has attained speed enough for the narrow struts of the after-hydrofoils to be effective. A single set of hydrofoils under the bow, known as a preventer, helps to lift the boat when getting up speed, while checking any tendency to nose-dive. Now let us describe what happens when the engines are started up. At first the boat proceeds through the water like any other craft, but when the speed reaches 16 miles an hour it begins to rise out of the water on the hydrofoils. As the speed increases the boat continues to rise, and more and more the upper hydrofoils come out of the water until the hull is entirely clear. At 60 miles an hour the hydrofoils remaining immersed have an area of only four square feet, upon which the whole weight of the machine (9880 lb.) is supported. To many this lifting-power of 2470 lb. per square foot will seem impossible, but a simple illustration will show what may be termed the solidity of water at high speeds. A type of water-wheel for high falls, known as the Pelton, is driven by a single jet which issues at a high speed. Jets of this character in which the water falls from great heights cannot be broken through by a heavy steel bar, the latter bouncing off the water as if it were a hard solid substance. At 20 miles an hour the boat rises clear of the water, and the thrust of the propellers is about 2000 lb. Above this speed the thrust decreases until it is only 1300 lb. at 34 miles an hour, this figure being maintained at higher speeds, as the decreased water-resistance, owing to the reduced number of hydrofoils immersed, is compensated by the increased air-resistance. The bow hydrofoils leave the water entirely at high speeds. As already suggested, speeds of well over 70 miles an hour may be expected with craft such as the one described, when further experience has indicated the directions in which improvements can be made. One advantage of this type is that waves up to 18 inches in height do not affect the speed or damage the hull, as is the case with ordinary boats at very high speed.

'WEAR AND TEAR' AND INCOME-TAX.

[The following note by Mr John Burns, W.S., author of *Chambers's Income-Tax Guide*, may prove of substantial pecuniary benefit to some of our readers.]

It would appear that a word of reminder and

warning is again called for on an income-tax matter which is very important to many traders. We refer to the proper treatment of the item of wear and tear of machinery and plant. There are many differences of opinion on the rules regulating how that item ought to be fixed and how much it ought to amount to. These are important also, but it is not to them that this note applies. Assume the item ascertained for any particular year: how does it operate on the assessable income and the amount of tax payable? The language of the Acts is not perhaps so absolutely clear as it might be, and that of the papers of directions and instructions issued with the yellow forms of Return is actually misleading. Expressed technically, the question is whether wear and tear is a 'deduction' or an 'allowance.' Expressed in an applied form the question is—given gross profits £1100 and wear and tear £100, and the number of children in the taxpayer's family to be four, is the rate of tax to be three shillings or three shillings and ninepence, and is there to be, or not to be, the children allowances of forty pounds and twenty-five pounds for the third and fourth children; in short, is the trader to pay three shillings and ninepence on £1000 or three shillings on £935, the difference being forty-seven pounds five shillings? Many years ago this was supposed to be a doubtful point, but it was settled a considerable time since that the wear and tear is an absolute deduction from, and reduction of, the actual income, and not a mere tax allowance like life assurance premiums. This corresponds to fact, for the item is passed because so much value has actually been lost to the trader in the depreciation of his plant. Our reason for dealing with the matter is that a prominent trade journal recently contained, in the shape of a letter from a correspondent and an editorial note appended, evidence that some inspectors of taxes are making the serious mistake of insisting on treating the wear and tear as a mere tax allowance, resulting, in such a case as we have figured above, in over-taxing the trader to the extent of forty-seven pounds five shillings. A letter to Somerset House will always lead to such an attempt being nipped in the bud.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

'A-L A Z Y-Z.'

By W. VICTOR COOK, Author of *Grey Fish*.

PART I.

I.

THE clerk in the Land Office at Helen Gap sucked the end of his recording-pen contemptively, as he looked up from the papers before him into the face of John Macdonald Rae. Mr Rae had just filed a homestead claim for a quarter-section—that is to say, 160 acres—in the Tortoise-shell Valley, and had defined with meticulous precision the fraction of Alex County which it was his intention to domesticate.

It is not usual in Montana to obtrude one's self upon another man's business (either by way of question or of advice) unless specially invited to do so. The practice, if carelessly indulged in, is one that has a tendency to affect one's life assurance premium adversely. The clerk at Helen Gap, having duly taken the seventeen dollars and fifty cents demanded by the State for the registration, would certainly have pursued the matter no further, had it not been for the presence in the office of Mrs John Macdonald Rae, a young woman whose extraordinary prettiness and grace threw him momentarily off his balance.

'Guess that'll be in Gentle Jim's district,' said he, without ceasing to suck the end of his pen.

'That so?' said John Macdonald Rae.

'Yep,' said the clerk. 'You know Gentle Jim?'

'I've heard of him,' said Mr Rae.

'Gentle Jim is kinder emperor of Alex County,' said the clerk. 'Cattle millionaire, you know. They say he's awkward if he don't just take to a man.'

'That so?' Mr Rae bit off the end of a cigar.

'This spring, now—Myrtle Spring. Your quarter-section just takes that in. Pretty dry country there, away from the river, Mr Rae. I presume Jim Andrews's ranch stock around there use that spring quite a bit.'

'They're welcome, I'm sure.'

Mr Rae's voice had a pleasant drawl. For all his Scots name, the clerk could not quite place him. He seemed quite at home in the West, though he was dressed with a care which few old-timers would think it worth while to bestow upon themselves. As for his blue-eyed, fair-

haired wife, she made such an alluring picture in her sky-blue summer frock that the clerk could scarcely keep his eyes off her. It was for her sake, rather than her husband's, that he ventured a rash suggestion.

'I presume it would not suit you to take up another section? There's some very fine country about ten miles to the west, just over the county border, Mr Rae.'

John Macdonald Rae lit his cigar—a good cigar, as its aroma testified. 'I've kinder taken a fancy to this quarter-section,' he drawled. 'If it's all in order, we'll be moving along.'

'Oh, it's all in order,' said the clerk dryly. 'Good luck, and look out for A-Lazy-Z!'

Mr Rae picked up his papers, and walked out with his young wife into the street; and the memory of the smile from the blue eyes which the clerk intercepted at the door lasted him pleasantly all that day.

II.

Mr and Mrs Rae pursued their affairs about the town of Helen Gap, a process which involved the visiting of a number of stores and the making of considerable purchases. Many curious glances followed them, for they made a striking pair—the man tall and wiry, with a keen, strong face that discounted the unusual elegance of his clothes; and the wife a creature so frankly beautiful that she would have challenged admiration anywhere, much more so in this Western land where women of any kind were at a premium.

When they sat at dinner in the best hotel after a busy day the blue eyes were sparkling.

'John,' said the young wife, 'I think I love this country already.'

Rae's face lit with pleasure. 'That's fine, Lucy! You will like it better when you know it better. It's a grand country. There's something in the air of it, the crisp, clear sunlight, that makes a man feel big and strong. The great mountains, the forests, the free, wide prospects, the wealth that lies on every hand only asking to be worked for—it's all like champagne to a man's spirit. And when a man has a girl like you to work for and work with, Lucy'—His ardent eyes completed the

sentence, and brought a softer glow into Lucy's face.

'Our honeymoon has been just like a dream,' she said. 'Just fancy, only six months ago I was stuffing lessons into the heads of naughty little boys, back there in dear old dirty Glasgow, and I had scarcely heard of Montana. And then suddenly you came, my wild man of the West, and all the world was different. Oh, John!'

'Say, it makes me feel good to hear you talk like that, Lucy! It's the last day of our honeymoon dream to-day, and to-morrow we have to wake up and butt in and get busy. No more glad rags till we have earned another holiday together!'

'John,' she asked suddenly, 'what did that man in the Land Office mean when he said, "Look out for A-Lazy-Z"?''

'I guess that will just be Gentle Jim's fetish,' was the ambiguous reply.

'And who is Gentle Jim?'

'Didn't you hear what that clerk fellow said? Gentle Jim is the Great Panjandrum of Alex County—or thinks he is.' Rae's strong jaw set a little grimly. 'He's called Gentle Jim because he's the roughest son-of-a-gun in fifty miles round. Gentle Jim is a mighty big punkin, Lucy, and we'll be up against him by-and-by. The ranchers, you see, were the first fellows who did anything with this country. They came along and started ranching on the open Government land—miles and miles and miles of it in the foothills of the Continental Divide—and their stock and their cow-punchers roamed the country at their pleasure. It didn't belong to any one, you see; so why shouldn't they? And then here and there along comes a homesteader, and files a claim, and starts to develop the land, and the State gives him his title to the section he has picked, and the rancher's stock must go graze somewhere else. Naturally the rancher don't like it, and he tries all he knows to make the other fellow quit. You will find Gentle Jim Andrews giving us a call pretty soon.'

'I'm not afraid,' said Lucy, and the blue eyes looked brave.

'You have no cause to be, sweetheart. Montana isn't quite a Sunday-school yet, but the boys have their own code. They don't give themselves headaches studying the law, but there's not one would harm a woman. Guess you could twist Gentle Jim round your little finger. All the same, A-Lazy-Z is a biggish proposition.'

III.

Mr Rae proved a true prophet.

The box shack in the Tortoise-shell Valley in which, a few weeks later, his pretty bride found herself installed was not a luxurious home, but love viewed it through rosy glasses, and hope transfigured it with visions. John built his house and barns himself, and a pretty

thorough experience of Western life had taught him the main requirements of a comfortable habitation.

Gentle Jim did not call in person to welcome the new-comers to his domain, but, as John described it, he left his visiting-card. The Raes had a few milk cows, and for several weeks these inoffensive animals led a somewhat chequered existence at the hands of Gentle Jim's 'punchers,' whose ingenuity and persistence in endeavouring to lure or frighten them away were worthy of a better cause. John Macdonald Rae, however, had not lived ten years in the West for nothing. The milk cows remained securely in his possession. He ploughed a furrow round his quarter-section to divide it from the rest of the State of Montana; and one lovely May evening, as husband and wife sat looking out down the Tortoise-shell Valley, dreaming under the crescent moon, pretty Lucy murmured her conviction that the unseen enemy had given it up as a bad job.

Rae smiled as he filled his pipe. 'Not if I know him, sweetheart. There'll be more fun coming.'

There was. That very night, as they were retiring to bed rather later than usual, Lucy called to John, 'There's some one at the door. Listen, dear.'

He listened. The moon had gone down, and the night was dark. Undoubtedly there was some stealthy movement outside. Nevertheless, he did not at once go out, but having extinguished the light, sat listening for a quarter of an hour or more before he quietly opened the door.

In the clear starlight he made out a horse fastened there by a halter. From the quietness of its movements when it stirred he guessed that its hoofs were padded. It was a good horse, and Rae talked to it like a good horseman. When he had talked it into confidence, he went indoors and fetched a sheepskin. With deft fingers, and soothing the lonely steed with soft words, Mr Rae attached the sheepskin to its tail, and this accomplished, turned the animal loose. The horse moved off. Flippety-flap went the sheepskin on its hindlegs. The horse, a half-broken, spirited creature, went off into a mad gallop, and John Macdonald Rae stood listening to the dull sound of its hoof-beats diminishing down the valley. Then he returned, smiling grimly, to his rest.

'Guess we've scored the first trick, sweetheart,' said he, and told his wife what he had done.

'But what does it mean, John?' The blue eyes were wide with wonder.

'It means,' said John, caressing his wife's fair hair, 'that Pete Jorsen, Gentle Jim's night herder, tied that horse there, intending to come back early in the morning with witnesses, and claim that it was stolen, and recognise me as the man they saw take it. Many's the man that

has been sent to Deerlodge (the State prison) that way. But I'm not for Deerlodge so easily. We'll go and find the sheepskin in the morning, Lucy. I'd hate to lose that sheepskin. The horse will kick that off easy enough. He was as scared as a jack-rabbit in a harvest-field.'

The next day Mr Rae judged it expedient to coach his young bride in some of the crooked devices that the baffled rancher might see fit to employ to retrieve his defeat. Lucy listened with amazement and indignation to the lesson in devious dodges, but when her experienced man had 'put her wise,' as he called it, her lips took a firm set, and she nodded her fair head sagely.

'You see, my dear,' said John, 'though the A-Lazy-Z boys would never hurt a woman, they might try to trip me up sometime when I'm away to Glendair, by taking advantage of your inexperience.'

'Let them try—the cowards!' cried Lucy hotly. 'I'll show them that a Glasgow girl can keep her end up, John!'

IV.

A week later Lucy's opportunity came. Her husband had gone to Glendair with the wagon, and she had been out herding the cows. She returned to the homestead to find the fenced corral in the occupation of a number of steers, and the gate of the corral shut upon them. The steers all bore the 'fetish' of Gentle Jim Andrews, a big A, with a Z swinging to its lower corner—the symbolic 'A-Lazy-Z' against which the Land Office clerk had warned them.

Pretty Lucy was frankly scared. It would be several hours before her John could return, and here she was left alone with half-a-dozen young steers ramping in the corral, and the milk cows to protect. She dared not put her cows in the corral, and she dared not open the corral gate and turn the steers out, lest they should mix themselves up with the cows in their flight, and she be unable to sort them out. On the other hand, she dared not leave the steers where they were, for at any moment Gentle Jim's men might appear, and charge her husband with having their stock in his corral—circumstantial evidence against which no protestations of innocence could avail, especially before a jury probably composed in large measure of Jim's friends or henchmen.

Lucy stood for a few moments desperately pondering the position, and then with a woman's swiftness made up her mind. She tied the cows outside the corral, and running into the house, returned with an umbrella, to the handle of which she had fastened the largest and gaudiest piece of red cloth she could find. She unlatched the corral gate, and set it slightly ajar; then, running round the fence to the side opposite the gate, she climbed up on the fence, opened the umbrella, and, with as terrifying a shout as she could produce, hurled the open umbrella with its trail of flaming red right in

among the steers. It was rather a forlorn hope, but it succeeded beyond her expectations. With one accord the frightened brutes bolted for the half-open gate, crashed it wide open, and stampeded away as if the fiend were at their heels. Trembling with excitement, Lucy returned to her cows, loosed them, and drove them in, then, fetching her husband's Winchester from the shack, mounted guard with it at the corral gate. And there John found his fair sentinel when he drove back his team in the summer dusk.

A fierce light came into the homesteader's eyes at the sight of the anxious little figure with the rifle, and though, when he had heard her story, he laughed, it was rather to encourage his pretty garrison than to relieve any mirthful feelings of his own. 'Put away the gun, little girl,' he said, taking it from her. 'You beat them fine. There's not a puncher in Alex County would have thought of what you did. My! I'd give fifty dollars to see Gentle Jim's face when he hears how he has been fooled by a woman, and she not six months out from bonny Scotland! But things are goin' to get kinder lively, Lucy. Jim won't stand for that. He'll put on his thinking-cap, and the A-Lazy-Z boys will be mad to get level with me. We're going to be right up against the whole outfit now. But we'll roast old Jim yet!'

Lucy, walking back to the shack with her man's arm about her, felt her courage revive. 'I'd like fine to see this Jim Andrews, John. What does he look like?'

'You'll see him, sure, before we're through, sweetheart. He's a mountain of a man, nearer seven feet than six, I guess, with a hawk face and a two-foot beard. He's as strong as a bull and as cunning as a fox. He's a dead-shot, and I presume he could fell a steer with his fist. Oh, he's some boy, is Jim. But he has his points. He wouldn't kill a man unless it was fair fighting. And he would never harm a woman.'

V.

After the episode of the umbrella there was peace for many days at Myrtle Spring. Rae and his wife came and went about the affairs of their homestead, and the place grew and prospered. The A-Lazy-Z ranchmen who brought their cattle from time to time to water at the spring seemed friendly, and no reference was ever made on either side to the state of siege in which both sides knew the homestead lived. Gentle Jim Andrews kept to his home ranch some twenty miles away in the foothills, and Lucy's desire to meet him remained ungratified.

One hot August noon Rae and his wife returned home from their work to find, suspended on the corral fence, two quarters of a freshly killed steer, the hide of which, neatly rolled up, lay on the ground beside the fence. Not a soul

was in sight. Rae put his hands in his pockets and stood frowning.

'If we were to turn that hide over, what kind of a mark do you think we should find?' he asked.

'A-Lazy-Z,' smiled Lucy.

'No good tying a mat to that,' said Rae.

'Perhaps it's a peace-offering,' said hopeful Lucy.

'Perhaps it ain't. We'll leave it there while we go and have some dinner.'

But when they got into the house, they found a third quarter hanging in the shack kitchen.

'There's four quarters to a steer,' said John Macdonald Rae sagely. 'Guess I'll look around for the fourth, while you get dinner ready, my girl. I'd hate to lose any of that meat.'

He went out again, and, just to make sure, turned over the hide by the corral fence. It was the hide of a red-and-white steer, and in the midst of a large white patch there was the sign he expected, the A with the swinging Z, which proclaimed the animal the property of Andrews. Thinking hard, Rae walked on to explore his holding. It was not long before, in a clump of quaking asp, he found the fourth quarter. By this time he had thought out his problem.

Like many a careful homesteader, Rae kept a brine-barrel for preserving purposes. It was empty of meat—the rascals, he reflected, must have kept close watch on him to know how short he was of meat. He carried back the quarter from the trees and put it in the barrel. Then he went and fetched the two quarters from the fence, and put them also in salt, Lucy watching him with curious glances.

'That fills it up,' said her husband. 'Guess we'll have to cut a good T-bone steak off that other quarter and cook it. It won't keep this hot weather. We'll start on it right now.'

In a short time the shack was redolent of the appetising odour of cooking meat.

'They'll be here soon,' Rae prophesied confidently. 'I'm going outside for a while, little girl. When I come back we will have dinner.'

When Rae returned presently, he left behind him, between the corral and the house, a large patch of fresh blood on the ground.

'It's going to be stud poker this time, Lucy,' said he grimly, as they sat down to eat. 'That fellow reckons he's got me this time, anyway. There's the hide with the brand on it, and if I am wise enough to bury it or hide it some way, there's the meat, which they know we need, and especially there's the quarter right here in the house. And if I don't fall for any of those games, they figure on the last quarter hid away in the bush. Oh, it's going to be a lovely game! Hello!'

There was a hail from outside. John Macdonald Rae went to the door, where Pete Jorsen was sitting on his horse.

'Say, Rae,' said Pete, 'have you seen a stray Hereford anywhere around?'

'Was it a four-year-old, with a lot of white on it?' asked Rae with child-like innocence.

'Yes,' said Gentle Jim's puncher eagerly. 'Seen him?'

'There's his hide on the corral fence, and there's three quarters of him in brine in the house. The weather is too hot to keep fresh meat.'

Pete's jaw dropped, and his eyes opened wide. 'But that's an A-Lazy-Z steer you've killed,' said he, not knowing what to make of it.

'Sure,' Rae answered coolly. 'Do you want the meat?'

'I'll have to report that on the ranch,' said Pete.

'Sure. Andrews might want the meat,' Rae readily agreed.

(Continued on page 233.)

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

ONE of the most amusing chapters in *The Golden Butterfly* is that which records the sumptuous dinner given at the Langham Hotel to the representatives of art, science, and literature by Gilead P. Beck, the American millionaire, whereat many of the most notable celebrities of the day were present. Jack Dunquerque, it is related, spoofed the rich American by introducing to him, as the guests at the banquet, a party of impostors, cleverly made up by perruquier and costumier to represent Thomas Carlyle, Algernon Swinburne, Alfred Tennyson, John Ruskin, George A. Sala, Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley, and Frederick Leighton, R.A. A description of the chrysalis of truth from which the butterfly of fiction emerged nearly half a century ago may possibly be of interest to readers at the present day.

Some short time before that chapter in the novel was written, the writer of this article met, at the office of W. Tinsley, the publisher, in Catherine Street, Messrs Besant and Rice, to whom he related the following story, to which they listened apparently with great interest. At its conclusion they asked permission to make use of it in the novel they were then collaborating on which was running serially through the columns of *The World*. Needless to say, the permission was instantly given, and they were informed that the incident was quite at their service to use in any way suitable for their purpose. The joint authors of *The Golden Butterfly* cordially expressed their gratitude, promising to utilise the idea, but stated that the anecdote as narrated was so extraordinary that some modification was

absolutely necessary to bring the story into a form that would not outrage the reader's sense of probability.

H. M. Stanley had recently returned from his successful search after Livingstone, in the heart of the Dark Continent, and he was, for the time being, the lion whom the British public delighted to honour; his wonderful adventures, hairbreadth escapes, and indomitable pluck formed at that period the principal topic of general conversation, to the exclusion of other subjects. On the afternoon on which the following scene occurred I had come back from a short yachting cruise, considerably bronzed by the sea-breezes. My white hair and dark moustache, combined with a short compact figure, rendered my general appearance not unlike that of the great explorer—a resemblance further intensified by the nautical rig-out and peaked naval cap which I affected. I was standing at the bar of the old Gaiety restaurant, probably discussing some intricate problem of the higher mathematics with the intelligent damsel who dispensed creature comforts in her leisure moments, when there gradually collected round me five literary friends, each of whom, strange to say, more or less resembled some prominent public character. First was Bracebridge Hemming, B.L., who bore a wonderful likeness to the Prince of Wales; another in the group was a near relative of his, an ex-officer of the Royal Navy, marvellously like the Duke of Edinburgh. Then Dr Henchman, with his gold-rimmed spectacles and full gray beard, taken in conjunction with his height and general appearance, might easily have passed for Wilkie Collins; another, one Richardson, prided himself on his striking resemblance to Frederick Leighton, R.A.; whilst the last to join the party could very readily have been mistaken for George Augustus Sala—and certainly his crimson neck-tie, his black moustache, and the white waistcoat were in evidence to deceive the unwary.

These several personal similarities had frequently formed the subject of good-humoured banter among ourselves, yet my own resemblance to Stanley had never struck myself or any of our coterie. However, to proceed with the story: it became apparent on inquiry that none of the six cronies present had any important engagement to occupy him for that particular afternoon, so a suggestion was made that we should form a pool, with myself as treasurer, and that the amount subscribed should be expended on a snug little dinner at a famous restaurant in Soho.

This being carried *nem. con.*, we proceeded to put our festive plan into execution, and chartering a couple of four-wheeled cabs, were driven to Church Street. Outside Kettner's restaurant we found a small crowd collected. I was in the foremost vehicle, and was the first to alight. As I stepped out one of the bystanders exclaimed, 'There's Stanley!' Immediately grasping the

situation, I rose to the occasion, raising my cap with an air of gracious condescension. This acknowledgment was the signal for a ringing cheer. Then in an awed whisper came the announcement, 'That's the Prince of Wales!' 'And ain't that the Duke of Edinburgh?' 'Why, yes; of course it is Leighton, the great painter; Wilkie Collins, the author; while blessed if the last chap ain't Sala—you could spot him anywhere.' Each, on being recognised, bowed courteously, receiving a cordial ovation from the spectators.

Hearing the hubbub which our distinguished arrival had created, the proprietor, Mr San Giorgi, who had recently married the widow of Kettner, advanced to the entrance, and to him I proceeded to address myself. 'We desire to have a private room. Please remember that we are here incog. Nothing would annoy His Royal Highness more than a public demonstration—you quite understand?' In compliance with my demand, our party was respectfully ushered into a comfortable room on the first floor, where presently was served for our delectation one of those *recherché* repasts for which the establishment was justly renowned. We all entered with gusto into the spirit of the impromptu practical joke, and played each his assumed rôle for all it was worth, as though to the manner born, so to speak.

During the course of the meal the proprietor entered, with a waiter carrying half-a-dozen bottles of champagne, and begged that we should accept this contribution towards our conviviality as some slight recognition of the honour we were conferring on his establishment. We graciously accepted the offering in the spirit in which it was tendered, and felt more than ever in duty bound to live up to the characters that had been thrust upon us. My own adventures in Africa would have appalled the lion-hearted Stanley himself; the opinions on art enunciated by 'Leighton' might have proved a revelation to his prototype; the criticism on the decadence of modern fiction would have brought tears into the eyes of Wilkie Collins could he have heard his own utterances; while Sala would have been reluctantly compelled to confess that, in face of the post-prandial eloquence of his *alter ego*, he himself was very small beer.

The waiters must have reaped a rich harvest in perquisites on the occasion of our memorable symposium, for every time our door was opened—an operation which appeared to occur more frequently than necessity demanded—a cluster of inquisitive spectators could be seen on the landing, peering over the shoulders of the attendants, all eager to catch a glimpse of the great men within, and anxious to overhear a few sentences of the brilliant conversation in which they indulged.

As the hours wore on the sense of important personality became vastly increased, till each member of the distinguished sextet at length became thoroughly convinced in his own mind

that Providence had been guilty of an inexcusable blunder in not having placed him in a more important sphere of action, and more perfectly confident that the real characters whose outward personalities we had assumed might have studied with considerable advantage the dignified deportment and oratorical fluency with which the respective rôles had been invested by those who played them.

Before making our exit from the *Hôtel du Pavillon*, we of course congratulated the host on the admirable manner in which we had been catered for, thanking him for his personal attention, and reiterating our desire that the proceedings of the evening might be preserved a profound secret. Having bestowed liberal largesse on the waiters, we drove away in three hansom cabs.

Never shall I forget the princely air with which Bracey directed his driver to take him to 'Marlboro' House.' Then I shouted, 'Royal Geographical Society'; while the great G.A.S. hiccuped out in a stentorian voice, 'Drive like Hades to *Daily Telegraph*—offish—(hic)—Fleestreet.' These varied directions were loudly expressed in order to impress the staff of the hotel, who were all assembled on the steps to lend *éclat* to our departure. However, once we were clear of the neighbourhood of Soho, we stopped our cabs by prearranged signal, and gave a general order to make for the Gaiety restaurant, where, over a doch-an-doris, we enjoyed a retrospect on our humorous adventure.

Alas! of those noble six humbugs only the writer remains to tell the tale.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER XI.—THE RENDING OF THE VEIL.

I.

THE house-party at Roselawn had hurriedly broken up, and only Selwyn remained.

In view of the scandal about Dick Durwent, although it was not spoken of by any one, he felt that it would have been more delicate to leave with the other guests. But it seemed as if the Durwents dreaded to be alone. His presence gave an impersonal shield behind which they could seek shelter from each other, and they urged him so earnestly to remain that it would have been ungracious to refuse.

It was the evening of August 4th, and the family circle, reduced to four, had just finished dinner. There had been only one topic of conversation—there could be but one. Britain had given Germany until midnight (Central European time) to guarantee withdrawal from Belgium.

After dinner the family adjourned for coffee to the living-room, and, as was his custom, Lord Durwent proffered his guest a cigar.

'No, thanks,' said Selwyn. 'If you will excuse me, I think I will do without a smoke just now.—Lady Durwent, do you mind if I go to my room for half-an-hour? There are one or two matters I must attend to.'

Half-way up the stairs he changed his mind, and went out on the lawn instead. Darkness was setting in with swiftly gathering shadows, and he found the cool evening air a slight solace to a brow that was weary with conflicting thoughts.

America had not acted. There towards the west his great country lay wrapped in ocean's aloofness. The pointed doubts of the ex-army captain had been confirmed—America had stood aside. Well, why shouldn't she? It was all very well, he argued, for Britain to pose as a protector of Belgium, but she could not afford to do otherwise.

It was simply European politics all over again, and the very existence of America depended on her complete isolation from the Old World.

Yet Germany had sworn to observe Belgium's neutrality, and at that very moment her guns were battering the little nation to bits. Was that just a European affair, or did it amount to a world issue?

If only Roosevelt were in power. . . . Who was this man Wilson, anyway? Could anything good come out of Princeton? . . . In spite of himself, Selwyn laughed to find how much of the Harvard tradition remained.

If America had only spoken. If she had at least recorded her protest. Supposing Germany won. . . .

Supposing

He kicked at a twig that lay in his path, and recalled the wonderful regiments that he had seen march past the Kaiser only three months ago. Who was going to stop that mighty empire? Effeminate France? Insular, ease-loving England?

Passing the stables, he started nervously at hearing his name spoken.

'Good-evening, Mr Selwyn. It's pleasant out o' doors, sir.'

It was Mathews, the head-groom of the Durwents.

'Yes,' said the American, pausing, 'very pleasant.'

'It looks sort of as if we was going to have some ditherings with Germany, Mr Selwyn.'

'It does. I don't see how war can be averted now.'

'It's funny Mister Malcolm ain't home yet, sir. Has his mobberlizing orders come?'

'There's a War Office telegram in the house. I suppose his instructions are in it.'

The groom shook his head and swung philosophically on his heels. He was a broad-faced man of nearly fifty, with an honest simplicity of countenance and manner engendered of long service where master and man live in a relation of mutual confidence. He sucked meditatively at a corn-cob pipe, and Selwyn, changing his mind about a cigar, produced a case from his pocket.

'Have one, Mathews?' he asked.

'No, thank 'ee, sir. I'm a man of easy-going habits, and likes me old pipe and old woman likewise, both being sim'lar and the same.'

With which profound thought he drew a long breath of smoke and sent it on the air, to follow his philosophy to whatever place words go to.

'If Germany and us puts on the gloves,' ruminated Mathews, 'I'll be real sorry Mas'r Dick ain't here. He's a rare lad, he is—one of the right breed, and no argifying can prove contrariwise. I always was fond of Mas'r Dick, I was, since he was so high, and used to come in here and ask me to learn him how to swear proper like a groom. Ah, a finelad he was; and—criky!—he were a lovely sight on a hoss. Mister Malcolm he's a fine rider hisself, but just a little stiff to my fancy, conseckens o' sitting up on parade with them there Hussars o' hisn. But Mas'r Dick—he were part of the hoss, he were, likewise and sim'lar.'

Selwyn nodded and smoked in silence. He was rather glad to have run into the garrulous groom. The steady stream of inelegant English helped to ease the torture of his mind.

'Has milord said anything about the hosses, Mr Selwyn?'

'No. What do you mean?'

'Nothing much, sir, excep' that it's just what you can expect from a gen'lman like him. He comes in here this arternoon and says to me, "Mathews," he says, "if this here war comes about it'll be a long one, and make no mistake, so I estermate we'd better give the Government our hosses right away, in course keeping old Ned for to drive." Never twigged an eyelash, he didn't. No, sir. Just up and tells it to me like I'm a-doing to you. "Then," I says, "you won't be wanting me no longer, milord?" And he says, "Mathews, as long as there's a home for me, there's one for you," and he clapped me on my shoulder likewise as if him and me were akala. It kind o' done me in, it did, what with the prospick o' losing my hosses—them as I'd raised since they was running around arter their mothers like young galathumpians—and what with his speaking so fair and kindly like. Well—criky!—I could ha' swore; I felt so bad.'

'It will be a great loss for Lord Durwent to lose his stable.'

'Ah, that it will. But this arternoon, arter what I'm a-telling you, he just goes through with me and says, "Nell's looking pretty fit," or "How's Prince's bad knee?" just as if nothink had happened at all. I says to myself, "Milord,

you're a thoroughbred, you are," for he makes me think of Mister Malcolm's bull-terrier, he do. Breed? That there dog has a ancestry as would do credit to a Egyptian mummy. I've seen Mister Malcolm take a whip arter the dog had got among the chickens or took a bite out o' the gamekeeper's leg, him never liking the gamekeeper, conseckens o' his being bow-legged and having a contrary disperation, and do you think that there dog would let a whimper out o' him? No, sir. He would just turn his eye on Mister Malcolm and sorter say, "All right, thrash away. I may hev my little weaknesses, but, thank Gord! I come of a distinkished fam'ly."'

They smoked in silence for a few minutes.

'No, sir,' resumed the groom, pushing his hat back in order to scratch his head, 'he never whimpered, did milord; but I saw when he got opposite Mas'r Dick's old mare Nell that he felt kind o' bad, and he didn't say much for the better part o' a minute. Mr Selwyn, I'm a bit creaky in my jint and ain't as frisky as I were, but I'd be werry much obliged to be sent over to this here war and see if I couldn't put a bullet or two in some o' them there sausage-eaters.'

'Well,' said the American moodily, 'you may get your chance.'

'Thank 'ee, sir. I hope so, sir.'

'Good-night, Mathews.'

'Good-night, sir. Thank 'ee, sir.'

Selwyn moved off into the network of shadows. Looking back once, he saw the weather-beaten groom with hands on his hips, tilting himself to and fro in benicotined enjoyment of some odd strain of philosophy. Good heavens! was that the way men went to war!—as if it were a hunt with an equal chance of being the hound or the hare. 'Sausage-eaters'—what a phrase to describe those eagle-helmeted supermen of Prussia's cavalry! And this little island of pipe-smoking, country-side philosophers and pampered, sport-loving youth—this was the country, heart of a crumbling empire, that had ordered the gray torrent of Germany to alter its course and flow back to its own confines. It was absurd. It was grotesque. It was a sporting thing to do, but would it mean the collapse of the sprawling, disjointed British Empire, linked together by a flimsy tradition of loyalty to the Crown?

Scotland would be faithful, not so much to England as to her own instincts. Even if England were the heart of things, Scotland was the brain, and more than any other part supplied the driving-power for the wheels of empire. But what of rebellious Ireland and the distant Dominions isolated by the seas? Would they seize this moment of Britain's mad impetuosity and declare for their own independence? It was the history of nations—and did not history repeat itself?

Canada, of course, would be governed in her actions by the mighty, neighbouring Republic. That was inevitable when the young Dominion's

life was so dominated by that of the United States. But what of the others? . . .

Thus for half-an-hour queried the man from America. He was about to turn into the house, when he glanced once more in the direction of the stables. It was too dark to distinguish anything, but there was the glow from Mathews's pipe as it faintly lit the surrounding darkness.

II.

Eleven o'clock.

'Austin.'

He had been sitting in the library talking to Lord Durwent, but the latter had just left the room to answer a phone-call from London. Elise, who had been playing the gramophone in the music-room, shut the instrument off and hurried to the American's side.

'Yes, Elise?' He tried to rise, but she pressed him back and sat on the arm of the huge chair, looking down at him with a face that was glowing with excitement. Her eyes were like jewels of fate lit from within by some magic flame, and a mutinous lock of hair fell on the side of her face, almost touching the crimson lips. There was so much magnetism in her beauty, such a heaven in the unconquered warmth of her impetuous being, that Selwyn gripped the arms of his chair to help to restrain the mad impulse to grasp her in his arms and smother those lips and the flushed, satin cheeks in a tempest of kisses.

'Yes, Elise?' he repeated, clearing his throat.

'Listen, Austin. I can't stay inside any longer. I think my blood is on fire. Will you come with me to the village?'

'At eleven o'clock?'

'Yes. The news from London will reach the village first, and I want to be there when it comes. We shall have to hurry if we are to make it in time.'

'I'm at your service, Elise.'

'Right-o. I'll let the mater know. I'll just run upstairs and put something easy on, and I'll meet you at the front of the house. You had better change too.'

A few minutes later she joined him on the lawn. They had just reached the road which led to the porter's lodge, when, without a word of warning, she grasped his hand, and, half-running, half-dancing, pulled him forward at a rapid pace. With a laugh he joined in her mood, and, running side by side, they sped along the drive, while startled rabbits leaped across their path, and melancholy owls hooted disapprobation. As if the fumes of madness had mounted even to the skies, dark flecks of cloud raced headlong across the starry heavens.

They were mad. The world was mad. He wondered whether his brain might be playing some prank, and this absurd thing of two young people laughing and running to discover whether or not a nation was at war would prove a pointless jest of unsound imagination.

'Come along,' she cried. 'You're dragging.'

Then it wasn't a dream. The sound of her voice whipped the wandering fantasies of his brain into coherency. With a shout he jumped forward, and ran as he had not done since that one great game when, as a 'scrub,' he had his chance against Yale.

'Oh-oh-oh,' she laughed, 'I'm—winded.'

He caught her up in his arms as if her weight were no more than a child's, and carried her forward a hundred paces. His strength was limitless. He felt as if his body would never again know the lassitude of fatigue.

His pulses were throbbing with double fever: that of the world and his own hot love for her. Yes, it was love. What a fool he had been ever to doubt it! His last thoughts at night were of her; the last word whispered was her name; the last picture shrouded by the approaching mists of sleep was of her face. What was morning but a sunlit moment that meant Elise? What was the day—what were the years—what was life—but one great moment to be lived for Elise—Elise?

'Put me down, Austin. There! you'll be tired.'

'Tired!'

But her feet had touched the ground, and she was away again by herself, like a tantalising sprite of the woods. The errant lock had been joined in its mutiny by a wealth of dark-hued, auburn hair, blowing free in the reckless summer breeze.

Out of the estate and along the highway, shadowed by tall bushes; past cottages hiding in snug retreat of vines and flowers; past the cross-roads, with their sign-post standing like a gibbet waiting its prize; past the inn on the outskirts of the village, with its creaking sign, and its neighing horses in the stable; past the church on the rise of the hill, with its graveyard and its ivy-covered steeple—and then the village.

Gathered in the square they could see a group of people listening to a man who was reading something aloud.

'It's the rector,' said Elise. 'Let us wait a minute. Can you hear what he is saying?'

The voice had stopped, and the crowd broke into a cheer that echoed strangely on the night-air. It had hardly died away when a quavering, high-pitched voice started 'God save the King,' and with a sturdy indifference to pitch the rest followed, the octogenarian who had begun it sounding clear above the others as he half-whistled and half-sang the anthem through his two remaining teeth.

'That's old Hills!' cried Elise, laughing hysterically. 'He was at Sebastopol.'

The crowd was coming away.

Some were 'boisterous, others silent. A girl was laughing, but there was a strange look in her eyes. Bounding ahead in high appreciation of the village's nocturnal behaviour, a nondescript hound was preceding an elderly widow who was

weeping quietly as with faltering step she clung to the arm of her son, who was carrying himself with a new erectness.

Behind them walked Mathews the groom, corn-cob pipe and all, shaking his head argumentatively and squaring his shoulders.

An Empire had declared war.

III.

Elise entered the post-office to telephone the news to Roselawn, and Selwyn was left alone. It was only for a few minutes, but in that brief space of time his whole being underwent a vital crisis, which was not only to change the course of his own life, but was to affect thousands who would never meet him.

The creative mind is ever elusive and unexpected in its workings. In it the masculine and feminine temperaments are fused. The inventive brain leaps to conclusions—erroneous, it may be, but sustained by the feminine conviction that what is instinctive must be true. Selwyn's was essentially a creative mind, prone to emotionalism and to inspiration. With men of his type logic is largely retrogressive; the conclusion is reached first—the reasons follow.

A few days before his imagination had been strangely stirred by the swiftness of thought which at twilight in England could visualise New York at noon. Simple though the scientific explanation might be, it had left him with a sense of detachment, almost as if he were on Olympus and the world spread out below for him to gaze upon.

That feeling now returned with redoubled force.

The group of villagers had parted into many human fragments. He could hear the hearty invitation of the innkeeper for all boon spirits to join him, free of expense—and regardless of the liquor laws—in a pint of bitter, to drink confusion to the enemy. But to Selwyn they seemed creatures of another planet—or, rather, that he was the visitor in a world of strange inhabitants.

All the resentfulness of an idealist whose ancestry was steeped in liberty of action rose to a fury at this unwarrantable interference of war with the lives of men—a fury maddened by his feeling of utter impotence. Was it possible, he argued, that a group of men drunk with pomp and lust of conquest could wreck the whole fabric of civilisation? What of science and education? Had they risen only to be the playthings of madmen? What kind of a world was it that allowed such things?

Was it possible, however, that this war was different from any other? Granted that Austria had willed the crushing of Serbia, and that Germany was instigator of the crime—had not the rest of the world proved false to their creeds by allowing the war-hunger of the Central Powers to achieve its aim? Supposing France, Britain, America, and Italy had joined in an immediate warning to Germany and Austria that if they

did not desist from their malpractices the area of their countries would be declared a plague-spot, commercial intercourse with the outside world at an end, and their citizens treated as lepers. If that had been done, men could have gone on leading the lives to which they had been called, and by sheer cumulative effect could have exerted a moral pressure on the war-lust of Germany that would have been irresistible.

Yet, like a bull that sees red, the nations had rushed madly at each other, thirsting to gore each other's vitals with their horns. Men of peaceful vocations were at that very moment slaughtering their brother-men. It was wrong—hideously wrong!

And the charge of responsibility could not be laid at the door of those idiots of Emperors. . . . Their crime was evil enough, but the responsibility for war was with the people who allowed themselves to be led to murder by a mad, jingoistic patriotism. Supposing that when Europe was mobilising the people of Great Britain had sent a message to the Germans: 'Brothers, justice must be done and malefactors punished. Fearing nothing but the universal conscience, we refuse to fight with you, but demand in humanity's name that you join with us in establishing the permanent supremacy of Right.' Some such message as that coming from a Power steeped in a great past would have been ashes to smother the smouldering flames of world-war.

But there was no machinery for such a thing. There was no method by which the great heart of one country could speak with that of another. Our obsolete diplomatic envoys, the errand-boys of international politics, were mere artifices, tending to cement rather than to dispel the mutual distrust of nations. What, then, stood in the way of world-understanding? What was the cause of the blindness which permitted men to be led like dumb cattle to the slaughter?

Ignorance.

That was the answer to it all. It was ignorance that kept a nation unaware of its own highest destiny; it was ignorance that fomented trouble among the peoples of the earth. Suffering, sickness, crime, tyranny, war, were all growths whose roots were buried in ignorance and sucked its vile nourishment.

An impetuous wave of loyalty towards his own country swept over Austin Selwyn at the thought. Other peoples had declared war on each other: America by her silence had declared war on Ignorance. He felt a sudden shame for his previous doubts. He saw clearly that his great continent-country was a rock to which the other baffled, despairing nations might cling when disaster overtook them.

And as he was joined by Elise Durwent, the American swore an eternal oath of vengeance against Ignorance.

(Continued on page 227.)

THE PTARMIGAN.

By SETON GORDON, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

I.

THERE is no bird that clings so tenaciously to the high hills, summer and winter, as does the ptarmigan.*

In summer its home is a nesting-site for the dotterel, and to a lesser extent the dunlin and the golden plover; but as autumn approaches these visitors betake themselves to the coast, and the ptarmigan have the high tops to themselves.

The golden eagle, in his magnificent flight, frequently passes over the land of the ptarmigan, and the snow bunting is often in the high corries, but these birds make their homes in the sheltered glens during wild and stormy weather, whereas ptarmigan never, under any circumstances, visit the low country. A further interesting point about the ptarmigan is that it possesses the peculiarity—unique among British birds—of assuming a completely white plumage during the winter months, in order to harmonise with the snow that covers the high hills from November till early May.

The most suitable season of the year to study the ptarmigan is during the early summer, when the winter's snows are fast disappearing from the high corries. During the first days of May the hills are often covered with a greater depth of snow than at any time during the winter, but a sudden spell of warm breezes and bright sunshine rapidly melts the snowy covering, and the hill plants quickly respond to the welcome warmth. It is then that the ptarmigan set about searching for a nesting-site—for the birds, notwithstanding the snow, pair early in the spring—and before May is over the majority of the hens are brooding on their full complement of eggs.

During the summer of 1919 ptarmigan were earlier in nesting than ever I can remember, for, after frost and snow up to the first week of May, that month was subsequently exceptionally fine and warm, and all bird-life on the high hills was in early June a full week more forward than usual.

During a fortnight in June (commencing on the 14th of that month) spent on the high hills, I did not see a single ptarmigan's nest still containing eggs; while on the 17th of June I came across a dotterel with her young brood, although during previous seasons I had never known of this bird hatching off her eggs before June 22.

Unfortunately for all bird-life on the highest grounds, the weather at the time of hatching,

and for a full fortnight subsequently, was exceedingly stormy, with constant gales and storms of rain and, latterly, snow. On June 26, when on the high slopes of Braeriach, I found a couple of inches of snow, and hard frost prevailing. At one point, not far short of 4000 feet, I accidentally disturbed a hen-ptarmigan brooding her two chicks in the snow, and very cold and dejected did the youngsters appear as they ran cheeping over the snowy ground.

A little earlier in the day I had come across a mother 'tarmachan' who had taken her brood to rocky ground—an unusual situation in which to find young ptarmigan—in order, I imagine, to shelter them from the storm. There is no doubt that many of the ptarmigan lost a portion at any rate of their broods during this stormy period, for I came upon one hen-ptarmigan brooding only a single chick, instead of the seven or eight she should rightfully have had. On the lower ptarmigan hills, as, for instance, the Monadh Liadh Mountains to the north of the Spey, the storm was not so severe, and an unusually large stock of ptarmigan were on the ground during the autumn of last year.

The nest of the ptarmigan is a hollow scraped among the mosses and the lichens—ptarmigan normally nest above the heather line—usually sheltered by a stone and frequently beside a small burn, at a height of from a little over 2000 to just under 4000 feet above sea-level. Though the birds, both old and young, are frequently seen above the latter height on the Cairngorm Hills, I have never seen a nest higher than about 3700 feet. The eggs in size and shape closely resemble those of the red grouse, though the blotches which thickly cover them are often of a brighter red than those on the eggs of the grouse. A full clutch generally numbers from six to eight.

During the time that the hen-bird is sitting the cock-ptarmigan takes up his position at some point from which he has a good view of the surrounding hillside, and at the approach of the human intruder rises with snorting croak, flying a short distance, and then, with more croakings, alighting and watching anxiously the source of alarm. The hen in the meanwhile is sitting very close on her eggs, and does not leave them unless absolutely obliged to do so. Indeed, I have on several occasions photographed a sitting ptarmigan on her nest at a distance of less than six feet. The young when hatched resemble their surroundings very closely, and crouch on the ground when in danger. The mother-bird in the meantime drags herself along the ground, feigning injury, in order to draw one from the neighbourhood of her chicks.

* In the Gaelic this word is written *tarmachan*, and may be derived from *tarmach*, to be the source of. The letter p in the English spelling of the word is said to have a French origin, and seems superfluous.

By August the young are strong on the wing, but are not full-grown until the end of that month, often considerably later.

The ptarmigan's life is rendered a burden to it by the golden eagle. I have rarely been out on the high hills without seeing the eagle hunting ptarmigan. During the first days of October 1919 I was crossing the Larig Ghruamach Pass, which connects Braemar with the valley of the Spey, and when I had reached the neighbourhood of the Pools of Dee I noticed great commotion in the ptarmigan world. A large pack of these birds came hurrying through the pass towards the north. Half a gale of south wind was blowing behind them, and they were travelling at express speed. Very beautiful did they look as they passed me, their white wings standing out sharply against the dark rocks of the hillside behind. When almost opposite me they alighted for a second, but fear again spurred them forward, and now I saw, sailing through the Larig behind them, the dark form of an eagle. The eagle, from his plumage, was a bird of the year, and as he soared downwind his flight at times was somewhat shaky. Some distance beyond me he dropped to the ground, but was too far off for me to see whether or not he had captured a ptarmigan. Shortly afterwards the mist came down, but about an hour later I saw the eagle beating up the Larig against the wind, and making for the Dee side of the pass, whence he had originally come.

In October ptarmigan are in a transition stage of plumage, and during the past autumn I noticed for the first time the curious effect thick mist, coupled with a fall of snow on the ground, has on the appearance of these birds when they take wing. The white wings, being of the same colour as the snow, are invisible in the mist, and the ptarmigan appears as though flying with its wing-stumps alone. The autumn of 1919 was

an exceptionally severe one on the high hills. As early as September there were heavy snowfalls, and the hills were deep in snow almost continuously in October. At the end of the latter month I had a fine view of a covey of ptarmigan in a remote corrie much frequented by these birds in winter. They were busy feeding on the young shoots of the ling and the crowberry, and were very tame. Two of their number had already assumed full winter plumage of pure white, while the rest were in varying stages of transition. It was interesting to watch them running along the snow, which was frozen sufficiently hard to bear their weight. Having reached what they considered a safe distance from the human intruder, they rested, some of the birds sitting on the snow, while others stood about on rocks, with their weather-eye open for danger. They were joined by a ptarmigan from the far side of the corrie, the bird as he alighted uttering a series of high-pitched yelping sounds quite unlike anything I have ever heard a ptarmigan use before—the cry of the cock-ptarmigan being a deep snorting croak.

On one occasion recently I saw footprints of a ptarmigan in the snow 4000 feet up, but during the winter months the birds are rarely met with on the summit plateaus of the Cairngorm Hills, where lie large stretches of land just touching, or closely approaching, the 4000-foot level.

It says much for the severity of the past autumn that on November 6 I saw about a dozen ptarmigan in the snow on the roadside on the well-known Cairnwell Hill, which sees thousands of cars make the trip from Perth to Braemar and *vice versa* during the summer months. The highest point of the road is 2200 feet above sea-level, but the bend at which I saw the ptarmigan is little over 1800 feet up, an unusually low elevation at which to find the 'white grouse' in the Central Highlands.

THE PROSPECTOR OF PILOT MOUNTAIN.

By G. TREVOR ROLLER.

I.

UP by Pilot Mountain near the Cœur des Laines travelling is hard. When the snow is down—five feet deep, perhaps—it's a job for snow-shoes, and it's biting cold. But prospectors don't range the mountains at that season, for they must see the ground and watch it for the outcrop, the rock that points the way to riches—or does not, as the case may be. No; the prospector sets forth in the late spring when the snow has gone, giving place to brambles and fallen trees, great giants of the pine belt, tamarack, spruce, and fir. Hard going this—impossible for a horse, sweating work for a man.

So our prospector found it as he scrambled

and climbed over the fallen trunks, while their living fellows towered about him, blocking his view.

No easy thing to steer a straight course through the pine-clad mountains, but the prospector did it by the occasional glimpse of the sun, a rarer consultation with a small compass—a trumpery thing that hung from his watch-chain, but it told the north, more or less. Soon he would come to the end of the saddle on which he was travelling, and the ground would slope rapidly down to a gulch that should lie at the foot of Pilot Mountain. He must cross the gulch and struggle on as far as possible, even in the dark, until, in fact, he was too dead-beat to go farther.

For the prospector was racing against time—and also hunger. Only one small tin of corned beef remained in his blanket-pack, the pack that seemed so light at the morning start, and grew so heavy as the day wore on, till his shoulders ached with the pressure and the straps cut into his flesh. Just one tin, three biscuits, and five days' hard trekking! He was racing for the Crowsfoot Indian Reservation, with a sound body, a tin of beef—enough for one good meal—and a will to win.

He never doubted his ability to 'make it'; he only cursed the necessity of having to. It all dated back to that rotten rifle-sling and the Blackwater River—the river of which no man must drink. He had crossed it astride a great log that had taken stupendous efforts to roll to the water. He had placed his pack and his boots before him on the log, sat astride it, and paddled with his naked feet. The pack slipped, and in his struggles to hold it on the rifle must have caught in a branch stub on the log. Anyway, the sling parted and the rifle sank to the bottom of the river. Half a day he wasted diving and dragging for it, but it would have been no waste had he found it. A man let loose in the western wilderness without a rifle is a man bereft entirely of food, a man who must make for the nearest civilisation; and well he knew it. He was then ten days or so from the approximate possibility of succour. He had gone half the journey; and his small stock of canned stuff had dwindled down to one small tin.

How he cursed the loss! For with his rifle he would have been so independent, able to shoot all those gulches and side-hills and probe the hidden secrets of the mountains. As it was, he dared hardly look about him for fear of catching sight of an outcrop that would delay him, so much was his stomach his master.

II.

The light was already failing him, but he tramped on, shoulders bowed with the weight of the pack, circumventing fallen timber here, dodging boulders there, sometimes catching his shins in the long brambles that crossed his line of march; and as there were none to hear, he swore foully as the thorns pricked him through his blue canvas jeans. But he was making good time, all things considered. Soon he reached the end of the saddle, and from here he could look across the darkening gully to the still sunlit Pilot.

It was going to be a bad climb down into that darkness; bad, possibly dangerous. He had done these things before; the thought of danger seldom occurred to him. He would have the creek to cross, and with the spring rains it might be swollen. The ascent would be worse, for he meant to strike over the western side of the mountain.

He paused, hiking the pack higher on to his shoulder-blades, took out a small slab of chewing-

tobacco from his hip-pocket, bit off a chunk, and murmured, 'Hell!'

He had a full view of the task, or, rather, a bit of the task, set him, and although not fearing it, he hated to have to do it. He was in the cursing vein as he again humped his pack and started, tired but alert, footing down the slope. Soon he struck boulders, then detached rocks springing from the ground like stepping-stones. Nimbly he stepped them, but the shadows were deceptive, and again he paused.

'I must come back to this,' he thought. 'There might be an outcrop here. Dolgarn the light! but I'd better make good that creek.' And on he went, still stepping gingerly.

Presently he heard the water below him splashing and gurgling. This was a good sign, for had the creek been full it would have flowed high up on its rocky banks, missing, or, rather, covering and making one deep stream of, the miniature waterfalls that gave out the pleasant splashing. So encouraged, he quickened up. He reached a large flat rock at the edge of the creek. Three feet from the edge another loomed darkly. He gave a slight spring on to it and—no! not missed—he had jumped at a shadow simply, and fell.

The wind was knocked out of him, and he lay face down with the pack still heavy on his shoulders, his arms outstretched. For some moments he lay thus, while the creek babbled merrily within a few feet of him. He bent his elbows, placing his palms on the ground to raise himself, but at the first effort his right thigh gave him excruciating pain. 'I've strained a muscle,' he thought.

Quickly he loosened the pack-strap, and the load rolled to his side. Then he turned on to his back, the movement costing him agony. He wondered dully if it could mean a broken leg—something had struck him as he fell. Carefully he felt down his right leg with his two hands. The knee seemed close to his body; there was an extraordinary lump on the outside of his thigh. He tried for a moment to bluff himself that it was only muscle cramp, but only for a moment, for he knew it was a break. So he lay back and wondered at the ways of God that had allowed him to break his leg when his neck would have made so much better a job of it!

III.

But while there is life there is hope. Hope cheered him—he might be found. Probably nobody had passed this spot for years—if ever; possibly no one would pass again for years. And yet there was a ten thousand to one chance of another prospector like himself, or an Indian trailing deer—what a fool he was: no deer-hunting at this time of year!—still some one; but it was an absurd, devilish outside chance.

Immediate action occurred to him—first-aid. What had he read? 'Make splints out of

butts of fishing-rods, baseball-bats, golf-clubs; bind to the limb,' &c. He looked round and saw no golf-clubs, only pine-trees, and they would have to be felled; so he laughed—grimly, but the laugh came.

Gently he got his pack to him and released his blankets. With one he arranged a pillow under the leg. It was a struggle, but the result was good. Another he spread over him; the third would serve as a pillow for his head. A hard man, he could lie on a hard bed. The tin of beef appeared in a gunny sack with the three biscuits. What nonsense it all seemed—food, and death at his elbow! But he was devilish tired. He was almost comfortable. He ate a biscuit. His left hand while feeling round—it was quite dark now—came in contact with water, a pool of it; he found his tin mug, and drank greedily.

He was in pain, but nothing so damnable as he thought it should be; surely a broken leg should hurt more than this! He would try to move again, just to prove it was not broken. He pulled the blanket up to his neck and endeavoured to raise his right knee. As the broken ends of bone grated against each other, he fainted. Fit, strong man that he was, he went off like a vapouring girl, and the best thing for him, too. He was dog-tired; the night was warm; his blanket was well up to his neck. The faint turned to a healthy sleep.

IV.

Later he woke; it could not have been midnight. Like most men who live the outdoor roaming life, he was fully awake in a flash; in a flash everything came back to him. He felt his leg. It was much swollen. It pained him dully and constantly, but not greatly. He wished he could get his boot off, but dared not move enough to try. He lit a pipe, gazed up at the stars, and tried to think.

Surely the one chance in ten thousand would turn up and beat Fate! It seemed so futile that he, in his strength and the very prime of life, should be cut off in this fool way. Death! Well, it had never frightened him—only the pain of death was a worry; but then he was in no great pain. Starvation meant getting weaker and weaker till sleep, and subsequently death, overtook him. He was not hungry at the moment, so he thought death by starvation none so bad. Then suddenly the thought of death made him angry—the thought that he must die before the fulfilment of what he took to be a direct promise from the Almighty. Surely he had been meant to find what he was firmly convinced was his lodestar. The lodestar which every spring for years past had attracted him irresistibly out on to the mountains, and kept him there till the first snows warned him that for that year, anyway, his search was over. Then he would return to work out his winter in mining-camps,

making enough to finance his spring setting-forth, and to provide for his wife during those long summer months. He had scarcely considered her—save in the matter of money; that spring call to the mountains was too strong on him. Even in the first year of his married life he had left her, reluctantly; but still he had gone, searching for what he knew lay hidden. Year after year he had prospected for gold. Small indications had encouraged him. Once in his search for gold he had stumbled on copper. He had staked his claim, assessed it, then leased it; the money that came from this he spent on his wife and on furnishing their home. He had bought a valuable piano neither of them could play, and a two hundred dollar gramophone that they were both heartily sick of in a month.

He thought of his back life. He had not been a bad man as Western miners go. In his youth he had known the insides of saloons and dance-halls. Well, better men than he had cut loose as colts, as young men will. He was even religious in a crude way; he believed in a God that had hidden a treasure in the mountains and had bidden him go seek it. But why in thunder, after all these years, had God let him down? There must have been a reason—he wished he knew it. He tried to think of all his sins. Long-past sins, yes; but lately what had he done? Neglected his wife? Well, it was a means to an end. One day she was to have been a rich man's wife; now it would be months before she could know of his death—if ever she did know for certain. In the meanwhile—heavens above, how long did it take a man to starve? Suddenly a fury of mad rage seized him. Why should he prolong the agony? He hunted feverishly for his knife to end it all. He could not find it. His hand came in contact with the gunny sack. At least he could hurry starvation. He threw the sack far from him. Then in a panic he realised what he had done. He rolled to his side and tried to drag himself after it.

The ghastly pain sobered him. He lay back, opening and clenching his hands, the sweat pouring down his face. What a fool he had been! With one throw he had added more odds to his ten thousand to one chance. Still sweating, he lay, while the pain in his leg numbed, and listened to the sounds of the forest going on round him, the whispering of the breeze in the pine-tops, the gurgle of the creek, and occasionally some slight rustling in the undergrowth that told of a night marauder. Hundreds of times he had lain hearing those sounds but never realising them, for he was no dreaming poet, merely a hard man treating himself hardly. But to-night he listened and wondered vaguely at the beauty of those sounds. They comforted him, and he grew drowsy; gradually he dropped off to sleep, wrapped in the mother-arms of nature.

V.

Men who sleep often in the open learn to wake when the sun's rays touch them; it, the sun, is the alarm-clock of woodcraft. Instinctively the prospector turned his face to the east. The very first beam of sunlight that came streaming down the gulch lit on his face; his eyes opened, and he lay blinking. For the first time in his life in the open he did not throw his blankets from him, stretch and yawn, jump up and bathe his face in the nearest water. No; he was a fixture, and knew it; the pain—returned now—warned him. Slowly and painfully he twisted his shoulders and head to get away from the glare, twisted till he lay staring at the rock from which he had fallen, a few feet from him, almost within reach. He stared at it a while; then he rubbed his eyes and stared again. Suddenly, forgetful of pain, he raised himself on his elbows, his eyes nearly starting from his head—and saw at last what he had spent all these years in seeking. The real thing! Not just pay quartz, but free gold running in a seam right down the rock, with the morning sun making the dull red sparkle. Free gold; every foot a fortune. Quickly he looked round the fast lighting scenery. All about him teemed with blatant indications; the creek itself must be a very placer mine, the whole place more wonderful than he had ever dreamt or read of. No! he was too cunning at his job; he couldn't be mistaken. What a spot for a mine, too! Down this side of the creek he would blaze his first claim, then on the other; next he would register, and the rush would come; he would dam the stream and make his water-power to run his mine. First the free gold and the placer, then sink and mine. Glory be, but this was his—his mine, his find; his to work

and make and lease, his to do what he liked with! His to—die on! The thought struck him like a physical blow, and he lay back panting. He had found what he had set out to find, right at the damnable end. Then he laughed, laughed senselessly, peal after peal; the irony, the rottenness, the sin of dying on top of a fortune—oh, fifty fortunes!

No white man had ever been here before, unless he had been blind or mad. This made his chance out to about a million to one.

Then delirium seized him, and all through the hot day the sun beat down and he raved. As night came his strength broke, and he fell into a coma. The last thing he did was to pull the blanket up to his neck with the instinct of keeping warm.

Next morning the rising sun touched the still form, but there was no awakening.

VI.

Extract from the *Butte Herald*:

'SIDNEY K. HERD AND HIS PROSPECTING-PARTY STRIKE A PAY STREAK. GOOD BOY, SID! UP NEAR THE CŒUR DES LAINES, A FREE GOLD PROPOSITION. THEY HAD TO TRAVEL SOME TO FIND IT.'

Here comes half a column on the locality and news of the property, ending thus:

'Immediately on the discovery of the gold another and very gruesome discovery was made. Just near the largest outcrop of all the party came upon the remains of what must once have been a white man—decayed bones and rusty metal buttons. A tarnished silver watch and chain were also found. A few feet away lay a rusty can of meat. This had not been opened, which points to the surmise that the man had not died of starvation. Could it have been a case of foul play? The tragedy has lain there for many years, and never until now come to light.'

THE PLANT-WIZARD OF AMERICA: LUTHER BURBANK.

PART I.

EVEN though we have never travelled abroad, we all know from pictures and photographs the appearance of those strange spine-covered plants which go by the popular name of prickly pears, but are really a species of cactus. In the American deserts of the West they grow in abundance, but though their thick and succulent stems, containing about 60 or 70 per cent. of water, form a nutritious food for cattle, the fact that they are covered with sharp spines renders them of very little use. In Arizona, during the great drought of 1903-4, cattle suffered severely for want of food and drink, and by utilising a gasoline-burner to singe off the spines, many hundreds of tons of cacti were made available for fodder to tide over the trying time. Singe-

ing, however, was a slow and costly process, and unpractical save as an emergency measure.

For many years men have been puzzled over the problem of the cactus. Here, in a region of drought and desert, where it is difficult to bring up food and fodder from the haunts of men, grows a plant that provides all that is needed to sustain and maintain large herds of cattle; and yet, because of its terrible spines, the plant is practically useless. Only those who have travelled in the native home of the prickly pear can realise the inconveniences and dangers that arise from these spines. There are a thousand species of cactus in the American South-West, and the names the desert men give them are sufficiently indicative of their char-

acter—'the never-fail sticker,' 'the stick and stay in,' 'the stick through anything,' 'the big sticker,' 'the little sticker,' 'the deep sticker,' and so on.

The American scientist, Dr Veatch, has given an account of his experiences with cacti when journeying through San Felipe Pass. His horse became irritated by the prickly plants and began to plunge, whereupon the traveller threw himself off, and was dragged through the cacti until his clothes, to use his own words, 'were literally pinned to the flesh from head to foot by the barbed needle-like prickles.' No wonder the stockmen who have to ride among these porcupines of the vegetable world see that their stirrups are well cased-in with stout leather.

Now, one man who had thought much on this subject determined that he would create a new cactus which should have all the virtues of the old prickly pear with none of its vices. In other words, he would breed a cactus without spines; and after numerous experiments he did so, with the result that now, in many of the American desert and drought lands which formerly were closed to cattle, large herds can be kept, and find their food and drink in the spineless cactus. The man who achieved this marvel was Luther Burbank, and he has earned for himself the by no means exaggerated title of 'the plant-wizard,' while one of the state legislatures of America has set aside his birthday as an annual holiday, to be called Burbank Day.

In many ways Luther Burbank is one of the most remarkable men living. There is no one quite like him in the Old World, and while his name is a household word on the other side of the Atlantic, and is honoured by scientists everywhere, he is almost unknown by the general mass of people in this country. Luther Burbank has literally created new plants. Let there be no misunderstanding about this. He has not merely produced by cross-fertilisation freaks that have died and been done with; he has put into the world absolutely new fruits and flowers and vegetables that breed true and go on propagating their species, as though they had been in existence for countless generations. Those that appeal to the imagination and the lay mind are not, of course, the most wonderful from the scientific point of view, but a few of his creations may be mentioned. There are the spineless cactus (already referred to), the white blackberry, the stoneless plum, the plumcot (a cross between the plum and the apricot), the scented dahlia, the blue poppy, the dwarf chestnut-tree, the thornless blackberry, the winter rhubarb, the paper-shell walnut, and the sunberry. A brief description of some of these, and an account of Luther Burbank's work, may not be uninteresting.

Even as a youth he was fond of experimenting in plant culture, and his first success was with

a potato which has since become famous as the Burbank Potato, and of which it is estimated that some £4,000,000 worth have been raised in the United States alone. The potato-plant does not usually produce seed, but young Burbank one day saw a plant with a seed-cluster containing twenty-three seeds. He saved this through the winter, and planted the seeds separately in the following spring. To his surprise, no two seeds produced the same kinds of potatoes; but one yielded tubers of an exceptional size and whiteness, and these he saved and planted the next year. Finding that they reproduced their fine qualities, he sold the potato to a nurseryman, and received for it in all thirty pounds, which enabled him to travel from his home in Massachusetts across the continent to California, where he had decided to carry on his experimental work under the most favourable weather conditions that the world could provide.

The development of the spineless cactus, in many ways the most dramatic of Luther Burbank's triumphs, was brought about only as the result of a long series of experiments extending over ten years. By selecting those plants that had the fewest and shortest spines, he hoped eventually to eliminate the prickles altogether; but for a long time it looked as though he would fail. The spines persisted, till at last one happy day he found in his garden a cactus eight feet high, with thick, fleshy leaves a foot long, and not a single thorn. It was a thrilling moment, but not the final triumph, for it yet remained to be seen whether the spineless cactus would breed true. Fortunately the species was fixed, and now tens of thousands of acres of wilderness produce crops of this rich cattle-food, so that what was once useless desert-land is now able to support large ranches of cattle; and, further, the luscious fruits of the spineless cactus form a welcome food for man. Burbank, as an admirer has put it, 'at one stroke rid the world of a plant enemy and gave it a new plant friend.' The cactus will grow where no other plant can thrive. It needs no rain, and millions of acres that have hitherto been bare and uninhabited may, by this wonderful creation, before long be supporting mighty herds of cattle and teeming populations of men. Burbank himself says: 'The population of the globe may be doubled, and yet in the immediate food of the cactus-plant itself, and in the food-animals which may be raised upon it, there would still be enough for all.'

With the plum Luther Burbank has done wonders, producing more than sixty new varieties that include and emphasise every possible good quality. Some varieties ripen at midsummer, others have an exceptional percentage of sugar, and others again have different flavours, such as those of the apple, the Bartlett pear, and so on. Then there are plums with a very thin skin, others with a red flesh; but the most striking

wonder of all is the plum without a stone. Burbank took a small, ill-flavoured European plum, not much larger than a cranberry, which had a very small, light stone, and crossed it with the rich American varieties until at last he produced a beautiful, luscious plum that could be bitten right through like a strawberry.

By crossing the plum and the apricot he produced an absolutely new type of orchard fruit, the plumcot, which has the virtues of both its ancestors. It is delicious in flavour and most attractive in appearance; but those who see and taste it have little idea of the years of almost superhuman patience that were needed to create the fruit and render it fertile, so that it would breed true.

The hardy Winter Rhubarb, with enormous juicy stalks, has been developed in the same patient manner from a poor New Zealand plant with a stem no thicker than an ordinary black-lead pencil. Luther Burbank wanted to find a rhubarb that would bear during the winter months when ordinary rhubarbs are dormant. He therefore introduced this variety from New Zealand, where summer reigns at the northern hemisphere's period of winter, and by selection he adjusted it to the North American winter, at the same time developing the size and flavour of the stalks.

Another miracle of this incredible plant-wizard is the dwarf chestnut. In the ordinary way we have to climb up to gather chestnuts, but Luther Burbank will ask you to stoop down and pick them from little bush-trees only two or three feet high. Thirty-five years ago he began his experiments with a score or so of giant chestnuts gathered from trees in Japan. These he grew and crossed with American chestnuts to improve the size and flavour of the fruit. Next he worked along another line to speed up the earliest date of bearing, and by also reducing the size of the tree he at last produced a type of chestnut-tree that, were it not a fact, would seem an utter impossibility. Within six months of the time that the nut is planted the dwarf tree is actually bearing a crop of fine large chestnuts. Luther Burbank has not yet finished with this fruit, for he is still working at it, combining and emphasising the best properties of nuts from three continents, America, Europe, and Asia, and endeavouring even further to improve the size, the flavour, and the bearing capabilities, while at the same time producing a smooth burr.

In a similar manner by selection and cross-breeding he has developed or created a blackberry without thorns, an orange without pips, a gooseberry without hairs, and a walnut with a shell like paper. The story of the last-named is extremely interesting. The wizard set out to eliminate the nut-crackers, but after breeding the walnut-shell down to a substance so thin that it could easily be bitten through like a skin, he found that the kernel now had no protection

from birds, which used to peck through the thin shell and eat the nut. It was necessary, therefore, to continue the experiments in the opposite direction, and thicken up the shell again till it was able to resist the efforts of the birds. The final result, while successful in this direction, has a shell so thin that it can easily be crushed between a lady's fingers.

Another wonder was wrought by Luther Burbank when he combined the peach and the almond, and in the second generation secured hybrids that bore fruits which were delicious peaches, yet had inside not the ordinary stone, but an almond-nut with the proper shell and kernel. Here were two fruits literally growing in one. The sunberry, another of Burbank's creations, is in some ways the most interesting of his productions, for this useful and delicious fruit was obtained by crossing two species of *solanum* or nightshade, neither of which bears a fruit that is edible. One nightshade is a native of Africa, and the other of America. For twenty-five years Burbank tried to hybridise these two plants, but it seemed as though all his efforts must end in failure, when at last on one plant a single berry was produced. How carefully the wizard watched over this precious fruit until it had ripened, and how jealously he guarded the seeds until he planted them and they grew up! He had scored a great triumph, and one of the seeds from that solitary berry, that took a quarter of a century to produce, became the ancestor of an entirely new race of fruits, now very popular in America.

Luther Burbank is not anxious to perform horticultural tricks, and has no desire to pose as a miracle-worker for the bewilderment or admiration of the spectator. He has, in the course of his operations, evolved extraordinary freaks, such as a potato-plant grafted on the roots of a tomato vine and producing aerial tubers. This, however, is merely an interesting anomaly. Luther Burbank's ambition is something much greater than that of the successful conjurer—his sole object in life is to enrich the world with new and improved food-plants of real value.

(Continued on page 237.)

TRANQUILLITY.

ALWAYS the peace above the unquiet heart—

The peace of dawn against night's brooding wing,
The dew-ponds on the downs that lie apart,
Like shining jewels in an emerald ring.

Dim shadowy aisles, formed by o'erarching trees,
Still water touched by a mysterious dream,
Ripe cornfields ruffled by a wandering breeze,
Or stirred to life by a red sunset gleam.

Gray waves that lap a vast and lonely shore,
And birds that softly sing and sleep apart,
Stars watching in the silence evermore—
Always the peace above the unquiet heart.

G. R. GLASGOW.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

LEAVES FROM A CATALOGUER'S WALLET.

III.—A GAINSBOROUGH MASTERPIECE.

By W. ROBERTS.

I.

IN 1785-86 Mr Gainsborough, as we gather from the scrappy bits of art news which found their way into the newspapers of the day, was painting the whole-length portrait of a beautiful woman, who had a few months previously married a well-known baronet, a descendant of a duke of ancient lineage. She herself was the daughter of a right reverend dean who, among his other distinctions, was chaplain-in-ordinary to George III. The progress of the portrait was watched with interest by the many friends of the lady and of the artist—it was 'daily awakening into perfection with all the external grace and elegance of nature.' It was not exhibited at the Royal Academy, for the artist had quarrelled with his fellow-academicians, and ceased to exhibit after 1783. The portrait, when finished, was sent to its home in Lincolnshire, and was never seen by the public until it was lent to an exhibition in London three-quarters of a century afterwards. Probably it was this very portrait which inspired the stanzas, 'On Viewing a Portrait of a Lady painted by Gainsborough,' dated 4th May 1786, which a Mr Herbert of Grosvenor Street contributed to the 'poets' corner' of one of the newspapers. Only two verses need be quoted here:

Sure magic lies within that art,
Which thus reflects the lovely dame!
Her eyes the pointed lightning dart;
Another form—and yet the same!

Here will I worship, here adore,
For here I trace an angel too;
The beams that warmed the heart before
By spells enforc'd—what will they do?

The husband of the lady—for convenience's sake we will call him Sir Robert Doncaster—lived until 1815, but his widow survived him for twenty years, dying just half a century after she was painted by Gainsborough. In the portrait the artist employed his favourite combination of grayish-white and sky-blue. It shows her walking in a summer landscape which helps us to realise the truth of Ruskin's contention that Gainsborough was the greatest colourist since Rubens—'pure in his English feeling, profound in his seriousness, graceful in his gaiety.'

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She is in a blue-and-white dress; her left hand supports a scarf, her right hangs down by her side. In looking at this superb portrait, so characteristic of Gainsborough, so typical of English high-born female beauty, and so graceful in the elegance of its pose, one thinks of Peter Pindar's famous apostrophe to Time in favour of another of Gainsborough's famous models, the Duchess of Devonshire:

Hurt not the form that all admire—

Oh, never with white hairs her temple sprinkle—
Oh, sacred be her cheek, her lip, her bloom,
And do not, in a lovely dimple's room,

Place a hard mortifying wrinkle.

But, alas for all apostrophes and appeals to Time, age creeps on, beauty fades, and the gracious belle of one generation becomes the wrinkled, despotic, and querulous old lady of another!

II.

The great success at the Grosvenor Gallery, London, of the loan exhibition of Sir Joshua Reynolds's works in 1883-84 was naturally followed the next season by one of Gainsborough's. Shortly before the exhibition opened it was reported that certain practically unknown portraits of the finest quality had been secured. There was much turning over of peerages and the like by picture-dealers to find out, so far as such books can indicate, the status of the apparent owners, and judge if they could be approached in the matter of a 'deal.' A wealthy and excellent member of the trade, Mr Joseph Moses, remembered having seen the superb portrait of Lady Doncaster when it was lent to an exhibition some twenty years previously. Mr Moses determined to purchase the Lady Doncaster *coûte que coûte*. He wrote to the owner, a collateral descendant, a polite and diplomatic little note to say that, as he was running down to the races—which he abhorred, by the way—in a few days he would do himself the pleasure of calling on Sir Robert Doncaster, as he had a little proposition to set before him. The Gainsborough exhibition had opened a day or two before, and such a display of the work of the great English artist had never been witnessed. The newspapers had printed columns about the beautiful portraits, and it was impossible to ignore the

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fact that the Lady Doncaster was one of the triumphs of the exhibition.

Mr Moses drove up to the stately mansion with hope in his heart and his cheque-book in his pocket. He was duly announced and courteously received; but he was somewhat nonplussed by the baronet's cheery and almost boisterous exclamation, 'Ah, Mr Moses, I suppose you have come to try to buy the portrait of my dear old grand-aunt?' Floored for a moment by this unexpected divination of the real object of his visit, Mr Moses quickly recovered himself, and answered, 'Sir Robert, if you had made any other guess you would have been wrong.' This might well have ended the interview, but Sir Robert was the pink of courtesy; he assured his visitor, with tears in his eyes, that he would never think of parting with the portrait of his dear old grand-aunt, and was grievously hurt at the suggestion of such a thing. But, as his visitor had come a long journey, he must join the family in a cup of tea. Tea was not what Mr Moses wanted—it was poison to him; but he was tactful and self-sacrificing. The afternoon passed pleasantly, and Mr Moses was conducted to his carriage by the family, and departed—not to the races, but to London, with the firm conviction in his mind that the baronet was not going to sell his dear old grand-aunt.

III.

The Gainsborough exhibition was prolonged into the summer, attracting great crowds of dealers who wanted to buy, of collectors who came to admire and envy, and of students who came to study the works of the famous artist. Now and then when in town Sir Robert would drop in at Mr Moses's beautiful galleries in Bond Street for a gossip and a cigar; they discussed politics, social questions, and other matters, but by a sort of mutual understanding the delicate subject of the dear old grand-aunt was not mentioned, or there would have been more tears and more protests. Summer came along, and Sir Robert—who never forgot the motto of his family, '*Comiter sed fortiter*'—dropped the hint that, as usual, he was going to Homburg to take the 'cure.' This was something in the nature of a bombshell. Mr Moses, like his father before him, had found the air of Margate and the produce of Kentish hops a sufficient 'cure' for all his ailments; but there loomed up in his imagination the possibility of other rival picture-dealers taking their 'cure' at Homburg, and tempting Sir Robert with offers for the portrait of his dear old grand-aunt. This possibility became an obsession, and Mr Moses determined that Sir Robert should not fall into other hands if he could help it. And so it came about that the two worthies eventually found themselves housed in the same hotel and drinking the same nauseous waters. Once only was the matter of the picture broached, and that was when Sir Robert

had swallowed an extra dose of the waters; he then asked, almost in spite of himself, 'Mr Moses, if I ever felt disposed to part with my dear old grand-aunt's picture, what would you be inclined to give for it?' Mr Moses had a sudden thrill; he felt that things were moving in the right direction; but his reply was restrained—he simply said, 'Sir Robert, *when* you have decided to part with it I will make you a handsome offer.'

Both in due course, having taken the 'cure' and swallowed enough water to make them ill whenever Homburg was mentioned, found their way back to London. The Gainsborough exhibition was drawing to an end, when the pictures would return to their respective homes. One day before the close Lady Doncaster strolled into Mr Moses's gallery and casually mentioned that, as their country-house was in the hands of the painters and decorators, Sir Robert would take it as a personal favour if Mr Moses would receive the Gainsborough portrait and store it until it was safe for it to be sent to Lincolnshire. The permission was readily granted, and again Mr Moses felt that things were moving. He inquired after Sir Robert's health and whereabouts. Lady Doncaster informed him that her husband was staying at a certain hotel at Brighton whilst their own house was being put in order, and that she was going down to join him by the 3.40 express. Mr Moses suddenly recollected that Brighton air always did him a lot of good, and he informed Lady Doncaster that he thought he would run down by the same train for a day or two.

IV.

The 3.40 express carried Mr Moses down to Brighton, but by some curious hitch—it is true, Lady Doncaster had sent a telegram in the interval—her ladyship was not on the train when it reached Brighton. Sir Robert was on the platform, and expressed his great surprise and consternation not to find his wife there. But, like a wise man, he bore up under the disappointment. It was natural that the two men should patronise the same hotel and take wine together. Sir Robert was in an expansive and reminiscent mood, and, after the second glass of port, talked freely of his dear old grand-aunt, with whom he used to stay as a child, and who had left him all her belongings. Perhaps it was the port—or it may have been the thoughts of his early youth—that caused Sir Robert to be sentimental.

But Mr Moses was not a sentimentalist, and he had no use for reminiscences of other people. So he took out his cheque-book and said, 'Now, Sir Robert, I am going to make you a first and final offer. I will give you £10,000'—this is not the exact amount, but it is near enough—'for your grand-aunt's portrait by Gainsborough.'

Sir Robert remained silent for a moment or

two. He remembered that agriculture was far from flourishing, his rents were coming in slowly when they came at all, and, for other considerations, £10,000 was not to be sniffed at. So he simply said, 'Make out the cheque, Mr Moses.' Duly made out and signed, Sir Robert took the

cheque, looked at it for a second or two, and placing it in his pocket, said, with just the trace of a smile on his lips, 'Mr Moses, I am so glad you have got the portrait of my grand-aunt. She was the curse of my young life. *I always hated the d—d old cat!*'

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XI.—*continued.*

IV.

WITH her arm in his, their subdued voices trembling with the repression of emotion, they retraced their steps. Back past the church with its white gravestones so curiously peaceful in the midst of it all; past the inn, jovial with light and the clamour of village oracles; past the forge, with its lifeless fires a presage of things to come; past the cross-roads, where the sign-post, silhouetted against the sky, seemed no longer a gibbet, but a crucifix; past cottages stirring with unaccustomed life, unconscious of the unbidden guest that was soon to knock with ghostly fingers at almost every door.

Along the quiet English lane they walked, but though the closeness of the girl beside him was ministering to the senses, his mind remained so clutched in the grip of thought that his head throbbed with pain with each step of his foot jarring upon the road.

They had reached the entrance to the estate and were nearing the house, when his reverie was broken by the sound of a quivering breath and a trembling of the hand on his arm. Like a conflagration that is already out of control, his brain flared into further revolt with the stimulus of a new resentment—he had not thought of woman's part in the thing.

'Elise,' he cried, 'this is monstrous. It is only the vile selfishness of men that makes it possible. They are not giving a thought to the women, yet you are the real sufferers. Now I know what you meant when you said that women don't have their place in the world. If they did, this never could have happened; for their hearts would never permit the men that are born of women to slaughter each other like bestial savages. Now is the time for you to speak. This is the hour for your rebellion. Let the whole world of women rise in a body and denounce this inhuman, insufferable wrong. If your rebellion is ever to come, let it come now.' . . .

The hand on his arm was wrenched free, and Elise stood facing him with fury in her eyes.

'Are you mad, Mr Selwyn? Or is this your idea of a joke?'

He stared at her, dumbfounded. Her eyes were glowing, and her lips were parched with the fever of the breath passing through them.

'A joke?' he said. 'Great heavens! Do you think I would jest on such a subject?'

'But—— You mean that we women should organise, rise up, to hinder our men from going to war?'

'Doesn't your heart tell you how infamous war is?'

'What does that matter?'

'But, Elise,' he pleaded desperately, 'some one must be great enough to rise to the new citizenship of the world even if martyrdom be the condition of enrolment. It is far, far harder than snatching a musket and sweeping on with the mob, but it is for people like you and me to have the courage to try to stem this flood of ignorance, to stop this butchery of women's hearts.'

'Women's hearts'—— She laughed hysterically. 'And you believe that you understand women! Do you think war appeals us? Do you think because we may shed tears that it is from self-pity? Rubbish! There are thousands of us to-night who could almost shout for joy.'

'Elise!'

'I mean it. Don't you see that to-night our whole life has been changed? Men are going to die—horribly, cruelly—but they're going to play the parts of men. Don't you understand what that means to us? *We're part of it all.* It was the women who gave them birth. It was the women who reared them, then lost them in ordinary life—and now it's all justified. They can't go to war without us. We're partners at last. Do you think women are afraid of war? Why, the glory of it is in our very blood.'

'But,' cried Selwyn, 'you can't think what you are saying.'

'I don't want to. All I know is that I could sing and dance and go mad for the wonder of it all.'

He took a step forward and grasped both her wrists in his hands.

'Listen to me,' he said, his jaw stiffening as he spoke; 'some of us have got to keep our sanity in this crisis. You know better than I, for you have described it to me, that this country has been darkened with ignorance just as Germany and the rest have been. This is the climax of it all—and you're going to help it on, instead of having the courage to take your

stand. Elise, to-night I pledged my whole life to a crusade against the darkness that men are forced to endure. It is going to be a long fight, and perhaps a hopeless one, although some day, somehow, the cause must win. And I need your inspiration. Oh, my dear, my dear, you must know how much I love you. Every minute that you're away I'm hungry for you. When we were together that evening by the stream I longed so to take you in my arms that my heart ached with the repression I forced on myself. I have known that there were a thousand difficulties in the way, and I was not going to speak, but the other night when you met your brother by the oak'—

'Oh! you were spying.'

'It was an accident. I said nothing to you about it, but I thought that perhaps you needed me a little, that it might be my privilege to share your sorrow. And to-night, dear, I know that together we could work and live, and be a tremendous power for good.'

Her face, which had gone strangely pale, was darkened by a return of the crimson flush.

'Do you think I'd marry you,' she exclaimed scornfully—'a man who counsels treason?'

'I counsel loyalty to the higher citizenship.'

'H'mm!' Her shoulders contracted, and forcing her wrists free of his hands, she looked haughtily into his burning eyes. 'You had better go back to America and tell them there of this ignorant little island whose men are so crude and stupid that when the King calls they go to war.'

'Elise'—

'I would rather marry the poorest groom in our stables than you. He would at least be a man.'

'I have not deserved this, Elise. God knows I am no more a coward than other men, but I feel that I have seen a great truth which demands my loyalty.'

'It is easier to be loyal to a truth than to a country.'

'You know you are wrong when you say that. Come—we are both unnerved to-night. Perhaps I was injudicious to speak at a time when I should have known that you would be overwrought, but I could not keep back the love which you must have read'—

'Please, Mr Selwyn, you must never mention that again. I don't want to marry you. I don't want to marry any one. I always said that a women's rebellion would come, and I feel in my blood that it has started to-night. I don't know how, or when, or where, but I am going to join it and'—

'Then you agree with me?' he cried eagerly. 'You feel that the women of this country should rise, and try to prevent this catastrophe?'

'You fool,' she said, half in pity, but with a sneer; 'you poor blind American! Yes, there's going to be a revolution against conventions, Society, customs, morality, for all I know.'

They're all going overboard. We've hoisted the black flag to-night, but with one, and only one, object—to help Britain and the men of Britain to fight!'

And the British Fleet, at the King's command, was steaming out into the night.

CHAPTER XII.—THE HONOURABLE MALCOLM DURWENT STARTS ON A JOURNEY.

I.

AN early morning mist hung over the fields of Roselawn. From his nest in the branches of a tree, a bird chirruped dubiously, as though to assure himself even against his better judgment that the rain was only a threat. The woods which bordered the meadows were blurred into a foreboding, formless black, like a fringe of mourning, and the distant hills stood sentinels at the sepulchre of nature.

Flowers, rearing their lovely necks for the first caress of the sun, drooped disconsolately, their petals like the lips of a maid who has waited in vain for the coming of her lover. Cattle in the fields moved restlessly from one spot to another, finding the grass sour and unpalatable. Through the damp-charged air the melancholy plaint of a single cow sounded like the warning of rocks on a foggy coast.

In the air which was unstirred by a breath of wind the very buildings of Roselawn seemed strangely motionless, with their roofs glistening in their covering of moisture. And through an archway of trees the distant spire of the church on the hill rose above the mist as a symbol held aloft by some smoke-shrouded martyr of the past.

A hound with apologetic tail came stealthily from the house and made for the cover of the stables. A horse rattled its headstall and pawed the flooring with a restless hoof.

With a feeling of chill in the air, Selwyn rose at seven, and dressing himself quickly, left the house for a walk before breakfast. His body was fatigued from the long vigil of the mind which had kept at bay all but a short hour of sleep, but he felt the necessity of exercise, as though in the striding of limbs his torturing thoughts might lessen their thumbscrew grip.

His feet grew heavy in the thick dew of the grass, as he plunged across the fields to a path which led through the woods, where squirrels, coquetting with the intruder, dared him to follow to the summit of the oaks.

Heedless of the morning's melancholy, yet unconsciously soothed by its calm solace, he went briskly forward, and his blood, sluggish from inaction, leaped through his veins and coloured the shadowed pallor of his face with a glow of warmth.

He had lost her

That was the dominant note of his thoughts. What a jest the Fates had prepared for him that the very moment when the incoherencies of his life were crystallised by a great flash of truth—the very moment when he had felt the overwhelming impulse to consecrate his life in a crusade against Ignorance—that same instant should witness the snapping of the silk threads of his love!

How scornful she had been—as if he were something unclean, too low a thing for her to touch! This girl, whom he had pitied for her loneliness—this woman who had ridiculed the life of England and declared that it was stifling her—had said that the glory of war was in her blood. She had called him a fool because he dared to say that carnage was wrong. He had thought her an advanced thinker; she was a reactionary of the most pronounced type.

A feeling of fury whipped his pulses. Confronted her and her unbridled tongue! What a fool he had been to woo her! One might as well try to coax a wild horse into submission. She would have to be conquered; she should be brought into subjugation by the stronger will of a man, for only through surrender would she achieve her own happiness. At present she resented equally the conquering of herself physically and mentally. For her own sake she must be taught the perversion of her outlook on life.

And Austin Selwyn, the idealist, little thought that he was applying to Elise Durwent the same philosophy as Prussia was applying to Europe.

But of one thing he was certain—much as he loved her (and at the thought his heart grew heavy with longing), his words on war had not been the idle declaimings of a sophist. There *was* a higher citizenship; the world *was* wrong to allow this war; and ignorance *was* the foe of mankind.

He would not withdraw from that platform. Duty was not something from which a man could step lightly aside. All his writings, all his thoughts, all his half-worked-out philosophies had been but training for this great moment. And now that it had come he would not prove renegade.

He would write with the language of inspiration. The agony of Man would be his spur, so that neither fatigue nor indifference could impede his labours. With the tears of the world he would pen such words that people everywhere would see the beacon-light of truth, and by it steer their troubled course.

Five miles he covered in little more than an hour, and with the returning sense of strength his purpose grew in firmness.

The call of the Universal Mind had penetrated through the labyrinth of life as the sound of the hunting-horn through leafy woods. There must be millions, he knew, who were of that great unison, kept from *ensemble* by the absence of co-ordination, by the lack of self-expression. It might not be for him to do more than help to light the torch, but, once lit, it would burst into flame, and the man to carry it would then come forward, as he had always done since ages immemorial, when a world-crisis called for a world-man.

A sudden weakness crept into his blood. He was nearing home, and in a few minutes would see her again. If only he could have left the previous night on some pretext—but now he would have to wait until the afternoon at least. How strange it was to think of losing her! How wedded his subconscious thoughts had been to living out the future with her as his revelation of Heaven's poetry! Would he have the courage to maintain his purpose, or, at the sight of her, would he throw himself at her feet, and, admitting failure, plead for mercy to the vanquished?

No. A thousand times no. Anything but that.

Reaching the clearing in the woods, he paused as the ivy-covered towers of Roselawn were presented to his gaze. With a characteristic working of his shoulders he drew himself to his full height, and his jaws and lips were set in implacable determination.

The mist still clung to the earth, but over the north-east tower of Roselawn he could see the sun, monstrous and red, looming with its sullen threat of heat.

(Continued on page 248.)

THE TRADE IN WILD BEASTS.

I.

THE fascinating traffic in wild beasts, the capture and collecting of animals from all corners of the world, is a business which has largely been in German hands, although the principal hunting-grounds and hunters have always been British.

Germany in future is going to take a 'back-seat' in this as in many other trades. A syndicate of British sportsmen some time ago

founded The World's Zoological Trading Company, Limited, and there will be no room for anything German in it—absolutely none.

There are many reasons why this trade in living creatures should never again pass into the hands of the Huns. Most people interested in this strange business are aware that it was not always a monopoly of Germany. Its headquarters used to be in 'the hub of the universe;' and London's trade in wild animals and birds was founded seventy or eighty years ago by

Charles Jamrach (1815-1891), who came to this country from Hamburg in his youth. In those days London was the sole emporium for this trade in the whole world. All the Continental dealers came to Jamrach's, and the collectors who hunted in the Sudan and Abyssinia all brought their spoils to London.

Fifty years ago, however, Carl Hagenbeck, the great German dealer in wild animals, took his initial grip of the business, and eventually his zoological depot at Hamburg became the largest animal emporium in the world. Quite three-fourths of the trade done in wild beasts passed through his hands.

But to-day this is altered. We have come successfully through a world war; tremendous happenings are impending; things will never again be as they were in any sphere of commerce, trade, or industry. Our eyes have been opened to the vast potentialities of businesses which we affected to disregard, or at best treated lightly, and not infrequently, indeed, finally let slip into the keeping of our grasping and more enterprising Teutonic rivals.

Dealing in wild animals was one of the businesses which we foolishly allowed Germany to annex. This should never have happened—if for no other reason than this: the German is not a true sportsman. More often than not the animals he handled were subjected to cruel and callous treatment; frequently half-starved, they were also housed in unhealthy and insanitary back-yards.

Better things are assured from the new syndicate. The men who compose it are naturalists and lovers of animals, and not only will they bring to bear on the wonderful wild life of the African plains and the Indian jungle more humane treatment, but methods, scientific and entirely new, will be applied to the capture and the taming of the animals.

To supply zoological gardens and animal parks with healthy living specimens of the wild fauna of the earth is the primary object of the company's formation. They claim to be able to supply any animal you care to name, from a mouse to an elephant, from a baboon to a rhinoceros or a baby hippopotamus; while lions, tigers, bears, leopards, pythons, giraffes, antelopes, gazelles, porcupines, monkeys, birds of any variety—in a word, any beast, bird, or reptile that exists to-day—can be procured within a reasonable time.

II.

Game-reserves have already been established in East, West, and Central Africa, and the British, Belgian, French and Portuguese Governments are not merely interesting themselves in the undertaking, but are doing all they possibly can to make it a thorough success. That the company is a real, live, up-to-date concern may be gathered from the fact that

on their West African reserve alone there are over £50,000 worth of rare wild beasts with many species of rare birds, fish, and reptiles.

'Our aim,' said one of the founders of the enterprise, a well-known sportsman who has spent the greater part of his life hunting and trapping all over Africa, 'is not to destroy wild life, but to preserve it. There is no animal which it is not possible to capture alive and at least partially tame, so that it can live in captivity. We drive the freshly caught animals into large paddocks which have been constructed in our reserves, and there leave them until they have recovered from their fright. They have ample grazing-ground and a plentiful supply of water. Our men then venture into the enclosures and stroll about among the animals until they become accustomed to the sight of human beings. As soon as their natural shyness has been overcome they are herded into smaller paddocks, where any peculiarities or traits they may possess are noted, and—more important still—where they are gradually accustomed to the food they will receive when in captivity. In this way the zoological gardens are assured of a healthy beast, one that, with proper care, will live to its allotted span of life.

'Never before,' continued the expert, 'have these wild beasts been in such demand. Every zoo is crying out for animals. They have had no new stock for over four years, while many valuable creatures have been lost through the difficulty of feeding them properly. We have orders for £40,000 worth of animals from American gardens alone, another £20,000 worth from the British zoos, and also orders from the Continental parks.

'Naturally the rarer beasts are expensive, running in some instances from £500 to as much as £1000 apiece. The fact is, the animals are getting scarcer every year, and must continue to do so as civilisation advances and the wilder parts of the earth are opened up to settlement.'

From a purely financial point of view, the trapping and transporting of wild animals often involves great losses; on the other hand, it brings now and again vast profits.

The money aspect of the business apart, the trade in wild beasts, their capture and transport to this country, is a dangerous yet fascinating profession; it is also one which necessitates considerably more craft and skill than the pursuit of game for the sake of skins or ivory. Even so, however, it may truthfully be said of the men who deal in this curious merchandise that once a collector, always a collector.

At the same time it should be clearly understood that only the best men can carry out the requirements—trained men; men with muscles of iron, hearts of oak, and the digestion of an ostrich; men who are ready to risk all, to carry

their lives in their hands; men who know how to deal with the savage as well as with the savage beast.

But the modern animal-collector must be possessed of more than the highest physical attributes—indispensable as these unquestionably are—and among his other qualifications he must be something of a naturalist, and a scientist too. He is not a mere slaughterer of big game, since his mission is not to destroy, but in many cases to preserve specimens of rare animals which are rapidly being exterminated through man's short-sighted greed for horns, ivory, or hides. The collector is frequently called upon to penetrate into unknown lands, and has to be prepared for every emergency. His caravan is invariably more unwieldy and more difficult to manage than that of an explorer. Every step he advances he is always adding to it, for his business is to collect animals, skins, and other things of value to the dealer. His men and his animals have to be fed and constantly looked after.

III.

Broadly speaking, we may call the African continent the happy hunting-ground of the animal-collector. He journeys into the wild with a little army of trusted white hunters, a supply of camels for transport, and a large cavalcade of native hunters and trackers. The method by which these expeditions generally effect the capture of young animals is by chasing the herd until the young, lagging behind, can be isolated from their parents. They are then easily seized and made secure.

Among giraffes and antelopes, and even among buffaloes, which have no qualms about deserting their young, there is but little danger in the capture; but with rhinoceroses and elephants the process is not so devoid of risk. These great creatures turn ferociously in defence of their young, and in many instances it is only by first killing the parents that the young can be secured.

In the case of big beasts, with hardly an exception, the young are taken. This is only reasonable, as a large wild beast is difficult to hold, let alone transport many hundreds of miles across barren country.

Abyssinia is the great lion-hunting ground to-day. Here the collector employs the natives to help him. They know the dens of these creatures, and by watching can tell whether there are any young. Their aim is to rush the place when both parents are away, and carry off the cubs. If they are mere kittens, a few days old, the task is an easy one; but cubs eight, six, or even four weeks old can offer a stout resistance with their claws and teeth. If taken young, cubs can easily be brought up in captivity, to which they readily accustom themselves. They are suckled by goats, and it is surprising how

very fond the little ones grow of their foster-mothers, jumping and playing round them as if they were a family party.

Young tigers are obtained in the same way as lions. Now and then full-grown tigers are recruited. This unusual practice, however, is resorted to only by low natives who hope to earn a few rupees by capturing a full-grown tiger for some one who, they have heard, is open to purchase. The proper agents of wild-beast dealers very rarely attempt to capture a large tiger, knowing the game to be hardly worth the candle, more especially as a grown tiger, unable to accustom itself to life in captivity, would probably go mad or pine away to death.

Leopards and hyænas are frequently caught full-grown. Leopards endure captivity a great deal better than other members of the cat family, and being less heavy and powerful, are more readily managed, even in their most ferocious moods. In order to capture them, huge traps are set. Sometimes these traps are made of wood; sometimes they are cut out of the solid rock. They act much on the principle of the common mouse-trap; that is, they have a hanging door in front of the entrance which is raised by a lever held down by a baited hook. The bait consists of meat. The animal comes in and seizes the bait, the lever flies up, the door shuts down upon him, and he is held fast. The hunters then tie his legs together, muzzle him, and bear him off in triumph to the zaireba.

Every reader knows how elephants are captured in India by being driven into large enclosures. In Central Africa zebras are caught in much the same way.

IV.

Giraffes are peculiarly difficult to obtain. To begin with, they are rare, and are becoming more so year by year; they are also exceedingly timid and swift-footed. When a zoo gets hold of a good giraffe it pats itself on the back, so to speak. It can scarcely be said that there is any fixed method of capturing giraffes; almost every possible way has been attempted—usually in vain. The greatest difficulty is to come up with them, for they scurry off at the slightest sound of a human being, and can, of course, outdistance any horse. The most successful method, however, is by using a long cord, at each end of which is a round weight. When the hunter has succeeded in getting sufficiently near his game he throws the cord in such a manner that it winds round the beast's legs, either bringing him down or rendering him incapable of escaping before he can be otherwise restrained. It is a difficult feat to accomplish, even when the giraffe allows the hunter to approach comparatively close; and the transport difficulty is also a serious one. Most giraffes seen in captivity have been caught by chance when quite young.

Nobody has ever yet recruited an adult hippopotamus, and the probability is that if anybody ever does accomplish this great feat he will regret it. Hippopotamus calves are difficult enough to deal with when they are in their infancy, at which age they are generally captured. Pitfalls are dug for the hippopotamus, which has the habit of allowing its young to trot along in front of it instead of behind, so that it can have its eye open to any danger to its offspring. The young creature appears to vanish into the earth, through the branches which cover the pit, and the terrified mother turns and bolts. Then, always supposing that he can annex his prize before a lion or a leopard strips its bones, the hunter has his work cut out to get the weighty youngster out of the pit. A noose is passed over the neck and the forelegs, and the legs are bound securely together. Then a sloping pathway is dug out of the pit, and the baby hippo, a weight of about half a ton, is hauled upon a stout litter through the bush to the nearest river, where it continues its journey on a native barge. The hippopotamus is malicious and dangerous from the day of its birth, and becomes reconciled to captivity only after many months.

A very special trade is that of the water hunters, whose quarry is the crocodile and the hippopotamus. The Havati of the Sudan attack these creatures in their own element, being expert swimmers. Their weapon is the harpoon, which must be used so as to disable the young animal without causing a serious wound. The scars of the harpoon-wounds are to be found on many of the captured crocodiles in European collections. The creatures have wonderful healing faculties, and when muzzled and confined in trap-pools soon become fairly manageable.

Bears are not troublesome customers as a rule. The great grizzly—a perfect terror when his temper is 'up'—has been taken again and again with the utmost ease whilst quietly sleeping. Black bears also hibernate, and are easily captured in consequence. Brown bears are trapped in Scandinavia without serious difficulty, for they have an irresistible liking for honey, to obtain which they will go into any danger. As often as not the Polar bear from the Far North arrives at the dealer's depot as a cub in a barrel. It has been brought home on a whaling-vessel.

Monkeys are caught in specially laid traps. The various species of snakes and reptiles are taken in different ways. This is how their capture is effected in India. During the dry season the jungle which they infest is set on fire. The snakes dart out in all directions. It is a thrilling sight, especially if the bush contains some cobras and other deadly species. The men are furnished with huge butterfly-nets, and stand, illuminated by the fierce conflagration, scooping up the terrified and

hissing serpents as they appear. The snakes are then packed in boxes and sent to Calcutta or Bombay for shipment to Europe. They need neither food nor drink on the journey, but must be carefully shielded from cold, which is certain death to them.

In Borneo the natives take the bigger serpents—like the python—after they have gorged themselves with a meal, when they are more or less lifeless and can be handled without danger. Others are caught in traps and by means of the noose.

Specimens of the various species of deer found in Siberia and other cold countries are obtained by driving herds into deep snow, where the young, being unable to extricate themselves, fall a prey to their pursuers.

v.

Probably long before the wild-animal collector has come to his journey's end his camp will have begun to resemble a travelling menagerie. Young elephants, giraffes, hippopotami, and buffaloes fill the improvised stalls. Wooden cages are stocked with panthers, wild pigs, and baboons. Young lions, half-grown leopards, wild beasts of almost every description, birds, reptiles—all have to be fed, watered, and carefully attended to. The expensive expedition—which may last for eighteen months and cost thousands of pounds—is not undertaken for the procuring of two or three specimens.

Travelling mostly by night, on account of the excessive heat during the day, the caravan resembles a modern Noah's Ark procession more than anything else. Some animals are driven; others are carried, slung in litters and cages between camels. Hundreds of sheep and goats move along with the procession, the goats to provide milk for the unhappy orphans, the sheep to provide food for the carnivores.

Nor can it be said with certainty that, the animals captured and apparently in safe keeping, the rest is merely a matter of transport. One never knows what is going to happen with such a huge cavalcade. Hagenbeck on more than one occasion learnt this to his cost. Once—it was in pre-war days, of course—his people had been busy in Russian Turkestan, where they had collected a number of precious animals, when, lo! a flood overwhelmed them near the Syr-Darya, and swept away their deer, their pheasants, and everything else—the labour and expense of months lost in a few minutes!

As a matter of fact, the whole business of trapping and transporting wild animals is something of a gamble—a romantic gamble, certainly, but a gamble nevertheless—with an almost irresistible appeal to men who love adventure and the virile life, who fear neither wild man nor wild beast, and who have sufficient philosophy to enable them to take failure or fortune as it comes.

Such is the stuff of which the successful animal-collector is made—a man who is well worthy to rank among the merchant explorers of wild places; a man to whose courage, enterprise,

and activity is in no small measure due our knowledge of the mammals, the birds, and the reptiles which have their habitat in the world's remote and unfrequented regions.

'A-L A Z Y-Z'

PART II.

VI.

PUZZLED Pete gave his horse a vicious dig with his heels, and rode off without another word. John Macdonald Rae strode back into the house.

'They're coming in,' he announced, continuing his poker simile. 'The sheriff will be the next, and like enough Gentle Jim will be with him. Of course, they have got it all framed up for the sheriff to be ready, and I know the court is in session down in Glendair this week. If they weren't so sure of getting me, they would have had the gump to wait a few days till the court adjourns, and then they could have taken me down to Glendair and got me bound over for the next sessions; and as I am not well acquainted here, and could not get anybody on my bond, I should have had to stay in jail nearly six months. In that case I could not represent my claim. You see, Lucy, the law of this country is that a homesteader must not be away from his claim more than five months. If he is, he forfeits his rights, and anybody is at liberty to jump his claim, as they call it. But they are so dead-sure of me, they didn't bother about waiting.'

Pretty Lucy had thought for only one thing. 'Do you mean to say they will put you in prison, John?'

'They sure will,' said her husband, smiling. 'But only for a day or two, till the case is heard, if you do what I tell you, little girl.'

'Oh, John!'

John kissed her, and patted the fair hair. 'Don't worry, sweetheart,' he consoled her. 'Gentle Jim Andrews is going to hit a snag. Now listen. Just as soon as the sheriff starts down with me to Glendair, you drive the cows over to Stanley Henderson's place—that's just twelve miles away from here. You can stop with Stanley's wife to-night, and come on to Glendair to-morrow, in time for the fun. It's going to be a mighty game of bluff between me and Jim, and we are going to make all the play. The minute I get to Glendair I shall hire an attorney I know—it's no good employing the court attorney for the defence. Court attorneys in this country are just penitentiary agents; their job would burn their fingers if they got too many of their clients off. Now, just listen very carefully while I tell you what we are going to tell the court.'

John proceeded to unfold in detail his plan of campaign. His young wife was not so enthusiastic about it as he had hoped, but in the end her love overcame her scruples, and she could not but recognise the force of his contention that the ethics of Montana were not those of Scotland in the matter of legal procedure.

The afternoon was still young when Pete Jorsen returned, bringing with him the sheriff and Gentle Jim. It was clear that Pete had not had to ride very far to find those gentlemen.

The moment Lucy set eyes on the big rancher, she knew that, right or wrong, she would do all in her power to defeat the infamous scheme of that towering rascal. Swinging himself from his great horse, Andrews strode to the corral fence, coolly identified his mark on the hide, and stood stroking his tangled gray beard without further speech, watching the Raes from under his frowning bushy brows while his stockman preferred a formal charge of cattle-theft against John, and repeated his version of the morning's conversation. Rae making no protest, the sheriff duly arrested him.

'Before I go with you,' said John, 'I want to show you something.' They followed him to a spot between the corral and the house, and he pointed to the blood-patch on the ground. 'You see that, sheriff?'

The sheriff said he saw it.

'Do you see it, Mr Andrews?' asked Rae.

'Of course I see it. What about it?' said the rancher.

'And you see it too, Pete, don't you?' said John.

Pete also said he saw it.

Declining to satisfy their curiosity as to his reasons for showing them the mark, Rae said good-bye to his wife, and before night was safely lodged in jail.

VII.

Two days later his case came on for trial. The prosecution deposed that a Hereford steer was missed from Mr James Andrews's ranch nearest to Myrtle Spring; that, on inquiry being made, the defendant admitted that he had killed the steer; that the quarters of the animal were found on his premises, three of them already in his brine-barrel, the fourth actually in process of cooking in his house. The identification of the hide was described by Mr Andrews. The defending attorney put but one question to the witnesses.

All agreed that they saw a patch of blood which the defendant showed them between his corral and his house, rather nearer to the house than to the corral. It was also not disputed that the defendant offered the meat to Mr Andrews's man and to Mr Andrews. What else could he do, asked the prosecution, taken red-handed as he was?

No case could seem clearer. It appeared that the defendant's attorney was making an exceptionally poor job even of a hopeless case.

And then John Macdonald Rae took the stand. The court gazed on him with mild interest, not unmixed with good-humoured pity, as on a man likely enough to be innocent of the charge against him, but too weak to keep his end up against the powerful influences he had challenged. But gradually the court opened its eyes and its ears.

The kind reader who has followed the fortunes of John Macdonald Rae to this point is respectfully requested not to conceive the homesteader as a hero of romance. The moralist, indeed, must here definitely turn away his face from John, and even the plea that East is East and West is West must not induce him to alter this very proper attitude. That Rae was fighting with his back to the wall against the full might of the law, primed with perjured testimony, and further doubly fortified by the most damning circumstantial evidence, may perhaps serve John in extenuation, but that is the utmost that can be said for him.

The court at Glendair, however, did not consist of moral philosophers, and every eye was turned on Rae as he stood and drawled his defence.

He related how his wife and he were unable that morning to find their milk cows till long past milking-time, when they turned up, accompanied by the *casus belli*—that is to say, the steer. Still attended by the steer, they went into the corral, and Mrs Rae went in to milk them. Before she had fairly got started the steer made a charge at her. In the nick of time she reached the fence, climbed over, and ran to the house for her husband. Warming to his narrative, Rae proceeded to describe how he went into the corral to drive the steer out. It was very wild, and charged at him too, and he also had to save himself by the fence. He got over in safety; but as he had left the gate of the corral open, the infuriated steer burst out and chased him round the exterior of the corral. With the mad animal in full pursuit, he made a desperate run for the house, where his wife, seeing his imminent danger, ran pluckily with his rifle to meet him. He swung round, to see the steer within twenty yards of him. 'I plugged him, and he dropped in his tracks pretty nearly on top of me,' concluded John in a matter-of-fact tone.

Mr Rae's attorney proceeded to dot the i's and cross the t's of this plausible story; nor did he omit to emphasise the presence of mind of husband and wife, which had saved them from a danger so threatening, and the thoughtfulness

with which they had immediately taken steps to preserve for the owner's use as much of the meat as was possible in view of the hot weather. He pointed out that Rae had shown the witnesses for the prosecution the blood-patch where the steer had fallen, that he had at once offered them the meat and the hide, and that his demeanour throughout had been that of an innocent, not to say injured, man. Mrs Rae was called, and circumstantially bore out her husband's version.

From pretty Lucy, too, the eyes of the moralist must be sadly averted. But it is the duty of the chronicler to put no gloss upon facts, and to present Mr and Mrs Rae, not as they ought to have been, but as they were.

To say that the court was flabbergasted would be but a poor description of the effect produced. Judge and jury, sheriff and learned counsel, and witnesses for the prosecution looked at each other. Not all of them were deceived, but they were spell-bound. The whole series of events was too natural, plausible, and indeed obvious to bear disputing. The evidence was as plain as daylight, and the most venal tribunal could not, in face of such evidence, do other than register an acquittal. Indeed, his honour, in discharging the accused, felt it incumbent on him to compliment Rae on his behaviour under circumstances which must have been so trying to him. John Macdonald Rae was accordingly discharged, without, as he was assured, a stain upon his character.

VIII.

Outside the precincts of the court, the defendant sought a personal interview with the prosecutor. He achieved it in the bar of the 'Mint,' where, notwithstanding the towering presence of the ranch king, his entry was the occasion of a general murmur of approval.

Gentle Jim strode to meet his successful rival, and from the vantage of his superior inches regarded him with a wry grin, while he folded his great arms across his ragged beard, and straddled his mighty legs like a colossus. He had been feeling pretty bad when he entered the 'Mint,' but the soothing influences of that place of popular assembly had had time to operate, and though he would have sent the homesteader to jail on faked evidence without turning a hair, as a normal operation of ranchers' war, he was too big a man to bear a paltry grudge.

'Say, Rae,' he remarked at once in the hearing of the company, 'that was a dandy bluff of yours. What's your poison?'

'Now, see here, Jim Andrews,' answered Rae; 'I want to ask you a question. Is it to be peace or war?'

'What do you mean? You're an innocent man, and I'm a mistaken one, ain't we?' Jim chuckled, and so did the rest.

'You know what I mean right enough. I want to know whether it's to be peace or war. I don't give a darn which. There's that spring

of mine where your stock water. I presume that's a pretty good spring. Well, if it's going to be peace, your stock may drink at that spring till they bu'st, and I won't interfere. But if it's going to be war, then I run a fence around, and every head of yours that wants a drink is going to pay me a dollar a time, and every beast that crosses my section without permission I'm going to impound, and charge you up a dollar a day for keep. And I sha'n't send any special messenger to tell you when there's one in pound. Get me?'

There was a silence in the bar as he finished.

'I get you,' answered Gentle Jim. 'But I don't see why you should bear malice for a little misunderstanding. Look here; I'm short of hands, and there's a lot of stuff wants getting up to my home ranch from the city. What do you say to doing a bit of hauling for me?'

'Depends on the pay,' said Rae with ancestral caution.

'I'll pay you eighty dollars a month and your grub.'

'I'm your man,' said Rae.

'Guess it will be kinder lonely for your wife to stay on the section while you are up at my place,' said Jim. 'I've got plenty of room, and my wife can do with a bit of help and company. You can drive your cows up to my place while you are with me. They will be all right.'

'I'll ask my wife,' said Rae.

He talked it over with Lucy on the road home, and was convinced, upon reflection, that the plan promised well. 'Jim don't give up as easy as all that,' he remarked. 'We haven't shaken hands yet, and there's sure some devilry hatching in that tousled head of his. I've a kind of notion what it is, but we'll learn in time. Meanwhile it's good money, sweetheart, and, anyhow, it's up to us to see it through.'

IX.

So it came to pass that John Macdonald Rae enlisted under the standard of A-Lazy-Z. His money was punctually paid; he and his wife were comfortably quartered, and they gave good service. For exactly five months Rae drew his monthly eighty dollars, and on the last day of the fifth month his employer came to him as he was finishing the unloading of a wagon of iron roofing which Rae had brought up that day from the town.

'Say, John,' said Gentle Jim, 'there's a score of sheep to go down to-morrow to Maxson the dealer, and there's a lot of supplies to come back from the Amalgamated Stores. Guess the Stores people may not have them fixed up in time for you to return the same day. And the team has had some hard work. You had better figure on staying the night in town.'

Rae put his hands in his pockets, and looked queerly at his employer, who returned the look with a bland stare.

'Jim Andrews,' said Rae bluntly, 'you can go to blazes. You know as well as I do that if I stay away from my place another day you can go and jump my claim, and finish with me for good and all. And you figured on that when you got me to start on this job. And, what's more, I knew you figured on it!'

'Well?'

'Well, first thing to-morrow my wife and I are going to dig out for Myrtle Spring and represent my claim. Get me?'

Whether Mr Andrews got Mr Rae or not he did not say, for at that moment one of his cow-punchers came galloping up, and flung himself from his horse.

'Mr Andrews,' he shouted, 'your place is afire, blazing to beat the band!'

With a great oath Gentle Jim swung round, and looked in the direction of his home. There was no doubt about it. Over the far shoulder of the hill, draped in its pure winter mantle of snow, the fine timber home that was his pride was dark beneath rolling clouds of smoke, through which, here and there, shone a red angry glow.

Without a word, Andrews threw himself on the waiting horse, and galloped away across the rise. Rae and the cattleman followed at a run. When they reached the house, it was plain that the place was doomed. Fire was pouring from the windows. There was no water in that frozen land; and if there had been, nothing could have saved the structure. The greater part was already a roaring furnace. Every man about the place was hard at work saving what could be saved of the contents. Rae learned that no lives were in danger, though Mrs Andrews had had a narrow escape, having been brought out unconscious from the fumes.

He found his wife tending the senseless woman in an outhouse, and Gentle Jim standing beside them, staring stonily at the fiery ruin. Almost as Rae arrived, Mrs Andrews opened her eyes. She shuddered, stared about her wildly, and raised herself on her elbow. The red light from the burning house met her eyes, and suddenly she gave a piercing shriek: 'The boy! Frankie! Oh my God, the boy!'

Like a man electrified, Jim sprang at Mrs Rae and seized her by the arm. 'Woman,' he shouted hoarsely, 'you told me my boy was safe! You told me he went over to the pine-wood with the foreman's son.'

Held in that fierce grip and faced with those terrible eyes, Lucy went white to the lips. But she faced the maddened giant bravely. 'I saw them set out together after dinner. I have not seen them since.'

'Frankie came back in an hour, and said he didn't feel right. He's in his bed. Save him! My child! Save him!' The poor mother's wail was dreadful. She struggled in vain to rise.

'I'll save him, girl, or I'll die!' cried Jim. He rushed from the barn, and Rae followed. Well

he guessed the awful agony of the stricken parents, for the devotion of Gentle Jim to this his darling only child was the one characteristic about him that his nickname did not satirise. But well Rae knew, too, how small was the hope of any living thing surviving in the glowing furnace before them.

X.

The only portion of the great house which was not by this time completely engulfed was the south-west angle, and even here the heat was terrible, and the smoke was rolling in volumes. The wind was from the south-west, and all the ranch hands were over on the opposite, lee side of the house, striving to prevent the spread of the fire to the out-buildings on that side. Andrews and Rae were alone together.

'That's the room,' cried Gentle Jim, in a voice that Rae hardly recognised, pointing to a window over twenty feet from the ground. Wildly he shouted, 'Frankie!'

Tongues of flame were licking round the angle. Minutes, if not seconds, would see the last bit of the structure going up in the universal blaze. A frightful anguish was in the father's face as the red light played upon it. To fetch a ladder would take time, and there was no time.

'The piano, Jim!' cried Rae. 'Quick, man!'

There was a large piano that some one had salvaged from the house, and left in haste standing out in the slush of the melted snow. The two strong men seized it, and carried it as if it had been a rush chair to a point just under the window. The glare scorched their skin as they did so.

'Up-end it, Jim! Up-end it!' shouted Rae.

They turned it up on one end, so that the other lay like a narrow platform some seven feet from the ground. Andrews climbed up on the instrument, and stretched his great arms towards the window. They reached a full six feet short of the ledge. The madness of despair was in his eyes as he glared down.

'Stand firm,' cried Rae, 'while I climb on your shoulders. You can carry me, but I can't carry you.' While he spoke he was scrambling up. Standing on the giant's shoulders, with his hands against the scorching, smoking wall, he was still almost a foot below the ledge.

'Let me step on your hands, Jim, and hoist me up. Steady, boy; steady!'

Leaning on the wall to keep his balance, he felt his feet gripped strongly, till the mighty arms of the rancher were at full stretch below him, and he took firm hold of the sill. The window was closed, and as he smashed the glass with his naked fist the smoke belched out in his face. Next minute, bleeding and half-blinded, he was in the room, groping in the hot, choking darkness for the bed. Through the floor-planking the hungry flame-tongues were curling about his feet. He stumbled against a chair and over-

turned it. He felt his senses going, but it seemed to him the chair fell soft. He stooped, and touched a child's hair.

Catching up the little body, he blundered for very life to the window, and thrust it through. 'Jim! Jim!' he called. Smoke and flame were writhing beneath him now. Tongues of red and yellow shot out from the house wall. Through them he had a glimpse of the upturned face of Gentle Jim.

'Drop him straight, Rae!' came up in a hoarse cry.

Rae dropped him straight. The father caught him, and with the child in his arms leaped clear to the ground, the piano overbalancing as he did so.

Darkness rushed down on Rae. The noise of shouting mingled with the crackling of the fire as he struggled, gashing his hands and arms on the jagged glass, to get out of the window. It seemed that he fought that gasping fight for endless hours. He knew he was falling among fiery tongues. What was it they kept saying, those tongues of flame?

XI.

He's coming to! John, John, my dear!'

John Macdonald Rae could not see very well. His eyes hurt him horribly. But undoubtedly it was his wife's face, all smiling, Lucy's blue eyes, full of tears, that looked down at him.

'Oh, thank God!' he heard her say, and as he tried to sit up her arm was round his neck, supporting him.

John felt pretty stiff, but he sat up, and recognised the barn where he had left Mrs Andrews screaming for her boy. Mrs Andrews was there, sure enough, with the little seven-year-old Frankie on her knees, looking rather white, but otherwise unhurt.

'Your leg's broken, John,' said Lucy, and indeed Rae had just observed that his left leg was in splints. As he tried to move it now it gave him a nasty twinge.

A strange, uncouth figure came striding to the heap of straw whereon John was lying. Its neck and one side of its face were swathed in bandages, and what was left of the face was red and blistered, and shiny with oil. Its great beard was singed half off. It frowned at him with streaming eyes.

'That was a darnation close call,' it said. 'You'll be six weeks in hospital, Rae.'

John stared up at the figure that towered over him. 'Guess you'll be able to jump my claim after all, Jim Andrews,' he said, and smiled foolishly.

'Curse the claim!' said Gentle Jim. 'God bless you, Rae. When you come out of hospital, you can figure on a half-interest in the A-Lazy-Z outfit, if you care to come in. Shake!' He thrust out a great arm, singed, and raw in places.

John Macdonald Rae shook.

THE END.

THE PLANT-WIZARD OF AMERICA: LUTHER BURBANK.

PART II.

LUTHER BURBANK'S methods, indeed, are quite as romantic as his results. All his extraordinary creations and additions to the food-values of the world have been brought about on two plots of land covering together only twenty-two acres. These little plantations, situated at Santa Rosa and Sebastopol, in California, are in some ways the most wonderful pieces of land in the world; they are veritable Gardens of Eden.

Here, for instance, have been created and grown more varieties of the lily than the whole world contained before he began his experiments. Luther Burbank is a remarkably modest man, yet he was only stating sober fact when he said, 'Search this earth all over, climb every mountain, plunge into every cañon, valley, and jungle; and, when all this is done, visit every park, garden, nursery, and conservatory; go anywhere, everywhere, and as many varieties of charming lilies cannot be found as I have produced. All the earth is not adorned with so many new ones as are growing at my establishment.' As a matter of fact over a million lily-bulbs were grown, and 250,000 distinct lily hybrids were produced.

Burbank obtains his results by a systematic method of selection and cross-breeding; and for this work he has peculiar natural endowments which are denied to other men. His sense of sight is extraordinarily developed, and experts who have tested his eyes declare that he is able to detect differences and gradations in colour not noticeable to ordinary eyes. Then his senses of smell and taste are remarkably acute, so that, again, what is impossible to the ordinary man is natural to him. It can be easily understood that with senses like these it is almost an instinctive matter for Luther Burbank to go down row after row of plants and pick out those with the qualities of colour and scent for which he is seeking. He will walk past thousands of seedlings at an ordinary pace, singling out or marking one here and there, and at the end of an hour he has passed in review probably 20,000 plants, and chosen from among them fifty or sixty for further experiments. So uncanny does this power of selection appear that many have doubted its reality, and on one occasion it was put to the test by a horticulturist who was sceptical of its accuracy. He thought no man could possibly make a proper selection at so rapid a rate, and he was invited to prove the matter for himself by experiment.

Accordingly he chose a number of apparently valuable plants from those rejected by Burbank, and these were grafted on to trees at the same time as Burbank's own selections. It was several years before the result could be known, and then

the plant-wizard's choice was in every instance triumphantly vindicated. All his selections bore excellent fruit, while those so carefully chosen by the horticulturist produced either no fruit at all or very poor specimens.

When Burbank gets an idea for the improvement and development of a fruit or a flower, he searches among a very large number of plants for some approximation to the desired quality. Any plants showing such features are carefully tended, their seeds ripened and sown, and from the offspring, generation after generation, similar selections are made until the desired quality has been brought out prominently. During the process hundreds of thousands of plants are produced, and most of these would be regarded by ordinary growers as very fine specimens. But Luther Burbank is seeking only for the best, and consequently so soon as his selection has been made, all the other plants are taken away and burnt. This, to many, would seem like wanton waste, but it is the only possible way if he is to achieve his purpose. Sometimes plants which, if sold, would realise as much as two or three thousand pounds are thus consumed without remorse in a costly bonfire. In one case 40,000 hybrids were destroyed and only one saved; and every year, without exception, some hundreds of thousands of choice plants, many of them bearing, or capable of bearing, delicious fruits or beautiful flowers, are burnt in this way.

Luther Burbank collects seeds and plants for experiment from all over the world, and these he almost invariably sets in wooden boxes in his greenhouses. The soil is carefully prepared, and for particularly important experiments is sterilised with steam before being used. When the seeds have been planted, the earth is covered with a thin layer of sawdust or moss to keep the temperature even; and in all the details the most scrupulous care is taken. Later on the seedlings are transplanted to selected positions out of doors, and they are finally placed in rows in the fields. Plant disease and insect pests are particularly watched for, and any plants which show signs of either are rooted out remorselessly and burnt forthwith; for Luther Burbank in all his work seeks to produce plants which will be immune from disease.

Many of his marvels are produced by cross-pollination, and this is done by transferring the pollen from one plant to the other by means of a fine camel-hair brush. In this way the characteristics of plants from different parts of the world have been concentrated into one. The work of the plant-wizard at Santa Rosa and Sebastopol is, indeed, Mendelism in continuous practice; and if any further proof be needed

of the correctness of the Moravian monk's theories, the experiments in Burbank's Californian nurseries provide it on a large scale.

When the selected seedlings have grown sufficiently, sections are taken and grafted on to healthy trees, instead of being left to bear upon their own roots. This method is found to save very much time; and experience has shown that if the grafts be placed on twigs and small branches, they develop much more rapidly than if they be placed on the larger branches or the trunk. By this system fruit is obtained in the second year, instead of in the sixth or the seventh, as would be the case if the selected plant were left to bear on its own roots. In the aggregate, an incalculable amount of time is thus saved, results being achieved in a few years that would, by the old methods, have taken more than one man's lifetime. There is not space to go into the methods of grafting adopted by Luther Burbank, but it may be explained that, in addition to the use of stocks or scions, much is done by means of budding. A ripened bud with a part of the bark is cut away and inserted in a T-shaped slit made in the bark of the tree that is to be the host. This is then tied down, and in a single season a branch six feet long may grow from a bud. By carrying out these methods, Luther Burbank produced 20,000 prune-plants in a single season. He raised almond-plants from seeds, and then grafted prune scions on to them with most satisfactory results.

One of the most surprising features of the Santa Rosa and Sebastopol orchards is the great variety of fruits that may be seen growing on a single tree. A hundred is quite a common number, and in some cases as many as a thousand different varieties grow on one and the same tree, all produced by grafting, budding, and cross-pollenating. The idea is, of course, not new; it is practised a good deal in this country, though not on anything like the scale of Luther Burbank. The saving in space is enormous. For instance, on a single acre Burbank often ripens several thousands of varieties of seedling-fruits that, if tested on separate trees, would need six or seven hundred acres. Nowhere, in fact, are there such amazing acres as those of the plant-wizard in California.

Even by selection alone Burbank has completely changed the colours of flowers and the characteristics of fruits. The yellow Californian poppy, for example, has been changed into the brilliant crimson 'Fireflame' merely by choosing in the first place the seed of a plant that bore a yellow poppy with a thin red line, and then, generation after generation, growing the seed of those plants that had this red line more and more accentuated. At last the yellow colour disappeared altogether and the flower was completely crimson; a new variety of poppy had been created. In the same way the scented dahlia, calla, petunia, and verbena were produced.

Plants with abnormal rapidity of growth are developed by these means, as in the case of the chestnut previously referred to, and with trees the greatest care is taken that the timber will not suffer as a result of the quick growth. This is a matter to which Luther Burbank has devoted much time and attention, and when one realises the enormous advantage which would accrue to the afforestation of devastated areas by a speeding up of growth, it must be acknowledged that the subject is a fascinating one. If the hundred years or so which a tree like the oak takes to come to maturity could be halved, the advantage to the community would be very great.

Burbank's work is regarded as so important and of such permanent value in America that a Luther Burbank Society has been formed, and an account of his life and work has been published in twelve volumes, illustrated by 1260 plates of his most beautiful creations, reproduced in colour from original *lumière* plates. It is probably the most remarkable record of a man's life-work ever published, and certainly no such series of colour-plates has ever before been issued. As already mentioned, his birthday, the 9th of March, is specially set aside by the Californian State Legislature as an annual holiday for school-children, and is known as Burbank Day.

How great is the amount of work the plant-wizard gets through is shown by the fact that at one time he was experimenting with as many as 300,000 distinct varieties of the plum, 60,000 peaches and nectarines, 6000 almonds, 5000 chestnuts, 5000 walnuts, 3000 apples, 2000 pears, 2000 cherries, 1000 grapes, and 6000 berries of various kinds. In a single season over 100,000 grafts have been set, and from these have been obtained, also in one season, material for ten million additional grafts.

Perhaps the highest testimony to the plant-wizard's worth, one that can be fully trusted, is that of the famous Dutch botanist De Vries, who says: 'He has already accomplished in his chosen line of life more than any other man who has ever lived. Indeed, when the full sweep of all his achievements shall finally come into view, it may not be unfair to say that not all the plant-breeders who have preceded or accompanied him have done so much for the world. He has done more in a generation in creating new and useful types of plant-life than Nature, unaided, could have done in a millennium; more, indeed, than Nature, unaided, would ever have accomplished.'

Burbank himself is enthusiastic about the future, and the possibilities of increasing the food-supplies of the world, through the improvements wrought by plant-breeding. 'The vast possibilities of plant-breeding,' he says, 'can hardly be estimated. It would not be difficult for one man to breed a new rye, wheat, barley, oats, or rice which would produce one grain more to each head, or a corn which would pro-

duce an extra kernel to each ear, another potato to each plant, or an apple, plum, orange, or nut to each tree. What would be the result? In five years only in the United States alone the inexhaustible forces of Nature would produce annually, without effort and without cost, 15,000,000 extra bushels of wheat, 5,200,000 extra bushels of maize, 20,000,000 extra bushels of oats, 1,500,000 extra bushels of barley, and 21,000,000 extra bushels of potatoes. But these vast possibilities are not alone for one year, or for our own time or race, but are beneficent legacies for every man, woman, or child who

shall ever inhabit the earth. Science sees better grains, nuts, fruits, and vegetables all in new forms, sizes, colours, and flavours, with more nutrients and less waste, and with every injurious and poisonous quality eliminated, and with power to resist sun, wind, rain, frost, and destructive fungus and insect pests; fruits without stones, seeds, or spines; better fibre, coffee, tea, spices, rubber, oil, paper, and timber-trees, and sugar, starch, colour, and perfume plants. Every one of these and ten thousand more are within the reach of the most ordinary skill in plant-breeding.'

THE 'CAPE ROUTE' IN THE 'SIXTIES.

DURING last year occurred the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Suez Canal, with the result of a complete change in our sea traffic with India and the East. The traveller of to-day has but a faint idea of the conditions under which his near ancestors made their comparatively few voyages eastward. Even when the 'overland route' had been established for a quarter of a century, great numbers of passengers were carried *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope. Previous to the completion of the Suez Canal the service *viâ* Marseilles and Egypt was fairly punctual and rapid, but only one line of British steamers was available—the P. and O. In spite of obvious advantages in the matter of speed, and the assurance of arriving at one's destination on, or near, a certain date, the cost, the break of journey at Alexandria, and the intense trying heat of the Red Sea during the greater part of the year deterred many eastward-bound travellers from adopting this route. Before the opening of the railway to Suez the desert journey from Cairo was another drawback. In estimating the number of those using the long sea-route, it must be borne in mind that not only passengers, but large bodies of troops, were thus conveyed. Up to the year 1867, when the large royal naval troopships were commissioned, no troops travelled by the overland route. The only exception to this rule was during the Indian Mutiny, when some regiments urgently required were thus sent.

There are at the present time few people with a personal knowledge of the 'Cape Route,' and it may be of interest, therefore, to compare the conditions of sea-travel in those days with present-day conditions.

The modern third-class passenger, it may be affirmed at the outset, has more real comforts and conveniences than the first-class passenger of old. To illustrate the point, take one of the famous 'Green's' passenger-ships during the years 1860–65. The would-be traveller engaged his passage some months in advance. We will assume that he was married, and was travelling with his

wife and one child. He would be allotted a cabin—which meant four bare wooden walls, more or less odorous of paint. The next process was to arrange with one of the numerous outfitting firms for the erection of sleeping-berths and the provision of bedding. For ordinary passengers there were no baths and no lavatories, sanitary conveniences being fitted in the corner of each cabin. There were, however, two stern cabins with bath, &c., attached in the 'quarter galleries' for the exclusive use of the occupants of those cabins, for which a considerably higher rate of passage-money was demanded. The only means of bathing for other passengers were—for a man, during the washing of the decks; for a woman, a foot-bath of salt-water in the cabin. The daily allowance of fresh-water was two quarts per passenger; the only method of supplementing this meagre quantity was by catching rain-water. These were the conditions in the Indian passenger-ships; in Australian liners they were better.

The term 'saloon' was not used; nor would it have been appropriate. The dining-apartment was (as in the old 'East Indiamen') called the cuddy, the waiters being known as cuddy servants. The cuddy stretched across the whole beam of the ship at the forepart of the poop, and was a bare room with one long table, the seats being ordinary light cane-bottomed chairs. It also contained a piano. There were no sofas or easy-chairs. Large square ports and a glazed skylight gave plenty of light and ventilation. The meal-hours (following the custom of the old 'East Indiamen') would appear strange to the present generation—breakfast, 8.30; luncheon at noon, consisting of bread and cheese, and tinned provisions, with bottled beer *ad lib.*; dinner at 3.30; tea at 6.30; and at 8.30 ham sandwiches, biscuits, and cheese, with hot or cold brandy-and-water. Up to 1868 wine and beer were free at meals, champagne being served at dinner on Thursdays and Sundays. There was no smoking-room, and in stormy weather smoking on deck was difficult. All lights in cabins were extinguished at 10 P.M.; the illumination was by candles in swing-

ing holders with glass shades. The cuddy was lighted by swinging argand lamps burning colza-oil. The food, although simple, was in many respects equal (and in some respects superior) to that in the present liners, as large quantities of live-stock were carried. These were in the charge of a butcher and his assistant, the latter being known as 'Jimmy Ducks.' A cow was also carried, that animal being bracketed in the sailing advertisements with 'an experienced surgeon.'

The rates of passage-money per adult ranged from £65 in the between-decks to £120 in the stern cabins. When it is considered that these rates provided board and lodging for a period which extended to seldom less than three and a half months, and sometimes to nearly five months, they were not excessive; but, as a 'set-off,' the passenger not only furnished his own cabin, or portion thereof, but supplied his own linen, sheets, towels, &c. In the later ships of the company, notably in the Australian trade, there was a change in this respect; but up to the end of the 'sixties these conditions generally prevailed.

There were no libraries or amusements, and according to present ideas life was very monotonous. Nevertheless, the daily routine of a sailing-ship was more interesting than that of a steamer. The frequent changes of climate, with interludes of fine, calm, and stormy weather; the 'trimming' of the sails to suit the changes of wind; and the reducing of sail in squalls and gales of wind, served as mild distractions. To some passengers the freedom from letters and the absolute change of life for a long period—in fact, complete rest in pure air—were a boon and a tonic.

In the present day it is not unusual to hear persons commiserating the lot of their forebears in having to undergo the perils of those long voyages in small sailing-ships. Yet records will show that the loss of life among passengers in the vessels of Messrs Green, and probably in those of contemporary lines, was almost a negligible quantity.

The writer can recall only one instance of a total loss at sea in the history of the company. This loss is merely a matter of hearsay. A frigate-built vessel named the *Madagascar* is supposed to have collided with an iceberg off Cape Horn when homeward bound from Australia, leaving no trace. The only other losses which have come to the writer's notice were those of the *Childers*, wrecked in the China seas, and of the *Result*, burnt in harbour at Melbourne. In neither of these cases, it is believed, was there loss of life.

The ships were well built and well found, and carried, even for those days, very large crews; they held the same position in the passenger trade to the East as is now held by the Peninsular and Oriental Company. This famous line (Green's) came into existence on the breaking-up of the monopoly of the East India Company. At first the firm was organised as Green & Wig-

ram; but after a few years the partnership was dissolved. Messrs Wigram then carried on a passenger service to Australia alone.

The earlier vessels of the company were purchased from the East India Company, and the rules and discipline of the old 'Indiamen' were continued. From 1850 to 1870 the fleet consisted of some forty vessels, of which about twenty remained at the latter date. They were all wooden and composite vessels. In 1867 the first iron sailing-ship of the company, the *Superb*, was launched, followed at short intervals by two others, the *Carlisle Castle* and the *Melbourne*. In 1871 an iron steamer, the *Viceroy*, was added to the fleet; and in 1872 another, the *Sultan*.

Many of the earlier ships of the company were frigate-built; that is, they had a complete gun-deck under the upper deck, and another complete deck under that. The other vessels had poops and raised forecastles. With few exceptions, they were moderately fast sailers. Though none could vie in speed with famous clippers like the *Thermopylae*, there were ships—such as the *Renown*, for example—which could attain a speed of fifteen knots. An abstract of the 'log' of the *Renown* seen by the writer shows that she once covered 369 nautical miles in twenty-four hours.

The majority of the ships were capable of a speed of from twelve to thirteen knots. One vessel, the *Almrick Castle*, was credited with a record passage to Calcutta—namely, from Start Point to the Sand Heads at the mouth of the Hooghly—in sixty-five days. The writer has made the voyage from Sand Heads to Spithead in eighty-four days in a sister-ship, the *Newcastle*. Another fast ship was the *Result*, burnt in Melbourne while lying at Sandridge Pier. To this vessel a history is attached; but there are no accessible records by which to verify the tale. It was a commonly accepted tradition in the company that an American owner of clipper ships matched one of his vessels against Messrs Green's *Challenger*, the conditions of the race being that the losing vessel became the property of the owner of the winner. The American vessel was said to have been named *The Challenge*. Messrs Green's ship won, and the winners altered the name of the prize to *Result*.

The first iron ship, the *Superb*, had a long career. After some ten years as a passenger-ship in the Australian trade, she appears to have changed ownership. In 1895 the writer saw her loading in Sydney Harbour, apparently under Australian ownership; and in 1917 or 1918 she ended her career under the Norwegian flag, being torpedoed in the North Sea. It is possible that, with the development of the internal-combustion engine, sailing-ships with auxiliary power may again be employed in the Australian passenger trade; but there will never again be passenger sailing-ships with the prestige of Green's, Wigram's, Dunbar's, and T. W. Smith's, all offshoots of the East India Company.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

FIFINE'S PROBATIONER.

By Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS, Bart.

PART I.

I.

FIFINE was seventeen, an only child and fatherless. Her mother belonged to that class of widows about whom it is safe to bet that they will not remarry. Yet was she pleasant to look upon, gentle in her ways, and not much past forty. When the Reverend Stephen Laurillard died, leaving her in circumstances that called for prudent management, she had removed from his inland Yorkshire parish to Scarborough, and there devoted herself heart and soul to the bringing-up of her child. So genuinely nice a woman could not long remain friendless, and by degrees she gathered round her quite a pleasant little circle of acquaintances. The Church was her mainstay; for, as became a clergyman's relict, she was a devout churchwoman, 'well seen,' as the French say, by awe-inspiring dignitaries inhabiting the Close at York. And it was observed that when the bishop came to Scarborough to hold a confirmation, he would generally find time to call on 'poor Laurillard's widow.'

Well, now, for almost the first time in her life, Josephine—that is, Fifine—Laurillard was costing her mother tears. What had happened? Something very dreadful? You shall judge.

A few months before, Fifine had made the acquaintance of Montague Jerwood, the twenty-year-old son of a well-to-do solicitor carrying on business in the town, and himself being trained to that business. Though level-headed enough as a rule, the boy had simply gone crazy over Fifine. And, if you ask my opinion, I should say that there was something to go crazy about. 'Goethe's Mignon with a dash of the Nelly Farren of old days; wistfulness and piquancy'—that was the analysis of her opening charms made by the witty London journalist who, throughout so many successive years, was a familiar figure on the Spa. And he had seen enough of life to give his verdict some authority. Not that Fifine was universally admired, for there were those who called her hair red, her complexion colourless, and her eyes gooseberry, and, so doing, thought they had demolished her. But whether it was beauty, or mere *beauté du diable*, or personality (which is perhaps at once the wisest and the most dangerous thing to fall in love with), Fifine

Laurillard was too much for Monty Jerwood, so that the poor lad lost his sleep and his appetite, his grave good sense in the office and his pleasant light-heartedness in society; and the upshot of it all was that, he being an only son, it was decided, after infinite consultation in the Jerwood household, that, on the day when he should attain his majority, he should write to ask Mrs Laurillard's permission to propose to her daughter. That day had now come, that letter had been written and received, and hence Mrs Laurillard's tears.

II.

In the fact that a well-to-do young man of excellent character had proposed for the hand of her daughter, a more 'modern,' or (shall I say?) more reasonable, person would have seen no ground for weeping. If the proposal were importunate, such a person would have said, it could always be refused, and *there* would be an end of it. But Lucy Laurillard was not 'modern,' was rather womanly than reasonable, and such a complexity of tender associations was involved that she could not keep from crying. Perhaps the measure of her unreasonableness is best conveyed by the fact that she cried all the more because the letter was such a nice one! Whilst, on the other hand, the most plausible excuse for these futile tears was Fifine's extreme youth.

Further to complicate the situation, the loving little woman had a reason of her own for returning a very prompt reply to young Jerwood's letter, and that reason was as follows. Fifine was blessed with an aunt, Miss Martindale Laurillard, who, as it happened, was expected to arrive upon a visit to her sister-in-law and her niece on the very day when the fateful letter had come to hand. Now, Lucy Laurillard was extremely anxious to get the all-important question of the proposal disposed of before her stately guest should cross the threshold of the little house on Oliver's Mount. For, 'churchy' and 'well seen' by bishops though she was, Lucy remained very human (it was her crowning grace), and she had but too good reason to fear that, once Miss Martindale was in the house, the affair would be to a great extent taken out of her own hands. Martindale's policy had, indeed, always been to play off her influence with Fifine against that of

the mother. And though Ffine was in her way an affectionate daughter, as giver of feasts and costly gifts Miss Laurillard had certain advantages over the blameless little lady whose occasional duty it was to reprove, and whose almost daily duty to enjoin economy.

Miss Laurillard liked to have secrets with her niece, and to make rather provoking reference to them in Lucy's presence. Sometimes this would be carried to a point which would make Ffine feel sorry for her mother, when she would say, 'Let's tell mummy now, Aunt Bobo, shall we? We've kept her in the dark no end of a time!'

To which 'Aunt Bobo' would reply with firmness, 'No, Ffine, you are not to—I forbid it! I don't want your mother to know that.'

This in Lucy's presence, if you please!

And did Ffine ask for an explanation afterwards, when they were by themselves, she would add, 'Well, you know, my dear Ffine, that your dear mother is not the most tactful person in creation, and that she has positively no knowledge of the world.'

Young Ffine sometimes tried to realise for herself the precise nature of these qualities of 'tact' and 'knowledge of the world,' of which, so far as the family was concerned, her aunt claimed a monopoly. Things difficult of attainment they must be, and vouchsafed only to the few.

III.

Monty Jerwood's letter had arrived by the midday post, and three-quarters of an hour later Mrs Laurillard was endeavouring to sound Ffine as to the precise nature of her feelings for the budding solicitor. She set to work, however, with such excessive delicacy and reserve that Ffine, inexperienced as she was, obtained no very clear notion as to what she was driving at.

'You do like him, my Fifinette?'

'Rather.'

'I'm glad of that,' returned the mother sorrowfully. 'But tell me, do you say "rather" in the sense of rather liking him, or in the sense of, "I should just say I do like him"?''

'Just whichever you like, mummy dear,' replied the daughter, beginning to be bored.

Mrs Laurillard was baffled, but continued: 'Now, I wonder, Fifi, if he has ever said anything very particular to you?'

Ffine merely nodded in reply.

'Oh, my darling! You know that you and I have never willingly had secrets from one another—have we?—and I hope we never shall. What did he say?'

'Well, he did tell me not to say anything about it in the meantime.'

'Yes?'

'But it really can't matter. His people are giving him a Ford car as a coming-of-age present, and I am to use it as if it were my own.'

Needless to say, this was not exactly the sort of thing the good lady had had in mind when she spoke of something 'very particular.'

Ffine's words seemed, however, to confirm an assurance contained in young Jerwood's letter, to the effect that, up to the present, he had addressed no word of love-making to his beloved. What a strictly honourable young man he was! Mrs Laurillard liked him much; yet she much objected to losing her daughter. What should she do? Foiled in her first endeavour, she determined to try again, upon different lines, and with this object in view wrote an emotional note to young Jerwood, giving him permission to speak for himself to Ffine, and, by way of supplying him with an opportunity, asking him to tea that afternoon. By this means she hoped to evade all responsibility of spoiling any one's happiness. And as Monty was to come at four-thirty, one way or the other, all would be safely over before the arrival of the interfering Miss Martindale, who was not expected until six.

IV.

But, like many another well-laid scheme of mouse and man, this scheme of the cleric's widow went 'a-gley.' For, instead of coming by the six o'clock train, Miss Martindale arrived at two o'clock, having been obligingly motored from Ravenscaur by a fellow-visitor in the hotel. This was disconcerting, for circumstances now made it absolutely imperative that she should be taken into her sister-in-law's confidence, whilst, no matter what might have been arranged, it was all but certain that, from sheer jealousy or love of domination, she would do her utmost to upset the arrangement.

And so, indeed, it happened. The bustle of Miss Laurillard's arrival over, and Ffine having been got out of the room, Lucy Laurillard told her tale, and found her misgivings more than realised.

'But, my dearest Lucy, you never mean to tell me that you have authorised this young fellow to pay his addresses to that child!'

'Fifi will be eighteen next month, Martindale,' replied Lucy with gentle deprecation, 'and you know that you yourself always wished that she should marry early. I have often heard you say that.'

'My goodness, Lucy, you would try the patience of a saint, you have such a faculty for misunderstanding the plainest sense! Very naturally it was my wish that any one so dear to me as Ffine should be made happy early. But surely, surely, you have wit enough to understand that that takes for granted that a suitable match has presented itself. Do you ever remember hearing me say that I wished my darling to marry the first comer?'

There was sarcasm as well as irritation in the speaker's tone of voice, which goaded Lucy into

showing more spirit. 'She is my darling quite as much as yours, Martindale,' she replied, speaking in accents which were suggestive of an indignant lamb; 'nor is Mr Jerwood the first comer—I've already told you that. He is a youth of excellent principles, a sound churchman'—

'Churchman be bothered!' exclaimed Martindale. 'By your own showing he's an attorney's son.'

Here Lucy cowered, well knowing what was coming next.

'I suppose you have forgotten that we—or, at least, she and I—are Laurillards of Laurillard?'

It was the old story—pride of birth manifesting itself in the wrong way. It was true that Laurillard Park had been sold, to pay racing debts, long before the Reverend Stephen was born; but it still served the sorry purpose of reminding poor Lucy that he had married out of his own sphere, and that she had been a mere Miss Davidson! And the worst of it was that it served this purpose all too well. Lucy sat speechless. Mounted on her high horse, the other pursued her advantage.

'With *her* ancestry, my dear Fifine is a suitable match for a peer.'

Poor Lucy then was fain to plead the nakedness of the land. 'We know so few peers, Martindale—none, I believe, except spiritual peers. And though that would be a most distinguished honour, it might not be altogether suitable, seeing that Fifi is so very young and not yet quite weaned from levity. Besides, they are all of them married already.'

Here Martindale's impatience betrayed her into language most incongruous in a woman of her professions. 'Fiddlestick!' she cried. 'You surely don't suppose I mean one of your stuffy old bishops? I mean a proper peer—a peer by birth. And let me impress upon you, Lucy, that, pedigree for pedigree, there are plenty of peers who take second place to a Laurillard of Laurillard!'

There was a good deal more of this sort of thing, which I mercifully spare the reader. Briefly, the upshot of the discussion was as follows. Lucy, who could be firm about a few things, simply declined to retract her word, pledged to young Jerwood, to allow him to speak to her daughter on the subject nearest his heart. Fifine's reception of his declaration remained an unknown quantity, and, so far, the situation was as it had been before. But Miss Martindale Laurillard was nothing if not resourceful, and here she cut in to modify it, and make her influence tell. For she insisted that, supposing Fifine favourable to Jerwood, she should accept him, not as an intended husband, but merely as a 'probationer,' to be kept dangling on approval for six months. To this arrangement Lucy was wearied into agreeing, whilst the well-known state of Jerwood's feelings was guarantee that he would not reject it.

V.

In Fifine Laurillard love was still dormant. Among her acquaintances of the other sex, however, she preferred Monty Jerwood. He had always been so nice to her. And so, when poor love-sick Monty urged her to admit him to the position of a probationer for her favour, she answered, 'Very well!' or 'Oh, very well, if you like!' This was not exactly, or was not all, that Monty had hoped for. But he was such an unassuming young fellow, and so far gone in love, that he was able to content himself with it, as being perhaps as much as he had any right to expect. And so his probationary period was inaugurated.

To be an experienced lover seems to me almost a contradiction in terms, and certainly Montague Jerwood was anything but that. Still, he was clear-sighted enough to see that his cue was to 'make the running,' and henceforward joy-rides became the order of the day, or, rather, of the week-end (for he still stuck closely to his work on five days out of seven); and thus his little gray car got to be well known on the Filey and Whitby roads, at Hedmondswyck, Forge Valley, and Hackness. And in that little car, on these occasions, there was always to be seen, involved in her motor draperies like beauty in a cloud, the fair Fifine. For, undemonstrative though she was, Fifine took quite kindly to these drives. On the other hand, it was not often that she occupied the box-seat next the driver, for that was a privilege claimed, in right of seniority, by Miss Martindale Laurillard, whose tall and well-set-up figure towered above Jerwood's, as she surveyed the moving landscape and criticised his somewhat amateurish driving.

Being a martyr to hay-fever, Mrs Laurillard generally kept the house warm during these outings.

'Well, dears, how have you enjoyed your drive?' the good lady chanced to ask, one evening, when Jerwood, having dropped the two Misses Laurillard at their door, was driving off.

'Oh, I don't know,' replied Miss Martindale coldly, as she laid her veil aside; 'that car is certainly the shakiest I have ever sat in! Yet it mayn't be wholly the car's fault, for, between ourselves, Monty is no driver.' (By his own request, the two elder ladies had taken to calling him Monty.)

Fifine heard, and said nothing. *She* had enjoyed her drive, but it now occurred to her that she might have been wrong in doing so. (For, above all things, your flapper recoils from the imputation of enjoying everything indiscriminately.)

VI.

Another day, at a cricket-match, where they had met some friends, Monty happened to hear a matron inquire of Miss Laurillard if her niece was engaged to Mr Jerwood.

'Oh dear, no!' was the somewhat flippant answer; 'not engaged to her—he is only a probationer, and that, you know, is a very different thing!'

In this case the speaker's tone said more than her words did, and it hurt our poor fond Monty rather badly. Not that he was in any way morbid, or given up to introspection; still, it did at times occur to him that his position as probationer was not a very dignified one. No other youth that he knew of had been called on to submit to it, all his friends who had been accepted by girls having been accepted right away, and having entered forthwith into the enjoyment of a lover's privileges. Why should *he* be made an exception of? His estimate of his own merits was modest in the extreme. But that Ffine's relatives should so whole-heartedly (though tacitly) endorse that estimate was galling to his self-respect. And he knew that his people liked it even less than he did. Should he take his pride in both hands, confront Mrs Laurillard, and address her in a speech beginning, 'If you don't think me good enough to be your daughter's accepted suitor'?—Time and again he felt spurred on to do so, but his great dread of losing that dearest of all girls deterred him. After all, probationership (wretched makeshift though it was) was always something to the good. And, in judging him, please remember that what might have been rather despicable in an older man was excusable in a lad of twenty-one, and a home-bred lad at that. After all, it was only Miss Martindale who had ever made him feel his position. And, of course, it was a great piece of condescension on the part of a Laurillard even to think of allying herself with a family that bore no arms! Aunt Martindale had rubbed that well into him. But, for himself, he would have been just as well pleased if Ffine (being always Ffine) had sprung of some less lofty race.

'After all, what have they got to show for it?' exclaimed Jerwood *père*, who was nothing if not practical.

But now it was Monty who was up in arms. 'Shut up, dad,' he retorted defiantly; 'they claim descent from Edward the Fourth!'—as if there was no getting beyond that.

'From Edward the Fourth! Well, hadn't he rather more descendants than he ought? For my part, I prefer to do a rattling good business under Edward the Seventh.' And Jerwood senior settled down to his papers.

It is vexing when one's relatives show themselves so obtuse in comprehension and so limited in outlook as that! Ah, if only Ffine would have declared herself with no uncertain voice! That would have solved the difficulty. But, child-like, Ffine lived in the present hour—contented, sweetness personified, almost too beautiful, but apparently innocent of all inclination to look ahead or below the surface. So, to the much-tried junior Jerwood, no better course presented itself than to study to be patient. After all, Ffine was worth it. And, by way of tuning himself to the proper key, he re-read the touching old story of Jacob's twice seven years' service for his Rachel.

The more he studied to be patient, however, the more the demands on his patience made by Miss Martindale. Had she deliberately set herself to lower him in her niece's eyes? Kind-hearted Mrs Laurillard would at times stand up for him, but Ffine remained impassive, tantalisingly unconcerned, and allowed things to take their course. It was in this way that the whole of one of Monty's precious Saturday afternoons was wasted in going to and fro, trying to match Miss Martindale's wools. Naturally he had wished Ffine to go with him, but Aunt Bobo had answered for her that Ffine did not care for walking for walking's sake! For walking's sake! That little phrase had cut the too sensitive boy. But Ffine had let it pass.

There was one person at least in Scarborough who thought Miss Martindale's visit interminable. That lady, however, showed no sign of drawing it to a close.

(Continued on page 261.)

MEMORIES OF THE FIRTH OF FORTH.

Yonder the shores of Fife you saw;
Here Preston-Bay and Berwick Law;
And, broad between them roll'd,
The gallant Firth the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float,
Like emeralds chased in gold.

HOW manifold are the scenes and memories associated with the Firth of Forth! Many volumes would not exhaust them, and here we can but indicate some features in the story of this important estuary, which has been a background and a theatre for the working out of many great events in Scottish history. Alexander III. met his death in 1286 between Burntisland and

Kinghorn, by his horse stumbling in the dark, some think, not at the top of the cliffs, but at their base. The Forth's associations with Queen Mary, from the time she landed at Leith from France till her imprisonment at and escape from Lochleven, are many and varied. The Reformation struggle was fought out mainly around the Forth basin. The Forth has seen the incursions of the Danes, of the English under the Earl of Somerset and Cromwell; the wars of Independence—Wallace and Stirling Bridge, Bruce and Bannockburn; the battles of Pinkie, Dunbar, and Prestonpans; and many a lesser fight.

Above and below the Forth Bridge, which has conquered the old discomforts of the ferries, might be seen in war-time the great armada of gray battleships and cruisers. Rosyth dockyard and naval base lends fresh and unique importance to the Forth, which will go down in history, too, as the scene of the shepherding of the surrendered German Fleet.

One of our Scottish kings likened Fife to a beggar's mantle fringed with gold. Scott, in *Rob Roy*, calls the Forth a defensible line between Highlands and Lowlands; and his creation, Bailie Nicol Jarvie, declared 'Forth bridles the wild Highlandman.' The old rhyme says:

A crook o' the Forth
Is worth an earldom in the north.

The Forth is not a river Clyde with the far-flung commerce of a city with over a million inhabitants, but there are trade and industry in its basin (and a prospect of more), as witness what is done at Leith, Burntisland, Granton, and Grangemouth. The period of national reconstruction now begun is bound to tell on the Forth basin as elsewhere.

In that wonderful twenty-eighth chapter of *Rob Roy*, when Osbaldistone and Bailie Jarvie approach the river near the clachan of Aberfoyle, the Bailie remarks, 'That's the Forth,' with an 'air of reverence, which, I have observed, the Scotch usually pay to their distinguished rivers. The Clyde, the Tweed, the Forth, the Spey, are usually named by those who dwell on their banks with a sort of respect and pride, and I have known duels occasioned by any word of disparagement.' Andrew Fairservice, however, was in no wise impressed by the Bailie's solemn announcement 'That's the Forth,' which he greeted with an 'Umph!—an he had said that's the public-house it wad hae been mair to the purpose.'

From its rise to the east of Ben Lomond the Forth, formed by the confluence of Duchray Water and the Avonduh, passes through the defile of Aberfoyle, winds across the plain of the Flanders Moss, and loiters through the contracted part of its valley between Stirling and Bridge of Allan towards its estuary. Sir Archibald Geikie points out that its upper course is not only not in accordance with, but actually in defiance of, geological structure. He thinks that in cutting and widening a gap for itself, the Forth may have had much help from the sea. The level valley is a sea-bottom, and sea-shells are dug up there. A depression of ten feet would send the tide up the valley for eighteen miles, 'and if the land were sunk very little more, the firths of Clyde and Forth would meet, and a set of vexed tides would ebb and flow across the centre of Scotland. Such has doubtless often been the condition of the country in the geological past.' The Forth and Clyde Canal does make a modern waterway between

east and west, while the advisability of constructing a ship-canal has been urged from time to time.

Doubtless that would be reckoned a big day in the annals of Scotland when the *Great Michael* was launched in the time of James IV. She was one of the largest ships of war then known, and had exhausted the timber resources of Fife, though her length was only 240 feet. She had thirty-five guns, and 300 smaller artillery of the period. After Flodden, a not very brilliant history was closed for her when she was taken over by the French Government. Daniel Defoe, the greatest journalist and publicist of his day, while acting as an English secret agent in Scotland in 1710, made suggestions how Scotland could be pacified, her trade improved, and unemployment checked. Among his proposals was the erection of a yard, with docks, for building, fitting, and repairing ships, as at Plymouth and Portsmouth. 'Nature,' he said, 'has already made a wet dock of the Forth itself above the Queen's Ferry, and there can be none made like it.' The channel was safe, the ground good, and land-locked from storms. This project was to take shape 200 years later under the stimulus of the German menace. Queen Victoria wrote to Sir Charles Wood in 1855 regarding the need of a dockyard out of the Channel, other than Pembroke, and suggesting the policy of adding an establishment in the Firth of Forth. Such a measure, she thought, would be popular in Scotland, 'and by making the Queen's Navy known there, which it hardly is at present, would open a new field for recruiting for our marine.'

Some of the earliest experiments which led up to successful steam navigation were made on the Firth of Forth. Before Patrick Miller's experiment on Dalswinton Loch, a trial had been made here on 2nd June 1787 with a twin-hulled vessel, with paddles between worked by the crew. James Taylor, tutor in Miller's family, who was on board, seeing the exhausted state of the men at the capstan, is said to have suggested the employment of steam-power. Miller took up the idea, and employed William Symington, a young Wanlockhead engineer, then exhibiting a road locomotive in Edinburgh, to make the engine. So came about the successful experiment on Dalswinton Loch on 14th October 1788. After another trial under the superintendence of Symington on the Forth and Clyde Canal in 1789, when a vessel drawing a heavy load attained a speed of seven miles an hour, Miller, who had spent some £30,000 in this and other experiments, turned his attention to agriculture. Symington's next patron was Lord Dundas, and the *Charlotte Dundas*, in March 1802, made a trial-trip on the Forth and Clyde Canal, drawing two barges with a load of seventy tons for a distance of nearly twenty miles against a strong head-wind. It is believed that both Robert Fulton, who launched the *Clermont*, the

pioneer American steamboat, on the Hudson River in 1807, and Henry Bell, of the Clyde *Comet* (1812), benefited by a sight of Symington's experimental boat while it was lying in the Forth and Clyde Canal. Symington besides devised a new method of propulsion for the ferry-boat between Leith and Kinghorn which never materialised. We have seen his plans (1814) of a boat with rectangular sliding sculling oars to be moved by a steam-engine. These in effect were rear paddles. Symington is credited by Professor Beare with having devised the first steamboat for practical use. He employed a piston-rod, guided by rollers in a straight path, attached by a connecting-rod to a crank fixed directly to the paddle-wheel shaft, 'thus devising the system of working the paddle-wheel shaft which has been used ever since that date.' There was a curious outcome of the present of a model of one of the pioneer boats sent by Miller of Dalswinton to the King of Sweden. The king reciprocated by sending his miniature set in diamonds and a gold snuff-box containing some seeds of turnips which became progenitors of our Swedes.

The adventures and misadventures of the Firth passage in the days long ere the Forth Bridge was dreamt of may be better realised by a few instances we give here.

Charles I., when returning from Falkland on 10th July 1633, in crossing from Burntisland to Leith, nearly met with disaster. A violent storm swept the Firth, which rose and fell within half-an-hour. The king's vessel weathered the gale, but a boat with eight of his attendants, and a quantity of royal plate and money, was lost. Does this treasure still lie at the bottom of the Firth? Unrecorded tragedies 'half ower, half ower to Aberdour,' and elsewhere in the Forth, oft left maids and men lamenting. From the time of the saintly Queen Margaret, who gave her name to Queensferry and her dust to Dunfermline Abbey, many royal persons have crossed and recrossed. Scott makes singularly little in the *Abbot* of the difficulties Queen Mary and her retinue would experience in the crossing, after her escape from Lochleven, ere she gained the shelter of Niddrie Castle on the Lothian shore. Doubtless his mind was preoccupied in developing the psychology of the situation with Seyton, Douglas, and the Abbot. He voices the glad feelings of the imprisoned queen thus: 'No fish ever shot through the water, no bird through the air, with the hurried feeling of liberty and rapture with which I sweep through this night wind and over these wolds.' But there is an inimitable first chapter in the *Antiquary* descriptive of the Hawes fly coach between Edinburgh and Queensferry, which was late, and threatened to cause the intending passenger to tarry a day at the South Ferry for lack of tide. The hire of a special pinnace might cost five shillings, and the coach fare had already been three shillings. Readers know how happily

the travellers adapted themselves to circumstances. R. L. Stevenson, in *Kidnapped*, brings Alan Breck and David Balfour to the northern shores of the Firth after their Highland adventures, and on to Limekilns. 'This is a place that sits near in by the waterside, and looks across the Hope to the town of the Queensferry. Smoke went up from both of these, and from other villages and farms upon all hands. The fields were being reaped: two ships lay anchored, and boats were coming and going on the Hope. It was altogether a right pleasant sight to me; and I could not take my fill of gazing at these comfortable, green, cultivated hills, and the busy people both of the field and sea.' A kind-hearted Fife maiden, listening to their tale of distress, got a boat from its moorings and landed them on the other side near Carriden.

The ferry-boat from Pettycur (Kinghorn) started only at certain states of the tide; hence the passenger was often delayed at Kinghorn, to the satisfaction of the innkeeper. Thither, early last century, came young Thomas Guthrie, the afterwards celebrated Scottish preacher, from Forfarshire, in the charge of Mr Simpson, his tutor, bound for Edinburgh University. They had spent the night in Dundee, crossed the Tay in a pinnace, and travelled two or three stages through Fife on the top of the coach. The last ten miles to Pettycur were done on foot for reasons of economy. They intended to spend the night there, and cross the Forth next morning. They had dined at Kirkcaldy an hour before they came thither. Sampling the tea at Pettycur, they were aghast at the charge of one shilling and sixpence each for the little they had eaten there. Young Guthrie thought he was swindled, and, boy-like, wished that he had made a cleaner sweep of the viands, and so had value for his money. They resolved to get away quickly from what seemed a den of thieves, and cross by the 6 P.M. boat, which was an open pinnace. By this time it was wet and stormy. The tutor and Guthrie and one woman were the only passengers. When the boat had been for a short time on the tumbling waves, the boatmen threatened to pitch them overboard unless they paid double or treble the proper fare. The woman, who had a sharp tongue and a determined will, filled the breach. She snapped her fingers at the cowardly threat, and 'with a tongue as loose as theirs, and more mother-wit, answered these fools according to their folly;' and so, in spite of threats, the passage was continued, and they were safely landed at Leith.

The royal yacht *The George* arrived on August 14, 1822, in Leith Roads, in pouring rain, bearing George IV. on his visit to Edinburgh. Sir Walter Scott, as master of ceremonies, had been asked to put off to the king and humbly request him to delay his landing until next day. When the king heard

that Scott was alongside he exclaimed, 'What! Sir Walter Scott? The man in Scotland I most wish to see! Let him come up.' Sir Walter was presented to the king on the quarter-deck, and there followed a presentation to His Majesty on behalf of the ladies of Edinburgh, and a speech as recorded by Lockhart. The latter does not give, however, Scott's apology for the weather when asking the king to postpone his public entry until next day. The weather reminded Scott of an incident when on tour in the west Highlands with part of his family. He had written to the innkeeper at Arrochar for rooms, but on the appointed day it rained, as it was doing that day, ceaselessly. As they drew near their quarters they were met by the innkeeper, who, with bared head, and backing every yard as they advanced, thus addressed the party: 'Gude guide us, Sir Walter! This is just awfu! Siccan a downpour! Was ever the like? I really beg your pardon! I'm sure it's no fault o' mine. I canna think how it should happen to rain this way, just as you, o' a' men of the world, should come to see us. It looks amaist personal. I can only say, for my part, I'm just ashamed o' the weather.' 'And so, sire,' said Sir Walter to the king, 'I do not know that I can improve upon the language of the honest innkeeper. I canna think how it should rain this way, just as your Majesty, of all men in the world, should have condescended to come and see us. I can only say, in the name of my countrymen, I'm just ashamed o' the weather.' The sequel should be told. Scott asked for the king's glass, from which His Majesty had drunk a sample of Highland whisky. This glass Sir Walter put in his coat-pocket as a memento. When he reached 39 Castle Street he found the poet Crabbe there, and saluting him warmly, sat down beside him. In doing so the glass perished in his pocket. Scott screamed aloud from the pain of a considerable wound inflicted by the broken glass! The point of the king's embarkation for the south at the close of this royal visit was Port Edgar, above Queensferry, after a call at Hopetoun House. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, on the occasion of their first tour in Scotland, landed at Granton on 1st September 1842, and were met by the Duke of Buccleuch, Sir Robert Peel, and others. The *Royal George* yacht having arrived sooner than was expected, the Corporation of Edinburgh was denied the honour that morning of giving them a civic welcome. They drove to Dalkeith, and as guests of the Duke of Buccleuch had for breakfast Scotch porridge and finnan haddocks.

Here is an account of another crossing of the Firth by ferry from Burntisland to Granton, as recorded by the Rev. Julian Charles Young, rector of Ilmington. His journey from St Andrews to Edinburgh occupied five hours, the crossing in the steamer being specially

uncomfortable. A wait of forty minutes at Leuchars junction was rendered less wearisome by his meeting Professor Jowett. There was no comfort on board the Burntisland steamer. Every available space on deck, gangways, and saloon was overcrowded. It was the last day of August 1872, when many holiday-makers would be returning home. Young says that the packing of slaves in a slave-ship, in the middle passage of former days, could hardly have been worse than the manner in which they were wedged, almost welded, together. In a cabin of about forty feet long there were at least 120 people of all grades. 'Some with soaking mackintoshes clinging to their persons; others with saturated plaids; four young women, each with red hair, and each with a green bird-cage on her lap; three promising schoolboys in sparrow-tail jackets, with rabbit-hutches under their arms, and a commissariat of stale cabbage protruding from their pockets; four or five nursing mothers, with babes of tender age and high cheek-bones, muling and puking in their arms; a hirsute, pimpled, whisky-faced Highland clock-maker, with a specimen of his handiwork in his hands, and escorted by an obtrusive liver-coloured pointer, who found it convenient to dry his coat against my trousers.' Young had reached the depths of resignation, and was trying to close his eyes to the nauseous sights, and his nose to noisome smells, when the captain elbowed his way among the throng and warned the passengers against pickpockets. 'Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to tell you that we have several pickpockets aboard. They've given us a deal o' trouble lately; for you can't tell some on um from gentlemen. We warn ladies to look sharply after their pockets, their purses, bags, and such-like, and to take particular notice of the people they sit next.' This announcement acted as if a hand-grenade had been thrown among the crowd. Many bolted out of the saloon. Every woman looked askance at her neighbour; the lady of the bird-cage next Mr Young moved away from him, 'and kept on pinning her shawl around her until she was impregnable.'

Other travellers who remember this passage in east wind and fog shiver at the remembrance. The Forth all too often becomes a gully or a conduit to deluge Edinburgh and neighbourhood with winds from the bitter, biting east, with a probable accompaniment of rain, snow, or fog. A gale from the north-east in the Forth has taken effect as far up as Granton, and stones weighing a ton or more have been known to be torn out of a wall and rolled to a distance of thirty feet. Mr H. M. Cadell of Grange, who has written much on the industrial development of the Forth Valley, is of opinion that the mud in the Forth comes up the estuary, being washed in from outside.

Robert Stevenson, of lighthouse fame, grand-

father of R. L. Stevenson, in a privately printed volume, recording a trip to Holland, gives a wonderful word-picture of Edinburgh as seen from the Firth at sunset. Christopher North has a serio-comic picture of the same view seen when the Ettrick Shepherd and himself were splashing in the sea at Portobello. There are atmosphere and local colour in *Islands Chased in Gold*, by the Rev. John Dickson, and John Geddie's *Fringes of Fife*, which gives the story of the towns and villages on the Fife coast. For Kinghorn and Burntisland the beginning of David Pryde's *Pleasant Memories of a*

Busy Life is excellent. For the Lothian side in the eighteenth century nothing is better than 'Jupiter' Carlyle's autobiography. A modern book, *The Gateway of Scotland*, by A. G. Bradley, is good for the Berwickshire and the Lothian coasts. And we come again to Scott for the third time impinging on the Firth in his tragic *Bride of Lammermoor*. In some of the essays in *Across the Plains* by R. L. Stevenson there is a flavour of life on both sides of the Firth. But the special literature is far too abundant to be mentioned here in full.

R. C.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XII.—continued.

II.

IT was nearing the end of a breakfast that had been trying for every one. Lord Durwent's usual kindly affability was overcast by a fresh worry—the non-appearance of his son Malcolm. Four telegrams had been despatched to Scotland, but no answer had come. Elise had been gay and talkative with a forced vivacity; and Lady Durwent had been bordering on hysteria. Not that the dear lady was of sufficient depth to be profoundly moved by the world's tragedy, but her unsatisfied sense of the dramatic gave her a new thrill every time she said, 'WE ARE AT WAR—THINK OF IT!' as if she were afraid that without her reminder they might forget the fact.

Selwyn sat in almost complete silence, merely acknowledging Lady Durwent's proclamations of a state of war by appropriate acquiescence, but his eyes remained fixed on the table. He could not trust them to look at Elise for fear they should prove traitor and sue for an ignoble peace. As for her, she met the situation with a smile, using woman's instinct of protection to assume a cloak behind which her real feelings were concealed.

They had just risen from the table when the sound of a motor-car was heard in the courtyard, and Elise hurried to the window.

'It's Malcolm, dad,' she said.

More in hysteria than ever, Lady Durwent hurried from the room, followed more slowly by her husband and daughter, and greeting the Honourable Malcolm at the door, smothered him in a melodramatic embrace.

'My dear, brave Malcolm,' she cried.

With as good grace as possible the young man submitted to the maternal endearments, disengaging her arms as soon as he decently could.

'Where's the governor?' he asked. 'Ah, there you are. Hello, Elise! I'm frightfully sorry, pater,' he went on, shaking hands with Lord Durwent and patting his sister on the shoulder, 'about those telegrams of yours, but

we were on M'Gregor's yacht miles from nowhere, and didn't even know the dear old war was on until a fishing johnny told us. Are my orders here?'

'Yes,' answered Lord Durwent; 'there are two telegrams for you. One came last night, and one this morning. I will just go into the library and fetch them.'

'But, Malcolm,' said Lady Durwent, 'I want you to meet our guest Mr Selwyn of New York.'

The young Englishman smiled with rather an attractive air of embarrassment. 'I'm frightfully sorry,' he said amiably, proffering his hand, 'I didn't see you there. Have you had any kind of a time? It's rather a bore being inland in the summer, don't you think?'

'I have enjoyed myself very much,' said the American, 'in spite of the tragic end to my visit.'

'Eh,' said the Honourable Malcolm, startled by the seriousness of the other's voice, 'what's that? Ah yes—you mean the war. Excuse me if I look at these, won't you?—Thanks, pater.'

'WE ARE AT WAR—THINK OF IT!' cried Lady Durwent in a gust of emotion, assuming the duties of a Greek chorus while her son examined the telegrams brought by her husband.

'Well, well,' said the cavalry lieutenant, reading the first message, which was signed by the adjutant of his regiment, 'dear old Agitato. How he does love sending out those sweet little things: "Leave cancelled; return at once"! Ah, my word! "Secret and Confidential"—good old War Office. What a rag they'll have now running their pet little regiments all over the world! Humpf! By Jove! we're to move to-morrow. Good work! Let me see, pater. What train can I catch to town? I must throw a few things together'—he looked at his watch—'but I'll be in heaps of time for the 11.50. The Agitato always has a late lunch and never drinks less than three glasses of port, so I'll throw myself on his full stomach and squeal for mercy for

being late. I say, pater, do come up while I toss a few unnecessaries into my case.—That's right, Brown; put my bag in my room. And, Brown, you might put some vaseline on those golf-clubs. I sha'n't be wanting them for some little time.—Come along, pater.—Excuse me, Mr—Mr'—

'SELWYN,' cried Lady Durwent.

'Mr Selwyn, I'll see you later, eh?'

The old nobleman ascended the stairs with his son, and the agreeable chatter of the latter, with its references to 'topping sport' and 'absolutely ripping weather,' came to an end as they disappeared along the western wing of the house. Lady Durwent, wiping her eyes, went into the library, and Selwyn, who was not particularly enamoured of solitude and its attending tyranny of thoughts, followed her.

Elise, who had stood in mute contemplation of her brother, neither addressing a remark nor being addressed, hesitated momentarily, then went into the drawing-room by herself and closed the door.

'Oh, Mr Selwyn,' said Lady Durwent, breathing heavily, 'you have no idea what a mother's feelings are at a time like this.'

'I can only sympathise most sincerely,' said the American gravely.

'He has been such a good boy,' she said vaguely, 'and so devoted to his mother.'

'I can see that, Lady Durwent.'

'I shall never forget,' she went on, her own words creating a deliciously dramatic trembling in her bosom, 'how he wept when his father insisted upon his leaving home for school. It was all I could do to console the child, and when he came home for the holidays he was just my shadow.'

At that satisfactory thought (though Selwyn was a little puzzled at the picture of the diminutive Malcolm serving as a shadow for Lady Durwent's bulk) she expanded into a smile, but immediately corrected the error with a burst of unrestrained grief.

'THINK OF IT, MR SELWYN,' she cried, reversing the formula—'WE ARE AT WAR!'

He murmured assent. 'I am afraid, Lady Durwent,' he said, 'that I must return to London this afternoon.'

'Oh, Mr Selwyn!'

'Yes, I must. I have a great deal of work before me, and only the cordiality of your welcome and the pleasure I have felt in being here would have allowed me to stay so long. You have been wonderfully kind, and perhaps the fact that I was here when war broke out will lend a special significance to our friendship for the future.'

'Oh, I shall never forget you,' murmured his hostess, whose emotions were so near the surface that almost any remark was sufficient to tap them. 'You have been the truest of friends, and Elise is so fond of you.'

'I am very fond of Elise,' blurted Selwyn, feeling his cheeks grow red. 'Her companionship and inspiration were something'—

'Ye-es.' An instinct of caution plugged the emotional channel. Lady Durwent saw that she had been indiscreet. It was not in her plan of things that her daughter should become enamoured of a commoner. Selwyn was all very well for company, and no doubt his books were very good, but Elise Durwent would have to marry in her own station of life.

'You feel that you must go this afternoon?' said the Ironmonger's daughter dismally, but with an inflection that made it more a reminder than a question.

'Yes, Lady Durwent,' he answered, with a cynical smile creeping into his lips, which seemed thin and almost cruel. 'I shall catch the 3.50.'

'Then you must come again and see us sometime, Mr Selwyn,' she said, with that vagueness of date used by polite persons when they don't mean a thing. Lady Durwent rose with great dignity. 'Will you excuse me, Mr Selwyn? I always meet my housekeeper at ten to discuss domestic matters. Elise is somewhere around. Is it too damp for tennis?'

She paused at the door. She had to. It is one of the traditions of the stage that a player must stop at the exit and utter one compelling, terrific sentence.

'WE ARE AT WAR,' she cried—'TH'—

'Think of it!' he said maliciously, bowing and closing the door after her.

III.

Going to his room, Selwyn packed his own bags, dispensing with the services of the valet, and with more than one sigh of regret glanced about at the luxury which he was soon to quit. The great bed with its snowy billows of comfort; the reading-lamp on the little table with the motley collection of books borrowed from the library with the very best intentions—books which had hardly been opened before sleep would obliterate everything from his sight; that merry picture of the two medieval enthusiasts playing chess, and those jolly Dickensian paintings of huntsmen at luncheon with grinning waiters and ubiquitous dogs. What a charm they all had! What a merry little spot England had been in those good old days!

A ray of sunshine stole through the curtains as if it were not quite sure of its welcome, and shyly rested against the farthest wall of the room. With an exclamation of pleasure Selwyn threw open the window and looked out upon the lawns.

The sun had won its battle, and the countryside was cleared of the invading mist, which was ingloriously retreating to its own territory behind the distant hills. There was a sparkle in the air, and the rich colourings of the flowers vied

with each other in Beauty's quarrel. The birds flew from tree to tree, singing their pæan of the sun's victory, and a light summer's breeze was scattering perfume over the earth.

As a sick man emerging from a fever, Selwyn let the refreshing vigour of the morning lave his temples with its potency. Looking towards the stables, he saw Mathews, the groom, come out of his domain to cast an approving glance on Nature's performance. Selwyn decided that he would go and say good-bye to the fellow. There was something both sturdy and picturesque about him, and the American presumed that even the head-groom of the Durwents would not be averse to a ten-shilling gratuity. He therefore left his room, and reaching the lawn, strolled over to the stables.

'Good-morning, Mr Selwyn,' said the groom cheerily, touching his forehead in a semi-nautical greeting.

'Good-day, Mathews. How are all your family this morning?'

'Meaning the hosses, sir, or opposite-like, my old mare and her colt? Likewise and sim'lar, and no disrespeck meant, meaning my old woman and little Wellington.'

'Well,' Selwyn smiled at the worthy man's ramifications, 'I did mean the horses, but I am even more anxious to know how Mrs Mathews is.'

'She's a-blooming, Mr Selwyn, she is. When I sees her t'other night dancing at the village, I says to myself, "Criky! If she ain't got a action like a young filly!" Real proud I was of her, and her being no two-year-old neither, but opposite-wise free of the rheumatiz as is getting into my withers like.'

'And how is—did you say his name was Wellington?'

'That's his handle, Mr Selwyn, conseckens o' his being born with the largest nose I ever sees on a offspring of his age. He's only four year and a little better, but—criky!—if he ain't the knowingest little colt as ever I raised! When my old woman gives him his bath he goes "hiss-ss, hiss-ss," just like a proper groom rubbing down a hoss. But he's a unfeeling wretch, he is, for when I goes home arter feeding-time o' nights, and thinks I'll just smoke a quiet pipe, he up and says, "Lincoln Steeplechase, guv'nor, and I'm a-riding you." And there he has everything around the room—his little table and chairs and toy pianner, and I've got to jump over 'em on my hands and knees with that there vicious scoundrel a-sitting on my neck and yelling, "Come on, you d—d old slow-coach! Wot did I give you them oats for?" Now I puts it to you, Mr Selwyn, if a imp as makes his fayther jump over a toy pianner is the kind o' child as is like to be a comfort to a feller in his old age?'

'With which harrowing query the groom slapped his pipe on his heel and blew violently

through it to try to disguise his gratification at the paternal reminiscence.

'I don't think I've seen all the hosses,' said Selwyn. 'Can you spare a few minutes to show them to me?'

'Wi' all the pleasure in life, sir. Come in, sir. I know it ain't becoming of me for to boast,' said the groom as they entered the building, 'but if there's a better stable o' hosses than them there, then my name ain't Mathews, nor is my Christian names 'William John neither. There ain't many in England as knows a hoss quicker 'an me, Mr Selwyn, though I says it that shouldn't ought to, but I knows a hoss just as soon as I sets eyes upon him. Milord, he's just a small bit better, though likewise and sim'lar we usually thinks exac'ly the same. Only once we disergreed on a hoss. I says it were vicious, and he said as how it weren't. So we bought it.'

'And who was right?'

'Well, sir, I sort of estermate as how he was, for just arter we got him Mas'r Dick, who ain't afraid o' any beast as walks on four legs, took him out for a airing. Well, sir, that hoss—powerful brute he were, with a eye like Sin—goes along like as if he hadn't a evil thought in his head; but all on a sudden he comes to a ditch, and sort of rolls Mas'r Dick into it, and bungs his head against a stone.'

'Then he was vicious, after all?'

'No, sir—that's the extr'ord'nary part of it. He comes right back to the stables to me and pulls up short. I goes up and looks into that there sinful eye. "You hulk o' misery," I says; "you willainous son of a abandoned sire!" You know, sir, I always likes to make a hoss feel real bad by telling him what's what, for they got intelligence. Mr Selwyn, I should say, by criky! a human being ain't in the same stall as a hoss for intelligence.'

'I think you may be right,' said Selwyn decisively.

'May be? There ain't no doubt about it nowise.'

'And what happened to your horse?'

'Ah yes, sir. Well, sir, I gets on him, and pulling his face around by his ear, I give him another look in his sinful eye. "Where's Mas'r Dick?" I says. And—criky!—off he goes, lickerty-split, like as if we was entered for the Derby, and, sure enough, he stops right at the ditch where Mas'r Dick was a-lying all peaceful and muddy like a stiff un. Well, sir, I gets off and lifts him up, and then mounts behind him, and that there hoss he never moved until I tells him, and then he goes home so smooth-like that a old lady could have rid him and done her knitting sim'lar. And arter that he were as gentle as a lamb, he were—and there he is right afore your eyes, Mr Selwyn. He's a old hoss now, and ain't much to look on, but every morning when I comes in he takes a look with that

there bad eye o' hisn and says, just like I says to him that day, "Where's Mas'r Dick?" I sqmetimes feels so sorry for the old feller that I swears something horrible just to cheer him up.'

With considerable interest, though with a certain doubt as to the strict authenticity of the narrative, the American looked at the horse, which, after a melancholy survey of the visitors, vented its grief in an attempt to bite a large-sized slice from the neck of a neighbour.

'Nah, then, you — — —,' remarked Mathews unfeelingly, catching the old beast a resounding thump on the rump with a stick he carried. 'That'll learn you, you old hulk o' misery.'

'There's a beautiful mare,' said the American, pausing at the stall of a superb charger whose graceful limbs and shapely neck spoke of speed and spirit.

'Ah! Now that there is a beauty and no mistake. She's got the spirit of a young pup, but is as amiable and sweet-tempered as a angel. She's Mister Malcolm's hunter, she is, and his favourite in the whole stables. He never rides anything but her to hounds; leastways, he never did but once, and then Nell—that's her name—Nell was took so sick with fretting that she kicked a groom as had come to feed her clean across the floor agin' that there far wall. Never I see a feller so put out as that there groom—never. Well, sir, she wouldn't let no one come nigh her, and just as we was thinking as how we'd have to forcible-feed her, in comes Mister Malcolm. She hears him, but don't

make no sign, and just as he comes up close she lets fling her heels at his head. But he was watching for it, and just says "Nellie" kind o' sorrowful and reproachful, sim'lar to the prodigal son returning to his aged fayther. Well, sir, the mare she just gives in at the knees and rubbed her nose agin' him, and says jest as plain as Scripiter that she was real sorry, and hoped he'd forget it as one gen'lman to a lady.'

With sundry anecdotes of a like nature, Mathews guided the visitor past the long line of stalls, whose inhabitants kept their stately heads turned to gratify the insatiable curiosity of the equine. To the weary mind of the American there was an agreeable balm in the groom's fund of anecdote, and even in the odoriferousness of the stable itself.

Reaching the end of that line, Mathews proposed that before they went any farther they should go to an adjoining shed and inspect a litter of little hounds that were blinking in amazement at their second day's view of the world. From a near-by kennel there was the discordant yelping of a dozen hounds, and between the two places a kitten was performing its toilet with arrogant indifference to the canine threat.

They were just about to retrace their steps, when Selwyn felt Mathews's hand on his arm.

'Sh-sh!' the groom whispered. 'There's Mister Malcolm a-come to say good-bye to Nellie. I knew he would, sir. She'd ha' fretted her heart out if he hadn't.'

(Continued on page 267.)

THE SPECIAL BRIGADE, ROYAL ENGINEERS,

By J. A. COCHRANE, B.Sc.

I.

DURING the war the daily *communiqués* and the despatches of correspondents gave one only a very slight idea of what was going on in the battle area. And it was necessarily so, partly because everything could not be told, and partly because it was not expedient that some things should be known. Was there ever any mention of the Special Brigade, R.E.? If there was, it was indirect, and referred only to the results of its labours, and not to the methods by which those results were obtained. Even now practically nothing is known generally of its work, not even that it was responsible for most of the poison-gas that arrived in the German trenches. Super-secrecy characterised the use of gas from the time of its introduction into modern warfare. This was obviously very necessary at first in order to preserve the element of surprise, and even at a later stage to prevent our methods becoming known to the enemy; but latterly it hardly seemed necessary

to keep from the British public what was known to the enemy. However, perhaps it was better to err on the safe side.

Every one, whether he took more than a passing interest in the war news or not, was horrified when, towards the end of April 1915, he learned that the Germans had introduced gas as a weapon of war. This method of inflicting casualties had received special mention in the Hague Convention, by which all the signatories agreed that it would henceforth be unlawful to employ it. Notwithstanding this, the Germans, with almost incredible brutality, launched a cloud of poisonous gas against unprotected and unsuspecting troops. Acting in accordance with their usual policy, they prepared the way for it by accusing the Allies of having dropped gas-bombs on the German lines, an accusation in which, I need hardly say, there was not an atom of truth. From shells men can escape by burrowing into the ground (if they burrow deep enough), but gas relentlessly makes its way into every corner, and finds men in even the deepest dug-outs; there is

no escaping it. Any one who has had experience of chlorine in a laboratory knows what it feels like to take one breath of the gas. Can you imagine the fearful agony of those men who were involved in the first gas-attack? Without any warning they suddenly found themselves in a poisonous atmosphere, with no means of protecting themselves from the deadly fumes. The casualties reached an enormous figure, and a gap four miles wide was made in the line. Why the enemy did not follow up his advantage has always been a mystery; he could have gone at least five miles without encountering any formidable opposition.

After this experience respirators of a temporary nature were hurried to the front. These generally consisted of pads, soaked in hypo solution, which covered the nose and the mouth, and were tied behind the head. They afforded partial protection, but it is obvious that they could not stand high concentrations of gas or long exposure to a low concentration. Fortunately in the first two or three gas-attacks the concentration was only about 1 in 200,000, and it was effective only about three miles behind the line, so this hastily improvised respirator could deal with it until the more efficient smoke-helmets were got ready. Several more attacks were made in April and May of that year, after which the German gas companies were withdrawn and sent to the Russian front for the summer, because of the prevalence of westerly winds during that season.

II.

Meanwhile the British were not idle. While the Press was agitating for reprisals, the War Office was busy, and as early as May 1915 arrangements for a new branch of the service were on foot, and recruits called for. Before being enlisted into the Special Companies, R.E., as this new unit was called, men had to produce proof that they had at least an elementary knowledge of chemistry; hence it was thought, with no other information at their disposal, that their chemical knowledge was going to be utilised in a research laboratory or, at least, in some munition-factory. It was not until they were actually in France that they discovered that, far from making these trained men serve any technically useful purpose, it was intended to send them to the front line to discharge gas, an operation more suited for a plumber than a university graduate. It looked very like a trick to rope in a certain class of men, and as such it was greatly resented by the victims. They were secretly hurried out to France; some had not been in khaki three weeks before they found themselves in the front line. Men were also transferred from infantry regiments to form a military nucleus to the new formation, while, it was alleged, the chemists would give confidence in the handling of the gas. By the end

of August the new unit was assembling near St Omer. It was a motley crowd. There were representatives from nearly every regiment in the British Army, besides those specially enlisted for the work in hand. To make matters worse, from the military point of view, every man was given the rank of corporal, the unit thereby incurring the ridicule of regular units, and the title of a 'rag-time mob.'

The first British gas-attack took place at Loos on 25th September 1915, and it was a failure. In the first place, the wind changed slightly in direction during the discharge, and some gas entered our own trenches, which were packed full of men waiting for the moment fixed for the beginning of the infantry advance. In the second place, the apparatus used was clumsy and leaky, which caused endless and serious trouble. In the third place, the men had not had adequate training in the use of this apparatus. In the fourth place, the smoke- (or gas-) helmets that had been issued were too hot to work in; in fact, in many cases they were taken off, with disastrous consequences. Our own gas casualties were many, and it made a bad beginning for that successful but costly battle. Besides, it gave our game away; it showed that we intended to use gas, and so enabled the enemy to make defensive preparations before we came into the field with improved apparatus. However, experience again proved itself to be a great teacher. Many valuable lessons were learned from this failure, and future operations benefited accordingly. During the remainder of 1915 one or two small discharges of gas took place, but I doubt very much if they caused a great deal of annoyance in the trenches opposite.

III.

At the beginning of 1916 the Special Companies were withdrawn from the forward area. They were increased in number from four companies to twenty-one, and were then dignified by the name of the Special Brigade, R.E. They were put through a course of general and technical training to make them more fit physically, and more efficient in their particular calling as 'gassers.' When the companies forming the Brigade again proceeded to advanced billets in June, they did so with much more confidence, because of their better training and better equipment. At Loos cylinders were made to stand in the trench, and there were at most two parapet pipes per twenty cylinders, which meant, of course, that pipes had to be changed from one cylinder to another; after one cylinder was empty, the pipe was disconnected and connected to the next full one. This changing over introduced a good deal of gas into the trench, for there was always a certain amount of gas in the pipes; and it also made for a low concentration, as only a maximum of 10 per cent. of the cylinders could be turned on at one time. But

all this was changed in 1916. Special emplacements were dug in the front line, and boxes made to hold the cylinders. This prevented the trench becoming blocked, and also allowed a protective wall of sand-bags to be built. Then each cylinder had its own pipe, and thus all connections could be made before the discharge commenced.

Instead of pure chlorine, a mixture of chlorine and phosgene was now used. Phosgene, whose chemical formula is COCl_2 , is a more deadly gas than chlorine, but it could not be used alone in cylinders because of its high boiling-point. The chlorine acted as a kind of propellant, forcing the phosgene out of the siphon. Phosgene corrodes the lungs, causing coughing and sickness, and it is strongly lethal. It has a delayed action when inhaled sparingly, attacking the heart twenty-four or even forty-eight hours after exposure to it, without, in the meantime, any bad effects being felt. Hence the order that gas cases were invariably to be treated as stretcher cases.

At the end of June, just before the first battle of the Somme, there was a series of gas-attacks all along the British front, which, as we afterwards learned, were very successful. To give one example, at Nieuport it was discovered that the regiment holding the German line was badly trained in anti-gas discipline; accordingly gas was installed in our front line, and though by a raid the enemy found out that gas-cylinders were there, yet they suffered 1700 casualties, of whom 700 died immediately.

Along with the use of more deadly gas was introduced more adequate protection against enemy gases, in the shape of the Tower respirator, which was the same in principle as the box respirator issued generally a few months later. It consisted essentially of a canister containing three layers of charcoal and soda-lime, through which the wearer had to breathe. Any gas in the atmosphere was absorbed by the charcoal or acted on by the soda-lime, and only air was breathed. It was a tremendous improvement on the smoke-helmet. Let me quote from an official pamphlet in this connection: 'It cannot be too strongly insisted on that the measures that have been elaborated to meet hostile gas-attacks afford *perfect* protection, and, if they are carried out properly, no one will suffer from gas-poisoning.' This was a big claim to make, but it was fully justified. Gas casualties resulted either from individual carelessness or from exceptional circumstances.

IV.

An important change in offensive tactics came in November 1916, just before the attack on Beaumont Hamel. The idea struck an officer of the Special Brigade that if bombs filled with gas could be fired in considerable numbers simultaneously into the enemy's lines a maxi-

mum effect would be produced. In the ordinary 'cloud' method a fair percentage of gas was dissipated in crossing No Man's Land, and unavoidable leaks caused great annoyance, to say the least of it, in our own trenches. From this officer's idea projectors were finally evolved. These were steel tubes, closed at one end. They were dug into the ground in batteries of twenty or twenty-five at an angle of elevation of about forty degrees, and aligned on the target by means of a prismatic compass, the direction having been previously determined from a trench map. A charge of cordite was inserted, and then a bomb. Inside each charge there was an electric fuse, and each fuse was electrically connected by insulated wires to the fuse next to it in the battery. A battery connected up in this way was fired by a small hand-exploder, an instrument which works on the principle of the dynamo, the current being generated by the revolving of an armature between the poles of a magnet. With a blinding flash and a tremendous report, the bombs were sent off on their errand of death. The fuse in the bomb was timed so that it would explode as nearly as possible at the moment it landed, and the bursting charge was such that there was no splinter effect—the bomb merely opened up, allowing the contained gas to escape. In this way one company has fired as many as 2000 bombs at one time. When it is remembered that each bomb contained about thirty pounds of liquid gas (usually phosgene), some idea will be obtained of the density and the extent of the gas-cloud formed on the target. Projectors had a range of from 1100 to 1600 yards, depending on the length of the tube and on the weight of the charge.

This method of gas discharge was very successfully employed preliminary to the battle of Arras in April 1917, when ten companies, distributed along the line from Arras to Vimy Ridge, fired about 1000 bombs each. It was estimated that the casualties inflicted on the enemy in this operation amounted to one per two bombs.

During 1917 gas was discharged in this way, on an average, every alternate night. Many captured German documents went to show the dread the enemy had of these projector shoots. The higher commands issued more and more strict orders regarding anti-gas appliances and discipline, and the artillery were ordered to concentrate on projector positions when they were discovered in order to destroy our '*gas minenwerfers*,' as they called them. There was no doubt about this order being obeyed, as we found to our cost. One night the writer proceeded with his men to his battery position to carry out the usual night's work of preparation, and on arrival found that since the previous night some 400 shells had fallen on or near the batteries, causing great, though not irreparable, havoc. But unfortunately the Boche artillery did not always undertake these destructive

shoots by day when no one was there. One night in front of Lens, when we were making final adjustments prior to firing at 4 A.M., we were interrupted on three separate occasions by concentrated fire on our battery position, and the German gunnery was extraordinarily accurate.

v.

The best proof of the effectiveness of the Special Brigade's projectors came in December 1917, when the enemy tried to imitate our methods by firing salvos of gas-bombs from their medium and heavy trench-mortars. For two reasons, they did not meet with much success. First of all, the bombs contained only about half the quantity of gas that ours did; and, secondly, the number fired simultaneously was much smaller, about fifty being the maximum. About March 1918, however, they began to use some of our projectors which they had captured in the November debacle at Cambrai. Even then, however, their success was limited, because of the excellence of our respirator, and the high standard of anti-gas discipline among the Canadians, against whom most of these attacks were made.

About April 1918, just after the great German offensive had started, there was a shortage of projectors, partly because of the fact that the enemy had captured some 30,000 of them, and partly because the newly formed and newly trained American gas companies were clamouring for material with which to get going. This being the case, the companies of the Special Brigade had to be employed in some other way. During the offensive some of them had their hands quite full. On the Somme three of them held up a hostile advance for four hours; west of Armentières one of them made a counter-attack, and in so doing delayed the advance there for some time. But others, fortunately for themselves, were not engaged in this way. In April a circular letter came from the General Officer Commanding the Special Brigade, announcing that there were about 100,000 cylinders in the country, and companies were not using them. As a matter of fact, companies did not want to use them, for projectors were at the same time less troublesome and, they believed, more effective. On the La Bassée sector, however, about 3000 cylinders were installed, and they were the source of more worry and trouble to everybody concerned than the results could possibly justify. The wind-limits at the particular sector affected were very narrow—W.N.W. to W.S.W.—and it was six weeks before a suitable wind came. Then the enemy discovered that the installation was being made, and naturally he gave that part of the line a warm time. He shelled it; he trench-mortared it; he raided it. He came over at night, tied bundles of hand-grenades to the emplacements, and exploded them by pulling a string. It was a great relief when the cylinders were finally discharged.

vi.

In May a new method was initiated by which thousands of cylinders could be discharged with the minimum amount of risk and labour. Light railway-trucks were fitted with wooden frames, in which a number of cylinders (the number varying according to the type of truck) were fixed firmly in an upright position. On the outlet pipe of each cylinder was fitted a specially prepared spigot which could be burst by a detonator. The detonator employed was an electrical one. All those in one truck were connected by insulated wires in series, and the trucks were connected in parallel. All the preparatory work was done at a railway siding three or four miles behind the line. Then, on a night when the meteorological section forecasted a favourable wind, the whole train, with its load of anything up to 2000 cylinders, was pulled up to a previously appointed position. All that had to be done then was to turn on the cylinder-valves and burst the spigots, the necessary current being supplied either by exploders or by the petrol-electric engine which pulled up the train. Thus the maximum effect was obtained, for the cylinders were all emptied at the same time, producing a very dense cloud which has been known to be effective ten miles behind the front-line system. The transport difficulty was overcome, and, apart from shell-fire, it was the greatest difficulty we had had to contend with. Where there was a light railway near the battery position, it was a comparatively simple matter; but that was seldom the case. Usually all the material had to be man-handled for a considerable distance, and that over shell-torn country or through tortuous and treacherous trenches. Moreover, all operations were carried out at night. When it is stated that the weight of a cylinder was from 160 to 180 pounds, and of a light projector 95 pounds, these facts will be sufficient excuse for the strong expressions of strong views that one heard from carrying-parties. But the new method dispensed with all this. It was extensively employed on the Lens-Arras sector during the summer of 1918.

Of course, it was not quite so simple as it may appear; there were a thousand and one details connected with one of these 'Gas Bean' attacks, as they were called, that entailed careful organisation and a considerable amount of labour. The infantry had to be cleared from the path of the cloud, trucks had to be hauled into position by men in cases where the state of the railway did not allow the engine to take the train to the discharge-point, the railway time-table had to be gone into very carefully to avoid accidents, railway maintenance parties had to be available in case of breakdown or the railway being hit by shell-fire, and a sharp look-out had to be kept on the direction and speed of the wind. The responsibility of the officer in charge of one

of these operations was indeed great—a miscalculation or an error in judgment might have involved the loss of hundreds of lives. Things did not always go smoothly. A slight bulge in the rails on one occasion caused ten trucks to be reduced to matchwood, and a whole train to be left in full view of the enemy for twenty-four hours. In another case the fact that one of the railway switches had not been adjusted properly caused the derailment of six trucks. But one could hardly expect that undertakings so big would pass off without a hitch; the conditions of inky blackness that sometimes prevailed would have upset the most carefully-thought-out schemes.

In the autumn of 1918 these 'Gas Bean' attacks were in full swing at those parts of the line that were then stationary or only moving slowly, in addition to the continued use of projectors, which had become more plentiful. At the beginning of November several companies were sent down to the American front to assist in offensive operations there. This time, instead of gas-bombs, bombs filled with high explosive were to be fired; but when preparations were almost complete the armistice was signed, and, of course, all operations were cancelled.

VII.

One aspect of the work of the Brigade which has not yet been touched on is the simulation of gas-attacks. Occasionally bombs filled with a smoke-mixture were fired, which, when they burst, formed a cloud very similar in appearance to a gas-cloud. As a rule such a shoot was followed by a raid. If it took place by day, the cloud served as a screen by which the raiding-party escaped observation from the flanks; if by night, the characteristic flash and report which the enemy had come to recognise made them don their respirators, and thus gave the raiding-party an initial advantage. Oil was also fired

in bombs (the 'boiling oil' of the war correspondents), but the only effect produced by it was, in army language, to 'put the wind up the Boche.' This was done very effectively at the famous battle of Messines, just before the nineteen mines were fired.

There is not the slightest doubt that the Special Brigade, R.E., fully justified its existence. Considering the relatively small number of men it employed, and the comparatively low cost of the material it used, it was the means of inflicting more casualties on the enemy than any other branch of the service. This is a big statement, but figures, incomplete though they are, bear it out. The Germans had good cause to regret that they introduced this powerful weapon of war, for, after the first year's experience, we gained a decided superiority in its use, and not only maintained but kept increasing that superiority right to the end. Where we gained the advantage was in the matter of concentration. In projector shoots, we could obtain concentration in which no one could live with anything short of an oxygen respirator. The ordinary respirator is effective so far, but the stream of gas through it may become so great that the chemicals in the box cannot deal with it. As a matter of fact, men were found in the enemy's lines fatally gassed with their respirators properly adjusted. On the other hand, no British soldier was ever gassed through his respirator if it was in good order.

The Special Brigade, R.E., is now all but non-existent. So far as the writer could gather from documents issued before he was demobilised, it was the intention of the 'powers that be' to retain only a small research and experimental staff, who will, no doubt (if gas is ever used again in war), have some rare concoctions to serve up to any nation that is foolhardy enough to test its strength with that of the British Empire.

ROCKS IN MID-OCEAN.

ALL the events chronicled in ships' logs or journals are not to be relied upon as strictly true, although recorded in perfectly good faith; mistakes can easily be made. Thus, in former days sea-charts were dotted over with innumerable little crosses designating places in mid-ocean where from different vessels rocks had been seen rising above the surface of the water. Now, as the result of persistent investigation, practically all these crosses have been removed from the charts, and ships sail freely over the spots where danger was believed to lurk.

When some previously unknown rock was first reported—on apparently good authority—to have been sighted on the ocean highway, it was, of course, necessary to issue a warning as to its

existence; but that in many cases the observers made great errors of judgment appears from the following.

Some years ago Captain Lloyd, of the sailing-ship *Crampton*, reported on his arrival in harbour that he had passed a rock which lay in 47° north latitude and 37° 3' west longitude, in the direct route of the transatlantic steamers. He described it as being about seventy feet long and ten broad, with only the central portion actually rising above the water; and it was completely covered with algæ. From a number of the large steamers a special look-out was accordingly kept when passing the spot, but no suspicious object was seen. Communications on the subject reached the United States Hydrographic Department;

and three vessels passed over or close by the place where the rock was reported as having been seen, but not a trace of it was found. In clear and fine weather the steamer *Ulstermore*, Captain Moore, reached the exact spot. Two men were placed at heights of about sixty and one hundred feet respectively above the water; the officer of the watch was on the bridge; and the captain was in the charthouse somewhat higher up. All kept a sharp look-out. Two days afterwards the *Aurania* steamed over the place, as did the *Lucerna* somewhat later on, and although the weather was still favourable, no sign of the supposed rock was seen from either of the vessels. It would seem as if Captain Lloyd had been deceived by some piece of wreckage. In the neighbourhood, indeed—in 46° north latitude and 40° west longitude—such an object was observed some time afterwards from the steamer *Ingram*. There was only one mast standing, painted dark yellow, and the wreck had evidently been drifting about a long time.

That reports of the finding of previously unknown rocks should not be treated with disbelief, however, appears from the case of the *Avocet*. Some years ago information reached England that the steamer *Avocet* had struck a rock in the Red Sea; but inasmuch as the spot where this was described as having happened was in a part which had for long been constantly traversed by ships, it was thought that some mistake must have been made by the captain as to its locality. Soon afterwards, however, the *Teddington* was wrecked on this rock, and it became necessary to ascertain its exact position. The warship *Flying Fox* spent several days in the search, but found only deep water everywhere; and the *Griffin* met with no better success, although she remained for more than a week at the place, took many soundings, and dragged the bottom with cables. The *Sylvia* stayed six weeks in the neighbourhood without any satisfactory result; but at last it fell to the lot of the *Stork* to discover the rock—not more than six hundred yards from the *Sylvia's* anchorage. At low-water there was not more than sixteen feet between it and the surface.

The steamer *Quetto* sank in Australian waters in 1890, from no apparent cause, when following a route which was traversed by many vessels annually. For a long time the coral reef which was suspected of being the cause of the accident could not be found; and when it was at length discovered by the gunboat *Paluma* there was barely ten feet of water between it and the surface.

In 1876 Captain Pearn was sailing in a small schooner inside the Great Barrier Reef, about fifty sea-miles to the south of Cape York on the Australian coast. When looking over the side of the vessel, his wife drew attention to the fact that the bottom was plainly visible. The captain was aware of the existence of this shallow, which had been sought for in vain on various occasions

by surveying ships, and was accordingly marked on the chart with the word 'doubtful' added. Nineteen years afterwards the steamer *Duke of Buckingham*, when passing over the spot during the night, struck something that was 'harder than water,' but suffered no material damage. Not until 1899 did the surveying ship *Dart* find a very small rock, with some ten feet of water over it, only one sea-mile from the spot described by Captain Pearn, and in the middle of the usual course of steamers. In the interval the little builders had reared their edifice of coral, and in view of the areas where their work is constantly in progress, it seems remarkable that such cases are not of more frequent occurrence.

Even the experienced eye of the seaman is sometimes mistaken as to the nature of objects appearing on the surface of the water.

When Admiral Beaufort was entering the river Plate in 1807 under a press of canvas, what was believed to be a rock appeared right ahead; the sea was breaking against it, and it seemed to be covered with algae and barnacles. Suddenly it disappeared. It turned out to be a whale.

In 1847, from the frigate *Owen Glendower*, a small algae-covered rock was seen about a mile away, with surf beating upon it. A boat was sent out, and not until it had approached quite near was the supposed rock discovered to be a large collection of mahogany wood.

In the China seas, from one of the tops of the warship *Dove*, what was thought by all on board to be breaking surf was observed in 1866. On closer investigation it turned out to be a fight between a whale and a shark.

In 1890, in the Pacific Ocean, breaking surf was seen from the warship *Alert*, and when approached it proved to be thousands of fish playing on the surface.

In 74° north latitude and 16° west longitude, in 1866, a large dead whale was seen floating in the Atlantic, and was taken for a rock, which is hardly to be wondered at, as it showed six feet above the surface of the water and was black on the top.

SONNET.

I WRITE my tropic thoughts beneath the sky,
Full-open to the air; and, meshed by fields
Of apple-green and purple, Nature yields
Me changing scenes of colour; and thoughts fly
Like wanton birds, who know that Home is nigh,
Yet love to haunt the azure-tinted shields
Of cloudland. . . . Thus my craftsmanship ne'er
wields

Its powers of weaving, as the hours flit by.

With light and hope my happy days are lit—
I watch the amorous insects, mating herds;
And I am all alone! But there are words
Full-ready to my pen; for, as I sit
Before my desk, I see the glow and wit
In your dear pictured face—my thoughts are birds!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday*.

IT is at all times a matter of importance to the people of Britain who becomes President of the French Republic, and at no time could the election of the Chief Magistrate of France have been of greater consequence than recently when M. Paul Deschanel was raised to the highest dignity his countrymen may award a man whom they respect, and in whom they have confidence as conductor of their destinies. The British people, then, have reason to be pleased and satisfied that the choice of France has fallen on this careful, experienced, cultured, and dignified statesman, who from the early years of his life has steadily aimed at the achievement of the highest offices in the Republic, even of the Presidency. It has not been recorded of him, as of so many who win the fame of high position, that at his birth such towering success was prophesied for him; nobody is known to have murmured when young Paul first displayed signs of an acute intelligence that he would one day become President of the French Republic. But it was soon apparent to all about him that he was making it his business to hitch his wagon to a star. And now for seven years he will be at the Elysée, the first Frenchman, chief of a brilliant race that has sacrificed much for its safety, honour, and ideals, and is now set the difficult task of restoration and advancement. It has always been a thing of much moment to us who might be chosen President, Britain and France being such near neighbours, with so many strong joint interests, and others which, with the best will of all parties, must inevitably conflict. Let the memory pass back to twenty, thirty, forty years ago, and we recall that Britain and France were not like good friends, trusting and assisting each other. For the improvement, with all its mighty consequences in the most recent times, King Edward, as we know, was the man most to be thanked. During the war Britain and France were drawn more closely together than ever before; the sentiment was everywhere expressed that a brotherhood cemented in such tremendous circumstances, amid such overwhelming common sacrifice, must needs endure and glow in pride and love while humanity held on its track of progress. The thought, the feeling, was sincere enough at that

time, in the heat and passion of war, but we know now, as not then, that in the most absolute sense no men are sane in war; their judgment is disturbed; they see things as they are not; they kindle fancies in their minds which may never be akin to plain reality. With peace, with the return to work, to the normal life of man struggling on to his unfathomable destiny, come calmness of mind and clarity of judgment. So in the case of ourselves and France, we appreciate and respect each other deeply and sincerely as before—but it is remembered in peace that, after all, we are of different races, and that it is easier for oil to mingle with other fluids than for a Latin people to extend to the full intimacy of brotherhood with those of another race, one of vastly different temperament. It has been realised that the relationship must halt at simple friendship and respect, with no tight-drawn bond, and with full liberty to criticise. France, indeed, exercised the right of criticism very early after the Armistice; her remarks upon our policy in Syria were such as in days before the German aggression might have created difficulties. She lectured us; she passed uncomplimentary opinions upon us through her Press. One looking for difficulties might have sworn that underneath carefully chosen words he saw a mild threat lurking. Since then France may have become a little suspicious in other ways. She thinks there were too many intrigues at the Peace Conference, and that we did too well out of that affair, at her expense. M. Deschanel speaks the voice of France—as by a splendid instinct he has always done—when he says that the hopes of 1918 have not been realised for his country. Such feelings are but natural; they arise from the Gallic temperament in strong reaction, and we on our part are perhaps not uncritical either. If we, and what we call civilisation, are to be saved we must be friends with France, and both parties know it. And, knowing it, they have made a bond—to fight again side by side if necessity should arise. There need, then, be no fears upon this point; but for the best results of the peace—such as it is—it is essential that the good relations between the countries should be assisted in every way possible, and that is why it is an excellent thing for Britain that Paul Deschanel is now President

of the French Republic, for he is a lover of our land and people, one who has always contended for policies that would bring the two in harmony.

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Apart from ourselves, the problems of foreign policy are extremely difficult at the present time; never were they more so. Wise heads are needed for their solution. And France at home, with many of her industries so sadly injured, and such vast expanses of her territory laid waste by a mad enemy, has gigantic difficulties to overcome. As she is France she will overcome them, and the belief of the good French that their glorious nation will rise from the fires of war greater than ever before will be justified. With that coming success Britain also, spiritually and materially, will be in many ways associated. For all such reasons, and for many more, it is, as we say, a matter of importance to us that a man like M. Paul Deschanel should become President. It is a sign also of the change of mind of our neighbours from a war to a peace condition. The services that M. Georges Clemenceau has given to France and the world in the hour of great crisis are too vast and too solid to be estimated, much less criticised. He was the man that France found in her hour of agony, and more than any other statesman did he contribute to saving her. He did so by the exercise of good sense, the pressure of a tremendous personality, and a peculiar bulldog, stubborn refusal to admit the possibility of defeat in any circumstances. Called to the Premiership when his people were in peril, he braced them to their ordeal, infused some of his own strength of will into them, and led them to victory as no other could. During this period M. Deschanel was President of the Chamber of Deputies, and it was his business—as it was his patriotic delight—to make orations suggestive of the glory of France and her unconquerable spirit, at the time of the opening of Parliament and on other occasions. His speeches glowed with love of country and pride in it; they were rich in hope; above all, they were finely composed and phrased, the deliverances of a cultured man of high thinking with a keen sense of the dignities. When M. Clemenceau became Premier, and made his first speech as such, the burden of it was, repeated many times, 'I make war! I make war!' He, so closely pressed by a relentless enemy flushed with success, would be aggressive against that enemy. This great patriot let loose the flood of his emotions, and, with his back to the wall, told Germany and the world that France would perish ere she would give way, and, meaning it, he made France mean it. That was the spirit that was needed. M. Deschanel, so different in mind as in appearance—a small, slender man, with fine sharp features—could not speak like that, though he is not less patriotic than M. Clemenceau. Reason, philosophy, thought, care of expression, a peculiar

sense of dignity, lead him always to a more restrained, a higher, method of speech. So, while M. Clemenceau was the best possible Premier for war, M. Deschanel is doubtless the best President for peace, and the choice of the one over the other (for M. Clemenceau, who was not unwilling to become President, but yet not ambitious for the honour, withdrew when a preliminary vote had shown him that at least M. Deschanel would hotly contest the election, and might quite likely defeat him) represents in some measure the change from the war to the peace feeling in France. There are some, especially in this country, who seem not to understand how it came about that the great Clemenceau, the idol of his people, he whose war services were so supreme, was not the unquestioned, unopposed successor of M. Poincaré, as indeed, until within a few days of the election at Versailles, it appeared he might be. But that may be because of an insufficient understanding of the French spirit, the deep convictions and the essential desires of this exclusive and brilliant people. Among those who understood there was no such confidence that M. Clemenceau would find himself at the Elysée, nor is it considered that France will lose by the selection she has made. M. Deschanel, elected by the greatest majority ever given to a President—734 votes out of 888—is a fine man for the leadership of France in her most difficult years. He will exemplify the French spirit in peace as M. Clemenceau exemplified it during war.

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Here, as it may seem, one may be making to some extent an inaccurate comparison by associating a Premier with a President, but it is not so. The President chooses the Premier, and the latter in constructive work is the man who counts for most in France. M. Deschanel, careful, methodical, cold, of perfect equilibrium, actuated always by reason and hard judgment, as unprejudiced as man may be, has as his first Premier M. Millerand, who voted against him at the Presidential election at Versailles; and we shall hear much of Millerand in the future. This new Premier (presumably M. Deschanel's nominee, though actually appointed by the outgoing President) is sixty-one years of age. Beginning life as a barrister, he crept into journalism, in which occupation so many of the best and most flaming minds in France have found their satisfaction, and was associated with M. Clemenceau in the production of *La Justice*. In the Chamber he became an ardent reformer, and one of the best speakers on the Extreme Left. For a long period he edited the organ of the Socialist Union, called *La Petite République*, defended many trade societies in the law-courts, and, with Briand and Viviani, he assumed the control of *La Lanterne*. Becoming a Cabinet Minister for the first time in 1898, when Waldeck Rousseau was Premier, he passed successively from Com-

merce to Public Works and then to War—in 1912 under Poincaré. After a year of this office, he took to championing the cause of national defence, for he had come by a keen appreciation of the forthcoming German aggression. Under Viviani also he was Minister of War; latterly, until called to the Premiership, he was Commissioner-General at Strasbourg. Such is the Premier; he is a man of much power in France, and vast responsibility. M. Millerand has a ponderous and most serious task in front of him, not only in the matters of foreign policy and constructive work for overcoming war effects at home, but in manipulating the politics of his people to the best advantage; for, though it is easy to say that Socialism was routed at the last election in France, all know how it was done, and that Socialism there is not less strong than formerly, a serious factor among the political forces of the State.

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But, having seen what M. Clemenceau was as Premier, and how much greater he bulked in wartime than M. Poincaré as President, enormously valuable as was the effort always of the latter, the islander who may hitherto have concerned himself little with French affairs and methods (feeling now, as do all, that, what with war and aeroplanes and so many other things both good and bad, we are hardly islanders more, and it behoves us to get to study upon all Continental men and things) may be disposed to inquire as to where the President enters into the general scheme of France, and how it comes about that M. Deschanel is now of more importance than when President of the Chamber of Deputies, an office in many respects comparable to that of Speaker of the House of Commons. The idea of those who are not French, and are not of the understanding that comes by positive knowledge, often goes astray in comparison between the President of the Republic of the United States and the President of the French Republic. They see Mr Wilson acting vigorously, definitely, and with high responsibility for the United States, and being no mere figurehead, but a worker who all the time is in the maelstrom of politics; and they have seen M. Poincaré, and now M. Deschanel, enthroned almost, as one would say if not dealing with republics, on high at the Elysée, there, in great republican state, receiving kings and princes from foreign lands, and exercising a wise discretion in impartial advice to the troubled leaders of the people and others of high importance who seek assistance and consolation from the Chief Magistrate. But there is a wide difference between the powers and privileges of the Presidents of the two republics; their offices are not planned alike. The American President is Chief of the State and Chief of the Government at the same time; the French President is Chief of the State alone. He is surrounded by all the appearances of power, but all know

that in many respects his chief business is to fulfil the appearances of authority, and that it is the Premier who possesses most of the reality. Yet the President has great powers also, and one of the mysteries of the parliamentary régime in France is the part in effective direction that the Chief of the State possesses. The list of the President's attributions is wonderful and long. He can prevent the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate from assembling for more than five months in the year, and even within this time he may in special cases suspend the sitting for a month or two. He promulgates the laws that have been passed by both Houses, but may refuse to promulgate any law that he considers bad, instead calling the attention of the country to it, and demanding a fresh consideration of the Bill in question. In agreement with the Senate he may dissolve the Chamber, this right of dissolution not being given to the President in any other republic. To foreign countries he stands as the sole representative of France; his signature is that of France. He concludes treaties with foreign states, and may even make secret treaties. Any such treaties, however, that affect the area of France or her colonies must be approved by Parliament. He may make and unmake Ministries; he awards appointments to all civil and military offices, has the right of individual pardon, and can be called to account only if charged with high treason. Such are the regulations and the privileges, but the personal coefficient has counted for much since the establishment of the Republic. The men who have held the office have one by one established traditions in connection with it which have had a collective effect, and that inevitably in the way of restriction. This is held to be a chief reason why M. Poincaré, a man of rare qualities, found himself to some extent crippled during his term of office when France was passing through the most terrible crisis of her history. The Presidency of the Republic has been reproached with being a 'parliamentary monarchy,' but this is an exaggerated idea, since in countries where the monarch is in some measure autocratic he superimposes himself upon the democracy, and the Premier is his instrument. Such a monarch is tolerated, but the President is elected. It is said that this election is to him an invitation to persevere in the exercise of his temperament, and even to exaggerate it, and thus the decision of Versailles must have great repercussions upon the destinies of France.

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It is worth while, then, to glance at the record and the personality of the new President of the French Republic, friend of Britain as he is, known everywhere for his thoroughness, his tact, and his impartiality, and calm, calculating judiciousness, the latter qualities strikingly exemplified during the years that he occupied

the difficult office of President of the Chamber of Deputies, a circumstance, among others, which has tended to keep him out of mere party politics. It is remarked that during the long exercise of this office he never made an enemy; that all parties, violent in their opposition as they have been, had equal confidence in him; and that his honesty and impartiality were never challenged. When the times for his election to this office came he was given it by a unanimous vote. So he has studied politics of France from a neutral base in a way that no other President of this, or perhaps any other, republic has ever done, for it is an interesting fact that he has never held any Cabinet appointment. Sixty-three years of age, he was born in exile at Schaerbeek, a suburb of Brussels, his father, a professor of literature and a considerable intellectual force in the Paris of his time, having been banished from France by the Second Empire for his Republican opinions. Deschanel *père* attached himself to the same cause as Victor Hugo, and the poet dedicated a poem to him. And here in passing is the opportunity to mention that, despite the fact that M. Deschanel is a lover of literature, a very considerable writer (having published sixteen books), and a member of that exclusive body the Académie Française, he has himself written only one poem, or, anyhow, only one has reached the printers. It concerns his father's exile, and was written in reply to some verses of congratulation that the parent sent to him when he was elected to the Académie. These are the new President's verses:

Dès le berceau j'appris le nom de la patrie
Interdite à nos pas, et d'autant plus chérie !
Ton exil pour le droit m'enseigna le devoir.
J'appris sur tes genoux que 'vouloir c'est pouvoir.'

Et maintenant, assis sur ton épaule, o père,
Je vois loin. . . . C'est le fruit de ta longue misère.
Le sort, qui semblait dur, avec son lourd marteau
Forgeait sur ton exil notre avenir plus beau.

The Belgians in these days feel they may congratulate themselves on the peculiarly interesting and agreeable fact, in view of the alliance during the war, that their land gave birth to the new President. It was at 176 Rue de Brabant, which is now a draper's shop bearing the sign of the Boule d'Or, that he first saw the light, and not long since a tablet was attached to the building bearing the inscription: 'Ici est né Paul Deschanel, Président de la Chambre des Députés du beau pays de France.' He has, moreover, Belgian blood in his veins, for his mother was a native of Liège. Educated at the Sainte Barbe College and the Lycée Condorcet, eventually he took degrees in letters and law, and began his political career in 1878. The terrible days of '70 and '71 were slipping away into the history of the past; the Empire had gone; the Third Republic was settling down. He himself in politics is a moderate Republican. Sub-prefect for Dreux in 1878, after occupying various ana-

logous offices, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies by the constituency of Eure-et-Loir in 1885. During eleven years he steadily gained in parliamentary prestige, so that in 1896 he was elected Vice-President of the Chamber, and two years later became its President for the first time. This onerous post he held till 1902. He was re-elected in 1912, and in 1914 was selected for the office a third time. The chief characteristic of his exercise of it, apart from the impartiality and the tact which have been mentioned, has been his admirable serenity at all times. It is said that he always preserves his equanimity, is always serene, even when the violent emotions of his French heart threaten to disturb the clarity of his judgment, and that he can discern the light when the rest of the Chamber sees only cloud and the deep shadows of doubt.

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As we have said, M. Deschanel has written many books, and has devoted himself to literary and political subjects. It was far away back in 1883 that he first became author by virtue of a work on *The Question of Tonkin*, as to which it is remarked that France even to-day feels the benefit of it in the matter of Eastern policy. Next year there came from his pen *French Policy in Oceania*, and again a year later there appeared *French Interests in the Pacific Ocean*. In these works he developed a line of foreign policy and argument, and made such close studies of a question of the utmost importance to France, that he was chosen to preside over the Commission of Foreign and Colonial Affairs. Some years later, after an experience of parliamentary men and things, there came *Orators and Statesmen*; then in his literary efforts he departed from politics for a while, and produced *Feminine Figures* and *Literary Figures*. To politics he returned, and most of the remaining works have been devoted to the subjects with which he has been chiefly concerned; but his last book of all, published in 1913, was a brilliant study of Lamartine. This is to show that France has for her President now no mere politician, but a man of the highest culture and refinement, who has a soul above mere political things, as the good President should always have, even though in his impartiality he is conjoined to politics all the time.

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The personality of the man is interesting. He is in all respects precise. His neatness, always so dapper and nice, is an outstanding characteristic, and from his youth onwards he has always been an extremely well-dressed man. In passing, mention has been made of the strong French emotions that he controls so well that nothing of them is ever seen—at least when it is desirable that they should be hidden. But it was not always so. M. Deschanel has fought a duel, and whom was it fought against but

M. Clemenceau himself! It was in July 1894 that these two personages, since risen to the highest places, quarrelled about a debate in the French Chamber on the anti-anarchist laws. M. Deschanel had severely attacked M. Brisson, and in *La Justice* M. Clemenceau retaliated, and said strong things of M. Deschanel, which resulted in the latter challenging the 'Tiger' to a duel, which was duly fought with swords at Boulogne. M. Deschanel was slightly wounded on the forehead, honour was satisfied, and now on his election as President he took the initiative in preparing an address to M. Clemenceau, who had in a certain measure been his rival for the Presidency, expressing France's acknowledgment of the 'unforgettable services' the retiring Premier had rendered to his country. M. Deschanel is a happy family man, with a charming wife, a daughter of seventeen, and two younger boys. Never hitherto has there been a President of the Third Republic who has had children with him at the Elysée. Mme.

Deschanel will impart distinction to the social side of things. A brilliant woman, while her husband was President of the Chamber she ruled a *salon* which was a notable centre of parliamentary personages and cultured Paris. During the war she exerted herself with energy and enthusiasm on behalf of the Red Cross. Some people will say that M. Deschanel is fortunate thus to become President in such circumstances. In some ways it may be so; but he has earned the honour, is worthy of it. And think of that tremendous vote at Versailles! In that there is no mere fortune. However, here, in ending, it may be added that the first test of his candidature was made on what he regards his best day of the month, and that is the thirteenth! 'My life is very simple,' says he. 'I was born on the thirteenth day of the month, I was married on the thirteenth day, and on the thirteenth day they designated me in the Chamber as candidate for the Elysée.' And so, *Vive la France!*

FIFINE'S PROBATIONER.

PART II.

I.

AT this juncture there were three possibilities which might have helped the situation. The first was, had Jerwood been less hopelessly in love, and better able to look after his own interests; the second was, could Miss Martindale have been induced to withdraw; and the third was that Fifine should wake up from her present absorption in everyday amusements and take her fate in her own hand. Not one of these possibilities, however, appeared in the least degree likely. And in this way four months elapsed.

For Jerwood it had been a time of much-varying experience. Of course, there was the almost daily rapture of meeting Fifine; but, on the other hand, there was the drawback of hardly ever having her to himself. Aunt Bobo took too warm an interest in the young people to leave them to themselves. Then, as we have seen, there were constant little mortifications being devised by the said aunt for his benefit. For, however delicate and uncertain might be his position in relation to her niece, there was nothing either delicate or uncertain in the use made by Miss Martindale of her assumed right to snub him or to administer unpalatable advice. Under this trying regimen, enforced in these peculiar circumstances, a lad of less fine nature than Monty's might easily have been betrayed into committing himself. He might either have been cowed into a dull and spiritless demeanour, or provoked to angry retaliation. Neither of these things happened to Jerwood,

who contrived to retain, amid repeated provocations and brow-beatings, not merely his good temper and his cheerfulness, but his dignity as well. In a young man of character as yet imperfectly developed, his forbearance was distinctly creditable. And to what do you suppose he owed it? To that 'possible strength in actual weakness,' which is love. The thought of Fifine carried him through. And though 'twas, after all, but a mean and petty persecution, the man who can bear himself well under petty persecution is seldom the worst man in a tighter place. And I believe that this was true of Jerwood.

'Now that you know him better, dear Martindale,' said Lucy Laurillard to her sister-in-law one day when they sat alone, 'I hope you like him better? Oh, I do so hope it!' She spoke with fluttering amiability, awaiting an answer.

'Well, really, I hardly know what to say,' replied the she-dragon at length. (It was seldom indeed that *she* would go half-way to meet any one.) 'I've no particular fault to find with the young fellow! It is simply that he wants *that*, as Sir Joshua Reynolds once said of some painter or other who had all sorts of qualities and yet failed to please.' And Miss Martindale snapped her fingers contemptuously. 'I'm afraid, Lucy, that to want *that* is a serious failing, and the worst is, there's no getting over it.'

For a time she had been wont to sneer at the young solicitor as one who couldn't say *Bo* to a goose. But his cool and skilled management of a boat in difficulties on Filey Brig some weeks

before had deprived that criticism of its effectiveness.

Poor Lucy sighed a sigh of disappointment. It was so seldom that things in this world went altogether happily.

'Perhaps it is more to the point to know what Fifine thinks of him,' resumed Martindale sententiously. 'Apropos, I asked her yesterday, and she said he was the "right sort." Strange girl!'

'She is a strange girl, sister. There's more in her than one suspects. Do you know, I asked her the same question this morning.' . . .

'Well?'

'And she said he was "one of the best."'

'H'm! Of course, neither of these two slang phrases means much—probably not much more than that it's convenient to have the use of a car. For a child of her years and temperament, Lucy, your daughter is uncommonly reserved. Still, she's not altogether a fool, and I shall be much surprised if she fails to resist the blandishments of Mr Monty Jerwood! A few weeks will show.' And Fifine's aunt laughed an acid laugh.

II.

Things were in this position—a position by no means altogether satisfactory to any one of the parties concerned—when something happened to the Laurillards—something which, in its own way, deserves to be described as one of the most unexpected things that have ever happened to so quiet and unpretending a family. In order to understand what it was, it is necessary to premise that the Laurillard estate was at this time owned by the erudite and eccentric Simon Square, the family historian; that his years already exceeded the allotted span; and that he was without direct heirs. Well, one morning there was delivered at the small house at the base of Oliver's Mount a letter written by this gentleman's solicitors, and addressed to Mrs Laurillard, which contained an astonishing announcement. This was, in effect, that, having devoted the best years of his life to investigating family records, and having in the process developed a great reverence for old families and an equal unwillingness to see their possessions alienated, Mr Square had decided to hand back the Laurillard estate to the present head of the Laurillards; and, furthermore, that, with the object of evading the succession-duty, to which he was in principle opposed, he wished the change of ownership to take place at once, rather than at his demise. . . .

Having read thus far, though but vaguely grasping the import of what she read, Mrs Laurillard began to shed silent tears, and handed the letter to her sister-in-law. Miss Martindale read it with raised eyebrows.

'Can it be genuine, sister?' questioned poor Lucy, dimly suspecting a hoax.

For some moments Martindale held her opinion in reserve, unwilling either to betray emotion or to deliver herself at random. 'I see no reason to think otherwise,' said she at length. 'The notepaper and the signature are those of a well-known Lincoln's Inn firm, and, now I think of it, I have often heard old Mr Square described as a man much swayed by antiquarian sentiment, and quite capable of acting fantastically, as I suppose the world would call it. I had scarcely conceived, however, that it might enter his head to make Fifine an heiress.'

'My Fifi?' softly screamed poor emotional Mrs Laurillard.

Her sister-in-law regarded her severely. 'Really, my dear Lucy,' protested she, 'I do most heartily wish that you would be more sparing of your Fifis and your Fifinettes! Does it not occur to you that at your time of life they are just a little ridiculous and get upon folks' nerves? And surely, with all the childish fuss you make, you haven't waited till now to realise that, since the death of Cousin Carileph without issue, Josephine is head of the Laurillards!'

Lucy Laurillard drew a deep breath. 'Then Josephine is heiress of Laurillard?'

'Heiress; or, perhaps, more strictly, owner,' returned Martindale with imperturbable calm, 'for old Simon doesn't seem to have thought it necessary to consult us before giving effect to his whim. But, I presume, we shall not boggle over that.'

By this time Lucy's tears were flowing freely—those tears which were her refuge alike in joyful and sorrowful moments, perhaps especially in the former.

'Let me call Fifi and Monty, Martindale,' she exclaimed, rising impulsively from her chair.

But Martindale laid a restraining hand upon her. 'A single moment, Lucy!'

So Lucy unwillingly sat down again, whilst Martindale resumed: 'I believe that even you, my dear, must recognise that this crisis calls for very careful handling.'

She spoke so very gravely that the younger lady grew alarmed. 'How so?' she asked with bated breath.

Then Martindale played her ace of trumps. 'Why, does it not occur to you that this is an opportunity vouchsafed by Providence for getting rid of that troublesome entanglement?'

'You don't mean the engagement with poor Monty?'

'The entanglement with poor Monty, if you please! Not the engagement; for engagement there is none, nor ever has been—he himself must acknowledge that. . . . Yes, surely you comprehend, Lucy, that if Miss Laurillard of Laurillard was too good for young Jerwood when "of Laurillard" meant no more than an inscription on a visiting-card, then ten thousand times

too good for him must she be when "of Laurillard" means a landed estate?'

Lucy raised her hands and dropped them despondingly. 'What on earth are we to do?'

It seemed that the moment for which the aunt had been striving had at last arrived. She answered firmly, 'Leave things to me.'

And Lucy seemed about vanquished; she answered nothing. But at that instant a third voice spoke: 'Rather leave them to me!'

III.

The speaker was Fifine, who had slipped unnoticed into the room, and, hearing her own affairs being discussed, had allowed the discussion to proceed uninterrupted—which was possibly not quite sporting of her. Both the elder ladies were taken by surprise. But, recovering her composure with an effort, Miss Martindale inquired, 'And pray, niece, what would you propose?'

There was offensive patronage, covert aggression, in her tone; but Fifine kept her coolness. 'I'll tell you in a moment, auntie; first I want to call Monty. It's only right that he should know of this letter mummy has received; and as he knows all about the law, he will be able to tell us what to think of it.' And before her aunt could stop her, Fifine was out of the room and was heard calling Monty.

He came at once, and when the children (in some respects they were scarcely more) entered the room Lucy noticed that they were hand-in-hand, and thought they made a pretty picture.

Without demur on the part of the aunt, who perhaps realised that it would be useless, the lawyers' letter was handed to Jerwood, who carried it to the window for quiet study, and reported that it was in proper form.

Here Lucy felt emboldened to assert herself. 'Let me understand,' she said, raising one hand to her brow; 'is dear Fifine, then, really Miss Laurillard of Laurillard in the very fullest sense?' And she glanced appealingly at Jerwood.

But no lawyer, be he ne'er so immature, ever answers simply 'yes' or 'no.' So young Jerwood now replied that if things were truly as they appeared to be, and if nothing unforeseen supervened, then Fifine might really regard herself as having the fee-simple of Laurillard vested in her. (To have put the matter plainer than this would have been to fail in what was due to himself.) And, more by the expression with which he said it than by what he said, the ladies gathered that this rigmarole meant yes.

'How delightful! Kiss me, Fifi.'

The speaker was Mrs Laurillard. But once more Fifine surprised them. 'In a moment, mummy,' she replied. (On Jerwood's return from the window, she had placed herself beside him and

again taken his hand.) 'In a moment; but I must kiss Monty first. And I may as well tell you and aunt that we've decided to put an end to that stupid probation, and be engaged like other people.' Then, as an afterthought, she added, 'That was before this news about the estate reached us. But, of course, that makes no difference, does it, dear?'

So Fifine, the sleeping beauty, was awake at last! That is, supposing she had really been asleep, and not merely pretending, or allowing people to think her so. In any case, however, my analogy now breaks down, for it was she who kissed the prince—or, at least, she kissed first.

Meantime, if angry feelings were always expressed in terms of sound, there would have been a thunderstorm going on in the room, for Aunt Martindale was raging inwardly. 'We have decided'—these words of Fifine's kept resounding in her ears; 'decided,' if you please, without reference to herself, the aunt who had been such a good friend to the family! Truly Fifine had not been long in presuming upon the change in her position! The little minx, indeed! And as she sat fuming thus, Miss Martindale was again and again within an ace of springing to her feet and proclaiming her intention to leave the house. But, with all her infatuated desire of domination, she was not wanting in masculine sense, which, in the nick of time, suggested that her dread announcement might fall flat. To the good, affectionate Lucy it would, of course, be terrible; but even she would soon get over it. And as for those bad young people (so different from the young people of her own day!), so entirely absorbed were they in one another that they might even take it without turning a hair! Besides, how would it suit her own book not to be on friendly terms with the family, now that they really were once more Laurillards of Laurillard? On the whole, then, she decided to think better of first impulses, and, whilst the youngsters rushed off to tell the elder Jerwoods, she devoted herself to convincing tearful Lucy that the happy turn things had taken was very largely due to herself. And in one sense this may have been true. For I shouldn't be surprised if Monty's conduct under difficulties had done much to awaken the observant Fifine to a true sense of his merits. At any rate, as they hastened towards the Crescent, Fifi observed, 'You dear old boy, how well you stood her tantrums! I tell you, I couldn't have done it! I was often sorry for you.'

To which Monty made lordly reply, 'Pin-pricks, my dear! . . . No, to tell you the truth, it was just a bit galling at times. But it was for you.' . . .

And if it hadn't been a public place . . .

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WASHING UP MADE EASY.

FEW domestic duties are more irksome than the constantly recurring washing up of crockery after each meal; hence it is only natural that inventors should have directed their efforts towards minimising the work involved in this operation. In the 'Premier Washerup' dirty crockery is cleansed and dried without any hand-work at all other than that of placing the pieces in racks. The apparatus consists of a galvanised steel cupboard with folding-doors, fitted with a wire shelf at the top for cups, and graded racks below for saucers, plates, and dishes. The cups are inverted, and water is squirted into and round them through a series of jets. After cleansing the cups the water drops on to the crockery in the racks below and removes all grease and dirt. The 'washerup' is mounted next to the sink, and a short length of rubber tube with a Royle's hose fitting is connected to the hot-water tap for a few minutes, when, hey presto! the work is done! The actual washing up being completed, the apparatus next serves as a plate-rack, in which the pieces gradually dry, so that no wiping is necessary. In small households the crockery can be put to soak in cold water in the tank at the bottom of the 'washerup' after each meal, the lot being cleansed at the end of the day.

EMERGENCY FLOATS FOR 'LAND' AEROPLANES.

Aeroplanes are divided into two classes—(1) those fitted with wheels for 'taking off' from, and alighting upon, the ground; and (2) flying boats or seaplanes, which float on the water. During the war some 'land' aeroplanes were provided with detachable floats that could be cast off or retained according as to whether a 'landing' was to be made upon the ground or on the sea. In the battleships and large cruisers, small machines were flown from runways on the big gun shields. Such machines were necessarily of the land type, with wheels for alighting, and if they came down on the sea would sink. To enable these and other aeroplanes to alight upon water with safety Squadron-Commander Busteed devised bags made of balloon fabric. The bags were fixed under the lower wings between the leading edge and the front spar, and when folded flat produced no appreciable effect upon the machine's powers of flight. When it was proposed to come down on the sea the flaps holding the bags flat against the wings were released by pulling a cord, and the bags were blown up by air from a compressed-air starting-bottle. These bag-floats, in conjunction with a permanently inflated bag in the fuselage, were capable of keeping a machine afloat. An improved edition of this apparatus is now available for all machines which

have to cross the sea, although primarily designed for rising from and landing upon the ground.

THE 'TELEDICTAPHONE.'

A familiar object in many business and editorial offices is the dictaphone, an instrument which records on wax cylinders letters or articles spoken into it, with a view to their being reproduced at will and transcribed by a typist. The principle underlying its construction has been extended recently to telephone messages by the addition of what is known as a 'vibration motor,' which so amplifies the vibrations of the human voice as transmitted through the telephone that they are capable of cutting a record on wax. Major the Hon. Lionel Guest (brother of the Coalition Whip) and Captain H. O. Merriman, a Canadian electrical engineer, are responsible for this development. Referring to the possibilities opened up by the invention, Major Guest made the following statement: 'I think in the near future it will be possible for a receiver to be placed in a part of a hall, say in Manchester, where the speaker's voice is hardly audible, and at the other end of the wire in London the message will be recorded verbatim by the "telephone recorder" for instant reproduction through ear-pieces to the newspaper-offices. If the receiving operator misses a word he presses a button, and the line, or any number of lines, is repeated as often as he likes.'

A SITTING-ROOM RANGE FOR THE KITCHEN.

Now that so many households are reduced to one fire, a sitting-room stove of ordinary appearance that is capable of performing all the functions of a kitchen-range should prove invaluable in the small house or flat. This feature is to be found in the 'Interoven' cooking and sitting-room stove, which contains an oven, a hot plate, a boiler, and a hot chamber or under-oven, while presenting the appearance of a handsome sitting-room fireplace with a suitable mantelpiece. When they are closed one would never suspect the ornamental panels below the mantelpiece of forming an oven door. The door is hinged at the bottom, and can be lowered to a horizontal position, in which it may be used as a temporary support for the viands on their way to or from the oven. Bread, pastry, or cakes can be baked in the oven, which is large enough to take a 12-lb. bird or an 8-lb. leg of mutton. Equally deceptive is the back of the fireplace, which pulls down and forms a hot plate. The boiler occupies the usual position at the back of the fire, but, unlike the boiler in the ordinary kitchen, it is not bricked in, and can be taken out after disconnecting the flow and return pipes from the hot-water cistern. An ash-drawer is arranged under the grate with

the hot chamber below it, this chamber becoming hot enough to bake milk-puddings, pies, &c. A swing-trivet is arranged at each side of the stove, and these can be used over the open fire or with the hot plate down. Dampers are provided for controlling the draught. All the flues are self-contained, and are easily cleaned; in fact, every part of the stove is readily accessible. Compared with that of the ordinary kitchener, the consumption of coal in these stoves is very small, while the advantages are obvious of cooking in a sitting-room and keeping up a supply of hot water without any sacrifice of æsthetic appearance.

THE HELICOPTER.

The idea of a flying-machine which should draw itself vertically up into the air by means of horizontal propellers mounted on vertical spindles has always attracted the attention of inventors. Two propellers rotating in opposite directions are obviously necessary, as if only one were used the fuselage or body of the machine would turn backwards as fast as, or faster than, the propeller turned forwards. Some interesting experiments were carried out during the war with a view to developing this type of flying-machine, which is known as the helicopter. The idea of the experimenters—Dr Peter Cooper Hewitt and Professor Francis Bacon Crocker—was to reproduce the lifting action of an aeroplane's wings in a circular direction, so that a straight lift upwards would be produced without horizontal motion. Instead of the ordinary design of air propeller, therefore, a type consisting of aeroplane-wings mounted upon a cross-bar was developed. Each propeller has two blades or wings 15 feet long and 30 inches broad, which are fixed to a tubular steel cross-bar, the distance from wing-tip to wing-tip being 51 feet. The vertical spindles are, of course, tubular for lightness, and that for the upper propeller revolves inside the one for the lower propeller, and in the opposite direction. Particulars available at the time of writing, which have been taken from *The Rudder*, indicate that a lift of 20 lb. per horse-power has been obtained from these propellers when turned by two electric motors at seventy revolutions per minute, this pull being said to be twice the thrust per horse-power given by the ordinary aeroplane propeller. In an actual helicopter means will be provided for tilting the spindles over at an angle, when the propellers will give a combined lift and forward motion. It is easy to understand that such a machine would have many advantages over the aeroplane, as it would be able to rise straight upwards, to hover over one spot if required, and to come down gently exactly where desired.

A STOVE FOR BURNING SAWDUST OR PEAT-DUST.

In our issue for April 1918 we published a description of 'A Simple Stove which Burns Saw-

dust,' and it is interesting to observe that among the exhibits to be seen at the recent 'Ideal Home Exhibition' was a stove of this kind. It consists of a plain sheet-iron cylinder closed at the bottom, and mounted on four legs. At one side, near the top, is a hole for the flue-pipe, while a smaller hole low down on the other side admits air. The sawdust or the peat-dust is not put directly into the stove, but is packed into a sheet-iron container, and in order to allow a flow of air through the fuel a central wooden pin and a horizontal pin to meet it from the air-hole in the side are fixed in position before the container is packed. These pins are withdrawn when the container is firmly packed, leaving a passage from the air-hole to the central flue. The container exactly fits the stove, and the air-holes in each coincide, while the top of the container comes just below the flue. After the container is in place a lid is put over the top of the stove, and the fuel lit at the air-hole, when it will burn steadily for from five to seven hours without attention. This stove, which is known as the 'Cendra,' measures 2 feet 3 inches in height and 14 inches in diameter, and the container holds 16 lb. of sawdust or 14 lb. of peat-dust. It gives out enough heat to warm a moderate-sized office or conservatory, for which purpose it is very suitable. A kettle can be boiled on the top if desired.

WASHING-MACHINE FOR THE HOME.

Now that laundries are charging such high prices, many housewives prefer to have the washing done at home. Washing, however, is one of the most irksome and laborious of domestic duties, and it is not surprising that numerous machines have been devised with a view to eliminating the more objectionable features. Among the washing-machines to be seen at the 'Ideal Home Exhibition' was one known as the 'Thor,' which appeared to present many claims for favourable consideration. The washing is done in a galvanised iron tank, rectangular at the top, but rounded at the bottom. Inside is a horizontal wooden cylinder, built up of staves with gaps between them and with a line of holes along the middle of each, the aim being to allow the freest possible circulation of the hot soapy water with which the tank is charged up to about the middle of the cylinder. A sector of the cylinder is removable for the insertion of the dirty clothes, and it is fitted with longitudinal ribs which carry the clothes upward a certain distance as the cylinder is slowly revolved (first in one direction and then in the other), until they fall off into the water again. Naturally, if the cylinder were full of clothes this action would not take place, and experience has shown that the best results are obtained when it is rather less than half-full. The inside of the cylinder is carefully smoothed, and all corners are rounded, so that the most

delicate articles can be washed without risk of damage. At one end of the tank is a wringer of the usual design. An electric motor under the tank drives both the washing-cylinder and the wringer, either together or separately, through suitable reduction gears and shafts, which are all completely closed in. The wringer may be run in either direction. It is claimed by the makers that a good-sized washing can be made ready for the line in an hour at a cost of a penny for electricity, while the machine can be connected to any lamp-socket. A special feature of the 'Thor' machine is a device on the motor spindle which protects the motor from damage if the cylinder or the wringer is stopped by some obstruction. Different sizes of the machine are made, adapted for the various needs of large and small households, hotels, clubs, and institutions.

A SILENT WICKLESS OIL COOKER.

In country districts where no gas is available cooking must be done by means either of a coal-range or an oil-stove. Owing to the high price of coal and the difficulty of getting it, the former must be ruled out in many households, leaving the oil-stove as the only source of heat for culinary operations. Two kinds are available, those with wicks, and those in which the paraffin is vaporised and blown through a fine jet under considerable pressure. The former smell and are difficult to keep clean, and the latter make an irritating roaring noise, and are dangerous if left unattended for long periods. A new design of wickless paraffin burner has been brought out recently which is silent in action, gives a flame without any yellow in it, and can be safely left alone for an hour or more. This type of burner is to be found in the 'Supreme' oil cookers and water-heaters. The cookers are furnished with two or more burners, mounted under holes in a hot plate supported on legs. At one end is the oil-reservoir, with a self-contained air-pump and a pressure-gauge. In the largest size the reservoir serves four burners, one being used for a portable oven, the others being available for boiling as required. The oil is also available as an illuminant, giving, with an ordinary mantle, a pure, white light. In the 'Supreme' water-heater the heater is mounted on three legs above the burner and the container; a piece of rubber hose with a tap-fitting connects the apparatus with the bath-tap. Even a copper can be heated by one of these burners, the water being boiled almost in the time it takes to start a coal-fire. All the burners can be turned up or down by small needle valves, independently of the pressure in the reservoir.

MINE EXPLOSIONS CHECKED BY NON-EXPLOSIVE DUST.

One of the many dangers in coal-mines arises from the liability of the coal-dust to explode; moreover, what would otherwise be local explosions are spread along the headings by the

dust they stir up, and become serious conflagrations. Experiments have shown that if the coal-dust is mixed with a proportion of non-combustible matter, such as the dust from slate or stone, it will not burn, and this fact is taken advantage of to localise explosions in some American mines by mixing the first rush of air with stone-dust. This dust is contained in boxes along the roofs of the headings, clear of the traffic, and so suspended that the jar of an explosion causes them to discharge their contents instantaneously, thereby rendering the coal-dust non-combustible.

FLOOR-SCRUBBING MADE EASY.

That women go down on their knees to scrub floors has always been a source of surprise to the sailor, and he frequently wonders why the handiest of all cleaning implements—the mop—finds so little favour with the housewife. In a ship decks are scrubbed with the help of long-handled brushes without stooping, and are afterwards dried with mops. Until recently mops have been rarely used in houses, for the simple reason that there was no convenient method of wringing the water out of them. This difficulty is now overcome by an implement known as the 'Spirette,' which comprises a long-handled scrubbing-brush, a mop, and a wringer, all the metal parts being of aluminium, so that the total weight is only 3½ lb. When the scrubbing-brush is in use the mop is carried in the wringer clear of the floor. By a simple turn the mop is slid down over a spring similar to that in the stick of an umbrella, and put into use, while the scrubbing-brush is held above it. The wringer is of the shape and size of a pudding-basin, but the sides are formed of bars. By giving the mop a few turns in it the water is squeezed out and runs into a pail, to the inner side of which the wringer is attached by metal hooks. With this implement floors are scrubbed and wiped dry, the operator all the time maintaining her upright position. Moreover, boiling water and strong disinfectants may readily be used, as the hands never touch the water or the mop. It is often said that women have not got the inventive faculty, but here is a practical machine devised by a woman for women.

A NEW DEVICE FOR PREVENTING TIRE-PUNCTURES.

It is safe to say that during the last twenty-five years hundreds of patents have been taken out for the prevention of punctures in pneumatic tires. In most of them the central idea was to make the tire impenetrable to nails and other injurious articles. A recent inventor approached the problem from a new angle by studying the process by which the nail gets into the tire. He found that (1) nearly all nails lie *flat* on the road; (2) in motor-cycles and cars 90 per cent. of nail-punctures are in the *rear* tires; (3) punctures occur most readily at *high speeds* and

on *dry* roads; (4) the front tires are pierced by *short* nails, the rear tires by *long* nails. From these observed facts he concluded that rear-tire punctures are caused by the front tire turning objects on end, with the result that if the rear tire reaches them before they fall again, it is pierced. Experiments conducted over a track strewn with nails verified this theory; not only were the nails seen to act thus, but they were caught 'red-handed,' as it were, by a high-speed camera. The puncture-preventer designed as the outcome of these observations and experiments turns down nails as fast as the front tire turns them up, and so the rear tire is saved. The form of it suitable for motor-cycles consists of a specially constructed rubber-canvas flap, 3 inches wide, usually mounted on a scroll spring attached to a curved steel bracket fixed by one bolt through the fore-end of the rear mudguard, but occa-

sionally attached to the silencer or to a special adapter. The flap 'covers' the rear tire, and clears the road by half-an-inch. It lasts for about 25,000 miles, and can then be renewed cheaply. The puncture-preventer has kept the inventor free from punctures for 25,000 miles; previously he had forty-seven in 11,000 miles. On one occasion he rode for seven hours over a track strewn with thousands of nails. So long as the apparatus was in position, no damage was done; when it was removed, rear punctures came thick and fast. Forms of the preventer suitable for motor-cycles are already on the market; models suitable for cars and cycles will be ready shortly.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XII.—*continued.*

IV.

SELWYN looked down the stable, and in the dull light he saw the Hussar officer standing in the stall by the mare, crooning some endearing words, while the beast, in her delight, rubbed her face against his clothes and whinnied her plea to be taken for a gallop over the fields.

Not wanting to disturb him, or give the impression that he had been watching, Selwyn softly withdrew by a door near the dogs, and after giving Mathews a half-sovereign, made a circuit of the lawns and approached the house as if he were coming from the woods. As he did so young Durwent emerged from the stables, followed by a collie-dog that jumped and frolicked about him as he walked. Noticing the American, Malcolm crossed over to where he stood, proffering a cigarette.

'Have a gasper, Selwyn?' he asked.

'Thanks very much. I suppose it will be some time before the British Army will get into action?'

'I don't know, I'm sure,' answered Durwent, holding a match for the other, 'but three weeks at the outside ought to see us over there and ready.'

'The Germans have a tremendous start.'

'Yes, haven't they? Damned plucky of Belgium to try to hold them up, isn't it? Though, of course, you can't expect the Belgian johnnies to keep them back more than a few days.'

'You think, then, that she will be conquered?'

'Ra-ther. That's a cert. But I don't think it will be for long.'

'You mean that the British will drive the Germans back?'

'Not all at once, but sooner or later. Of course, I'm an awful muff on strategy—always was—but the general idea seems to be that we go over now and stop the bounders, and then our dear old citizens gird up their loins, train themselves as soldiers, and chase the Germans back to Berlin.'

'But—isn't it an open secret that your regular army is very small? Can you seriously expect to stop that huge force once it sweeps through Belgium?'

The Englishman picked up a stone and sent it hurtling across the lawn for the collie to chase.

'Ever play "Rugger"?' he asked.

'Rugby? Yes.'

'Then you've often seen a little chap bring a big one an awful cropper.'

'That is true, but the cases are hardly parallel.'

'Perhaps not,' said the other, rather relieved at not having to maintain the analogy any further; 'but, then, the beauty of being a junior officer is that one doesn't have to worry. I wouldn't be in old man French's shoes for a million quid, but for us subaltern johnnies it looks as if we'll have some great sport.'

As the two young men, almost of an age, stood on the rich carpet of the lawn with their figures outlined against the open background of the fields, they presented a strange contrast. The Englishman was dressed in a rough, brown tweed, and though there was a looseness about his shoulders that almost amounted to slouchiness, they gave a suggestion of latent strength that could be instantly galvanised into great power. When he moved, either to throw something for his dog or just to break the monotony of standing, his movements were slow and deliberate, and he took a long pace with a slight inclination

towards the side, as is the habit of cavalymen and sailors. His eyes were a clear, unsubtle blue, and though his skin was tanned from exposure to the elements, its texture was unspoiled. His hair was light brown, and, while closely cropped, in keeping with military tradition, was naturally of thick growth; in the centre where it was parted there was more than a tendency towards curls. From his lip a slight moustache was trained to point upwards at the ends, and beneath the tan of his face could be seen the glow of health, token of a decent mode of living and a life spent out of doors.

There was a frankness of countenance, a certain humour which one felt would rarely rise above banter, and the whole bearing was manly and attractive. But search the features as he would, Selwyn could not discover any lurking traces of undiscovered personality. Malcolm's very frankness seemed to rob him of possession of any hidden, unexpected veins of individuality. He was essentially a type, and of as clear Anglo-Saxon origin as if he were living in the days before his breed was modified by inter-association with other tribes.

Selwyn recalled the words of Mathews: 'Milord, you're a thoroughbred, you are.' . . . This youth was of a race of thoroughbreds. Maternal heredity had skipped him altogether; he was a Durwent of Durwents, and heir to all the distinction and lack of distinction which marked the long line of that family.

And opposite him was an American whose two generations of Republican ancestry led to the paths of Dutch and Irish parentage. Selwyn had never tried to discover the cause why his paternal ancestor had left the Green Island, or his maternal ancestor the land of dikes and wind-mills; it was sufficient that, out of resentment against conditions either avoidable or unavoidable, each had resolved to endure the ordeal of making his way in a land of strangers. Austin Selwyn bore the marks of that inheritance no less clearly than Malcolm Durwent bore the marks of his. In his features there was a certain repose, as became the part-son of a race that had produced the art of Rembrandt, but there was a roving Celtic strain as well that hid itself by turn in his eyes, in his lips, in his smile, in the lines of his frown. In contrast to the clear Saxon steadiness of Malcolm Durwent, his own face was constantly touched by lights and shadows of his mind, lit by the incessant prompting of his thoughts that demanded their answer to the riddle of life.

Although his build was fairly powerful, Selwyn's well-knit shoulders and alert movements of body spoke of a physique that was always tuned to pitch, but one missed the impression of limitless endurance which lay behind the easy carelessness of Malcolm Durwent's pose.

'I want to ask you, Durwent,' said the

American, 'more from the stand-point of a writer than anything else, if these men of yours who are going out to fight are actuated by a great sense of patriotism, or a feeling that the liberty of the world depends on them or—well, in other words, I am trying to discover what it is that makes you men face death as if it were a game.'

'My dear chap,' said the Englishman, with a slightly embarrassed smile, 'there again we leave it to the fellows higher up. Naturally, if Britain goes to war, it isn't up to her army to question it one way or another. Of course, back in our heads we like to feel that she is in the right—but, then, I don't think Britain would ever do the rotten thing, do you?'

'N—no, I suppose not.'

'You see, a chap can't help looking at it a bit like a game, for there's Belgium doing an absolutely sporting thing, and there isn't one of us that isn't straining at the bit to get over and give them a hand.'

With a slight blush at this admission of fervour, the Englishman grasped his collie-dog by the forepaws and rolled him on his back.

'But,' said Selwyn, unwilling to let the bone of discussion drop while there was one shred of knowledge clinging to it, 'supposing that Britain were in the wrong and you fellows knew it, yet you were ordered to war—what then?'

His companion laughed and thrust his hands in his pockets.

'Oh, we'd fight anyway; and after we had knocked the other chap out we'd tell him how sorry we were, then go back and hang the bounders who had brought the thing on. But then, you see, you're riding the wrong horse, because soldiering's my job, and I was always an awful muff when it came to jawing on matters I don't know anything about. You had better get hold of some of our politician johnnies—they've always got ideas on things.'

v.

A little later the Honourable Malcolm Durwent left Roselawn in a motor-car.

As it rounded the curve in the drive he turned and waved at the little group who were standing in the courtyard, and then he was lost to sight. And in the hearts of each of the three there was a poignant grief. Lord Durwent's head was bowed with regret that at Britain's call he had been able to give one only of his two sons. Dry-eyed, but with aching heart, Elise stood with an overwhelming remorse that she had never really known her elder brother. And Lady Durwent, free of all theatricalism, was dumb with the mother's pain of losing her first-born.

And as the heir to Roselawn went to war, so did the sons of every old family in the Island Kingdom. In something of the spirit of sport, yet carrying beneath their cheeriness the high

purpose of ageless chivalry, the blue-eyed youth of Britain went out with a smile upon their lips to play their little parts in the great jest of the gods.

Not with the cry of 'Liberty!' or 'Freedom!' but merely as heirs to British traditions, they took the field. Of a race that acts more on instinct than on reason, they were true to their vision of Britain, and asking no better fate than to die in her service, they helped to stem the Prussian flood while home after home, in its ivy-covered seclusion, learned that the last son, like his brothers, had 'played the game' to a finish.

Let the men who cry for the remodelling of Britain—and progress must have an unimpeded channel—let them try to bring to their minds the Britain that men saw in August 1914, when

catastrophe yawned in her path. That picture holds the secret for the Great Britain of the future.

VI.

It was almost the last day in August, when the little British Army was fighting desperately against unthinkable odds, that a brigade of cavalry made a brave but futile charge to try to break the German grip. The —th Hussars was one of the regiments that took part, and only a remnant returned.

Staring with fixed unseeing eyes at the blue of the sky, which was not unlike the colour of his eyes, the Honourable Malcolm Durwent lay on the field of battle, with a bullet through his heart.

(Continued on page 279.)

THE CARDINAL'S SON.

By NORMAN ANGLIN.

I.

FOUR hours after sunset rose the moon. As it floated out of the blurred mists covering the rice-fields and mounted into the clear sky, it seemed like a great silver globe glittering in the cold night-air.

There were scarcely any trees on the landscape, but along an embankment, raised only a few feet above the level of the rice-fields, ran the old royal road from Madrid to Santa de Jatellon. It being winter, the road was seared with great ruts, which were filled with ice.

A tremendous coach, all weather-stained crimson and gilt, rolled heavily as the wheels crunched through the icy ruts, and every now and again the cumbrous top-heavy structure would give a terrible lurch, so that it seemed it must overbalance and fall over the edge of the embankment. Six mules jogged steadily ahead, tugging unevenly at the traces, the steam from their nostrils floating back and around the coach; the coachman slept. Half a furlong behind the coach three horsemen rode wearily.

Inside the coach was dim twilight, for neither of the blinds across the door windows was drawn. Stretched on the back-seat, covered with rugs, a short, stout person was sleeping noisily. On the front-seat, beside a small leather trunk and a tray covered with broken food, sat a man muffled to the eyes in a dark cloak; whilst on the floor, among a great litter of clothing, including a large velvet hat with gaudy crimson feathers, a boy lay curled up, also asleep. The windows of the coach rattled as it lurched to and fro; two glasses jingled together on the tray amongst the broken food; the sleeper on the back-seat snored gruffly.

A series of unusually laboured snorts, and

this traveller awoke with a start, slowly sat up, glanced towards the windows, shivered. It was a woman, a dark-eyed, heavy-lidded southerner—beautiful; but her beauty was too matured, her full cheeks had lost their bloom, there was a querulous curl to her lips, and the modelling of her fine nostrils suggested inordinate pride—a woman of thirty.

Although she rearranged her pillows and tried to settle again, she quickly gave up the contest for further sleep and began shouting, 'Sem! Sem! Here, Sem, is there any wine left?'

The muffled man awoke, blinked drowsily, cursed under his breath for an instant, and then answered, 'Here is wine, your Grace. Will you take food?'

'I will. 'Tis only on a full stomach one can keep warm in this infamous vehicle. Is the boy sleeping?'

'He is, your Grace.'

'Be certain, for I would tell you something of which I have never before spoken. We approach the city, do we not? You said we should arrive before midnight.'

'The road is very heavy, your Grace,' the man murmured as a sudden lurch of the coach threw him against the tray, which he only just prevented from falling on to the sleeping child.

'It is this I would tell you, Sem—— But first put your head out of the window and see if the escort is within sight; sometimes the rascals will stop at a *fonda*, and then linger a couple of miles in rear. Put your hand through the front-window and pinch the coachman—you should do these things regularly and as a matter of course, and without my having to tell you; one would think you had never travelled before. Now give me all your attention—— Sem! are you listening?'

'I am listening, your Grace,' replied the man wearily.

'That child is asleep?'

'He is sound asleep, your Grace.'

'Sem, do you know who he is?'

'Why, he is your Grace's page-boy.'

'Fool! He is the cardinal's son.'

'What is your Grace saying? Not Cardinal José?'

'Who else, fool? Don't stare at me like that, or I will have you whipped. I was a young woman eight years ago. But enough of that. Now, listen to what I say, Sem. We shall be driving into Santa de Jatellon while men are asleep—that is, if they do not delay us at the gate. The coachman knows the way to my sister's house, and one of the men of the escort—look again if they are within sight!—one of the escort, Sem, will attend me out of the coach on my arrival at my sister's house. You must go straight to the Archbishop's palace—but first pluck one of the feathers out of the hat on the floor there.' The duchess's steward leant forward and reached for the crimson-plumed hat. 'Sem! carefully, man. Do not spoil my hat. Go to the Archbishop's palace and nail that crimson feather to the door. Don't gape at me like that, fellow! Am I an idiot that I should litter my coach with nails, hammer, and a great plumed hat? Nail that feather to the door of the palace; you understand? Then come quickly to my sister's house and tell me that it is done. I have not seen my sister for five years, not since José was appointed to Santa de Jatellon. You remember him when he was chaplain to the king? And you suspected nothing. Did you suspect, Sem?'

'I suspected nothing, your Grace.'

'I was never sure. You were a faithful steward, and I feared that had you known you would have told the duke. Silence, fellow! You would have told my husband for certain. You were his steward before you were mine. I have been able to trust you only since his Grace died. But when I took the boy for my page, six months ago, what did you think then?'

'I thought he was your Grace's page.'

'You were always a fool, Sem; but fools are faithful. So now you know where I am going to get the five thousand doubloons that are required for the estate. Sem, how far are we from the city? Lean out of the window. Can you see the trees that grow along the banks of the river?'

II.

There were more than one secret stair in the Archbishop's palace at Santa de Jatellon; and it so happened, at the hour when the great coach of the Duchess Aduana was being admitted to the city through the Castellon gate, that Cardinal José was not alone in his room.

The cardinal was pacing to and fro across his bed-chamber noiselessly. Half-a-dozen candles guttered on a centre table, on which was spread out an immense chart, decorated with dolphins, galleons, and an elaborate representation of the mariner's compass. At the table sat a tall, gray-bearded Spaniard—El Capitan Ximenes Calomarde, commander of a galleon lying in the harbour of De Jatellon, waiting to sail for the Spanish Main.

When they spoke, the two men addressed each other almost in whispers. Every now and again the cardinal would pause in his restless pacing and stand opposite the table. Although it was never referred to, the secret between the two men was that Cardinal José—having substituted glass for the precious stones in the saintly shrine of the cathedral—had found the gold wherewith the expedition had been fitted out. The cardinal was ambitious, desiring power; he looked forward to returning to Madrid and dictating the policy of the already failing king, or—better still—of his youthful successor.

Over his night-shirt the cardinal had thrown a purple cassock embroidered handsomely with thread of gold. He was a heavy-shouldered man with long, powerful arms; piercing black eyes burned in a face that was unhealthily pale and yet strongly moulded. An aggressive face—and his action was aggressive as he stopped suddenly beside the table and smote it heavily with his lump of a fist.

'I would I were going with you, Ximenes—to be free of all the petty grovelling that everywhere surrounds me.'

'You would make a sailor,' *el capitan* replied, as he laid aside the lens with which he had been examining the New World.

'Should I? You think so? Ah, Ximenes! to meet men as equals, to assert one's individuality without relying on the weight of one's position! To be free of all the trammelling consequences of position! Oh, it is terrible to go on and on, to have to go on always, strengthening not one's personality but one's position!'

'But why—why—why not?'

'Yes, why should I, Ximenes?' Suddenly the cardinal stopped speaking. His keen ear had caught the sound of hasty knocking that ceased as abruptly as it began.

El capitan sat behind the candles watching the cardinal's face, waiting for him to say what he had been about to say. But Cardinal José turned and approached the window; he drew aside the heavy curtains and peered through the casement down into the street, looking towards the gate of his palace, for his sleeping-apartment was situated in the upper storey of a tower that stood at a corner of the building. Then *el capitan* watched the cardinal throw the window open; the candles guttered heavily; some papers lying on the chart fluttered and glided to the floor.

When *el capitan* had recovered these papers and arranged them again on the table, he saw that the window had been closed, the curtains drawn again, and the figure of the cardinal was disappearing through the concealed doorway that opened on to the secret stair descending to the gate.

Down the narrow stone stairway the cardinal groped his way. He was wondering greatly, for he had caught sight of a cloaked figure hurrying away from the gate down the street.

A few minutes later he was returning, groping his way back to his apartment.

A crimson feather! Nailed to his gate! So he had a son. He had often suspected the fact, but why had the Duchess Aduana waited all these years before revealing her secret to him? Well, he was glad. He had always wanted to have a son, one who would grow to be a man, whom he would train himself, who would gain by his experience and profit by his mistakes.

The cardinal thrust the feather under his cassock before he stepped out into the candle-light again.

'Ximenes, I may come with you yet. You sail at dawn to-morrow? Good! To-day send me a suit of sailor's clothing and a sailor's cloak.'

The cardinal's eyes burned fiercely in his pale face as he grasped the hand of the man who had risen eagerly from the table.

III.

Sunlight streamed into a long, low room richly hung with old brocades and furnished with heavy high-backed walnut chairs; on a side-table was an array of massive gold plate, and behind the gilded arm-chair that stood on a dais at the end of the room hung a great curtain of embossed leather, all black and crimson.

The cardinal was receiving the Duchess Aduana in private audience. The duchess was attended by a single page-boy. Every one, even the cardinal's secretary, had been ordered to leave the apartment.

'Five thousand doubloons, Isabella! It is impossible—impossible, I say.'

'But think, your Eminence. You surely remember the letter from the French ambassador that, years ago, you removed from the king's mail-bag before it reached His Majesty?'

The cardinal, always pale, grew ashen gray; only, his eyes seemed to burn more fiercely in his face. The duchess continued: 'You remember also that you lost that letter? But you did not know that it was I who stole it from you. José, that letter is worth more than five thousand doubloons to you.'

'Woman! I have already taken the jewels from the shrine of our saint; the silver bell of Santa Antonia has already been recast; but——You say I can have the boy?'

'Surely! I can do little for him. I had not thought you would desire to have him. But

I must have five thousand doubloons, your Eminence.'

'Ah! Then there is only one way left. Yet that way even I shrink from following. But if you will help me—remember, Isabella, I am to have the boy—if you will help me, I will try that way.'

The Duchess Aduana was silent; but Cardinal José had risen from his chair, descended from the dais, and was pacing up and down the audience-chamber.

'It is this, Duchess Aduana. From one archbishop of Santa de Jatellon to another there passes a secret—a secret guarded for two centuries by many seals, even the key to a great treasure—but the occasion has not yet arisen when any prelate has dared to use it. In the tomb of one of my predecessors lies a great treasure. It was amassed by an unworthy priest; it was buried with him. Now, you will come to the little door in the south wall of the cathedral to-night, and you will bring our son with you. Then you and I will slide back the stone of the tomb, and I shall give you the value of five thousand doubloons, and you will give me the letter and—our son.'

Cardinal José stopped suddenly in his restless pacing, stopped before the child, and, lifting him, held him at arm's length, his eyes bent on the frightened face of the little page-boy. 'Yes,' he exclaimed at last, 'he is the cardinal's son!'

An expression of amazement came into the petulant, haughty face of the woman who had once been a famous Court beauty, as she watched the cardinal gently lower the child to the floor and gravely stoop to kiss his brow.

IV.

The footsteps of the cardinal echoed noisily in the darkness of the great silent cathedral as he made his way to the little door in the south wall of the choir. The sound of his footsteps resembled anything rather than the quiet, quick shuffle of a priest in some holy place; and instead of his cassock the cardinal wore a great cloak of a coarse material. In his hand he carried a tall candle in a jewelled ecclesiastical stick—only the cardinal knew that the jewels were false.

In a few minutes he was retracing his steps, but now he was followed by two figures—the bulky one of a stout, heavy woman, and a slight one that could only be a boy's slim form.

The cardinal led the way up into the choir; past the gloomy stalls of the choristers that in the candle-light seemed to the frightened child like a row of tall, ghostly, shivering figures; past the great oaken lectern with the stout candles set on either side of the great books, and up steps to the presbytery. There, close to the high-altar itself, he stopped before a simple stone tomb, bearing no effigy, but only a long Latin inscription on the great slab that formed the side.

The cardinal placed the candlestick on the pavement beside the tomb, and, kneeling, groped along the dusty masonry of its base. The Duchess Aduana was amazed when she noticed he was wearing heavy top-boots of coarse, unpolished leather. She watched him until he suddenly straightened himself on his knees; then he leant against one end of the tomb's side-slab, and it gradually sank inward, hinging on a pivot, so that the other end swung outwards.

The cardinal seized the candle. The duchess could not restrain her curiosity; she too knelt on the pavement, and they both peered into what, however, seemed to be an empty space.

'Perhaps, José, the lower stone moves also,' she murmured, creeping a little closer towards the opening.

For a moment the cardinal did not reply; then he turned to the boy, who was standing behind them, and exclaimed in a hoarse whisper, 'Run to the lectern, boy, in the choir there, and bring me one of the candles.'

As the child hurried away the duchess turned to the cardinal petulantly: 'So the treasure has been stolen!'

'No, Isabella; no, no. See! you are nearly in the tomb. Creep a little farther and feel if you can discover a ring sunk into the second of the pavement stones. No, the next one, a little farther.'

The duchess was already more than half-way into the tomb, when the cardinal turned to the boy and took from him the candle that he had secured, whispering at the same time, 'Run back again, boy, back to the lectern, and bring the other candle also.'

The cardinal's son hurried away across the pavement, trying not to look into the shadows clustered everywhere about and before him. Down the steps from the presbytery to the choir he ran, climbed the wooden steps to the great lectern, and drew the second candle from its socket. Then he ran back to where the cardinal was rising from his knees by the tomb.

'Here, boy! Take both the candles and place them again where you found them. Quick, sirrah!'

But the boy hesitated, frightened by the harshness of the man's whisper, glanced past the cardinal at the tomb, and then his eyes were raised to the ghostly silver figures, faintly lit in their niches on the reredos by the flickering light that the cardinal held. He had heard a sudden muffled scream, but he could not see the duchess, his mistress, anywhere. The cardinal was pushing him towards the steps leading down into the choir. Again he heard a muffled scream. Utterly terrified now, he hid his face in the cloak of the man urging him down the steps. Losing his footing on the steps, the boy stumbled, and falling, tripped up the heavy man to whose cloak he was clinging. And the cardinal fell headlong with him.

The body of his son broke the cardinal's fall on to the hard marble pavement at the foot of the presbytery steps. The candlestick shot out of his hand. He slowly picked himself up, groping in darkness. For a moment he stood listening. Yes, he surely heard a faint moaning—but it was not from the figure at his feet, which was utterly silent.

Stooping quickly, he lifted the boy in his arms and hurried towards the vestry and the door communicating with the palace, only stopping his hurried flight from the inky vastness of the cathedral when he found himself again in his bed-chamber. Even then he still heard in his ears the sudden muffled scream from within the tomb that he had closed.

Candles were burning on the table; he advanced slowly and held the face of the boy he carried to the light. For a long while he stood, not even the muscles of his face or his eyelids quivering, gazing down on the little head that was bent stiffly and unnaturally towards one shoulder. At last the cardinal crossed the room and laid the body of his son upon the bed.

V.

So soon as it was daylight there was a great firing of cannon from the harbour, where the galleon of El Capitan Ximenes Calomarde was setting sail for the Spanish Main.

When the monk who was the cardinal's secretary hurried into the bed-chamber to waken his master, he shrank back amazed, doubting the witness of his eyes.

He saw four great candles burning about the bed, on which a small figure was lying, laid out as though for burial. And then he saw that beside the head of the bed a solitary figure was sitting, as though watching the corpse—a man in coarse clothes, the hood of his cloak drawn over his head, which was sunk to his chest. So still did he sit that the monk hardly dared to approach him.

At last, having spoken holy words in Latin several times, he approached the figure and threw back the hood from the face. It was the stern white face of Cardinal José that he saw, yet curiously unrecognisable, for the lids were lowered over the piercing dark eyes. The lips were pale, and the whiteness of the cardinal's face was as the whiteness of wax.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE INFRA RED RAY.

By 'R.E.'

PART I.

I.

IN the autumn of 1916 I found myself stranded at Abbeville *en route* for Boulogne and leave in England. On my way to the '*Tête de Bœuf*' in the evening my thoughts turned on my friend Grant Haswell, and I wondered what part he might be playing in the world-war. Imagine my surprise, then, when the waiter was gone to bring coffee and I was scanning the cosmopolitan crowd one meets in that well-known hostelry, to see Haswell himself sitting at a small table, wearing the uniform of the Royal Engineers!

He caught my eye at the same moment, and came over, smiling, to shake hands. 'I'll join you if I may, old thing,' he said gaily, hanging his Sam Browne on a convenient hook and holding up two fingers to the waiter.

I expressed my pleasure at seeing him, and asked him if he was on the same errand as myself.

'Yes; I've got ten days this time, and am going by the Boulogne route—special leave, like yours. Don't ask me that,' he said, as I looked at him questioningly. 'You're so beastly frightened you'll lose that pass that you put it in your cigarette-case, which you've opened once and felt at twice since we sat down. In fact, Craven, you're a bit jumpy—which isn't to be wondered at after the knocking about you've had on the Somme.'

'Why, I haven't seen you since, with my humble aid, you caught old Von Hilsener, the spy, just before the war; and I certainly haven't said anything that wouldn't pass the censor in my letters.'

'No; but you are still wearing the flash of the Nth Division, and I know you are Brigade Signals, and that your division was on the Somme and amongst it.'

'You're about right, Haswell; we had a rough time—all of us. Now what about you?'

'Well, I've had several jobs in the last two years; but, if you like, I'll tell you about one which will interest you, as an officer of the Signal Service, and as an old colleague in the gentle art of spy-hunting.'

Knowing Grant Haswell as I did for one of the cleverest amateur detectives England has

produced, I nodded eagerly. The son of an English country gentleman, a shrewd student of human nature, an accomplished linguist, Grant Haswell had two favourite hobbies—applied science and mystery-solving, in both of which he excelled. When he could combine the two Haswell was at his best; and from his last remark I gathered that the adventure he proposed to relate was a case in point.

'Go ahead,' I urged.

II.

'I dare say you've noticed how news gets across to the old Boche,' he began, 'generally in about three days (which usually doesn't matter much), but sometimes nearly crisp from the hob and in time to allow him to anticipate a move of ours, or to shell a new trench-mortar position or O.P. even before it has had a chance to do any useful work. I divide this information under two headings—purely local news, and news of large movements over big areas. Now, you may have heard that where the line runs through the colliery area, notably opposite Lens, there was some time ago a considerable leakage of news of our movements to the Boche.'

'For various reasons, but mainly because General Vernon (whom you knew as a captain) was aware of my interest in this sort of work, I was selected to try to trace this leakage to its source. My knowledge of French was a recommendation, and, as you know, I have also a fair grasp of German. I was given information as to what had been done already, and was frankly told that all theories tested had broken down, and that over a front comprising five sectors, with Grenay as a centre, our work was always interfered with by shelling, fire from fixed rifles or machine-guns, &c. I asked by what means it was supposed that news was getting over to the enemy, and was informed that the mine-workings had been suspected as having an outlet into territory occupied by the Germans. The positions of outlets on our side were known, and had been watched or stopped up by explosives after consultation with the mine directors. Other workings were flooded and impassable. A watch had been kept for lamp and smoke signals, and buried electric-power cables had been tapped

and "listened into." In fact, signals of all kinds, including semaphore, had been closely looked for, as the news must have arrived in great detail and fullness at the German headquarters. Aircraft photographs were ruled out, because movements invisible from the air had been included in the leakage. The Boche listening apparatus or amplifying telephone could not have got it, as some of the units concerned in the work never used the 'phone, nor had directions been given otherwise than on paper to the O.C. Having got this and such other information as the general could give me, I left his place with *carte blanche* to try my luck.

'From the first I agreed with the rest that some very excellent form of telegraphy was probably the means by which the news got across, but how it was worked, and by whom, seemed to be the puzzle. There was little doubt that the centre of operations was near Grenay, and near Grenay there was a very large civilian population engaged in working some of the mines within easy range of the Boche light artillery, which seldom disturbed them, though occasionally it dropped a few shells about Les Brebis, Mazingarbe, and Bully Grenay.

'Now, supposing the installation were in this district, what form could it take? There were four feasible forms—wire, wireless, pigeons, and visual. Of these the last appeared to me the most likely. Pigeons, or wireless with its noisy generator or accumulators to be charged, seemed too likely to be detected for the wily Boche to use them. To search for wires or old buried power-cables entailed an endless quest, and from the German point of view, this method appeared too easy of detection, as our listening sets could have picked up signals by either means; so I decided to look for some sort of visual.

'A lamp in a rifle-barrel flashing Morse signals can be read with a telescope at two miles under certain conditions; and if the barrel is blackened, it has a very narrow angle of dispersion. Such a device would, however, have had to be worked from near our front line to avoid detection, and answered in some way by the receiving-station. I considered that if this means had been used, it would have been discovered by the very sharp watch kept during the last few weeks.

'Suddenly it occurred to me that the Germans might have perfected an idea which was worked on by a friend of mine in 1915, but which, I believe, was never made use of by us. The principle was to send out a concentrated heat-ray and pick it up with a thermopile. Now, a thermopile is, as you know, an instrument of extreme delicacy. With it the heat given out by, say, a cow in a field can be detected from a distance of 200 yards! If the source of heat were great and a powerful lens system introduced, a concentrated heat-ray could be produced capable of affecting a thermopile at a very considerable distance, say in the German line. The system

would be workable day or night, and invisible and unreadable without special apparatus. Supposing the "infra red ray" or any similar system to be the one employed, it appeared well-nigh impossible, even if I obtained the necessary receiving-apparatus, to pick up signals in transit, owing to the extremely narrow pencil of rays which would be used, and the fact that the stations would probably be placed high up on the rising ground, making interception from our front line or anywhere near it impossible; for, as you will remember, the line runs along the valley on the whole of this front.'

III.

'Having settled that the difficulties of interception were too great,' continued Grant Haswell, who had paused to light a cigarette, 'I decided to confine my attention to the discovery of the sending-station on our side. To walk about in daylight on the front slope of our position facing the Germans was suicide, and would have probably flushed the game, anyhow; so I employed the day in making myself conversant with the network of trenches in front of Grenay, and studying the trench-maps for likely positions for signal-stations. I took no trouble to disguise the fact that I was engaged on the work, believing that even if I did not prevent the spy carrying out his reconnaissances, it would put him at his ease, should he become aware of my existence, so long as I made no attempt to approach his suspected hiding-place. After some days I was generally known throughout the five sectors to be in search of the "Boche signaller," as he was called, and regularly chaffed at the various Messes.

'I then altered my tactics, and instead of going about in the front and support lines, frequented the almost deserted reserve line. There were several fine O.P.'s there, and I used to look forward at the hills near Lens and Vimy and think how any point would do as a receiving-station, provided the apparatus used had the requisite range. I came to the conclusion that it probably had not, and began to examine more carefully with my binoculars the various chimney-stacks and pit-head gears nearer the lines, both on our side and on that of the Boche.

'On the German side there was a pit-head, known as Fosse 16, long suspected as a centre of German observation and fire-direction, though it looked battered and deserted enough to allay any suspicion on our part. Opposite, on our side, were several similar battered pit-heads, and one of them, Fosse 11 of Béthune, was close on my right. This was in a better state of preservation; and though nobody could safely approach it in daylight, I knew of several important projects which were in full swing there.

'As I lay in the long grass and poppies and looked over this deserted and shell-pitted ruin of French enterprise, it struck me that its piles of

timber and extensive *crassiers* (pit-banks or dumps) would be just the place to conceal the sort of station I was looking for. I was lying a few yards from the trench, and had taken no pains to conceal myself, as the grass made me invisible from the front. Two dull bangs from somewhere in the German lines, a loud hiss, and two splitting explosions a few yards off made me tumble into the trench and run down a communication-trench at right angles, just in time to avoid two more shells pitched close to the last. Those shells had been fired to close direction, and had been fired at me, I was sure. I was also fairly sure that they had been directed from somewhere near Fosse 11 of Béthune. I was surprised and flattered, too, that the Germans should think me worth four shells.

'Next day I went and examined the place where I had been lying, and discovered in the chalk-dust near by the footprints of a man in Ordnance "issue" boots. The hardness of the ground, and the fact that he had gone away by the trench on the "duck-boards," made following up the "spoor" impossible, and I continued my way to a private O.P. at an R.E. advanced headquarters, near the support-line. On the way back I was walking along the trench with my steel hat off, when two cracks, one at a few hundred yards, and the other apparently a foot from my ear, made me duck instinctively. The north side of the trench here was low, and through a gap in the grasses I saw Fosse 11 and the brick-stacks framed before me. Those were rifle-bullets aimed at me. I sat down and drew a pencil-line on my trench-map through the fosse, and the point in the trench where the bullet hit.

'Two days afterwards I was getting on to my "Douglas" at the signal-test station near the outlet of the communication-trench, when a bullet chipped the angle of a ruined house behind which I used to leave my bike, and went through a gate opposite. I drew in that line also on my map, allowing for a slight deflection of the bullet.

'That line produced intersected the previous one in the brick-stacks near Fosse 11. That night I smoked several pipes over the matter, and came to several conclusions. The outstanding one was that whoever was behind our lines not only knew that I was after him, but feared me sufficiently to take considerable risks to put me out of the way. Possibly he had met me face to face in the trenches, as he probably had a British uniform and must move about to get his information. Again, assuming he was lurking near Fosse 11, he could easily have recognised me with glasses as I lay in the grass on the day of the shelling, or passed the low-sided portion of the communication-trench on the previous day. Now, why should he risk detection by shooting at me with a rifle in broad daylight? The others had not been molested. Evidently he had heard of me before

in connection with some other investigation; and somehow the Von Hilsener case came into my mind at the moment, and I remembered how the Press got hold of my name and published my photograph broadcast along with that of the notorious spy.

'This German was evidently a picked man, as Von Hilsener had been, and I smiled as I wondered if he would prove to be a friend or a co-worker of his in their secret service. If I was recognised, the fact that I was Grant Haswell, who ran down Von Hilsener, was of course sufficient; but something told me there was more behind it all.'

IV.

Grant Haswell puffed contentedly at his cigarette for a moment or two ere he resumed his narrative.

'The investigation,' he went on, 'had now narrowed down considerably, for it was certain that if the person who worked the signalling was the same as the one who had twice fired on me, he must be concealed somewhere near the fosse or the brick-stacks. Such shooting was unlikely to be at greater range than 400 yards. He also had the advantage of knowing me and my not knowing him, so I determined to shift my headquarters and alter my appearance from that of an officer on the general list to that of a sapper of R.E. Next day, having gone *via* Bruay on the "Douglas," and the latter part of the journey on foot in sapper attire, with a pack, &c., I established myself at Philosophe, in a ruined house, and sent an orderly to a friend in the I.D., asking him to bring a revolver and join me in Tommy's kit at 10 P.M. that evening. I promised him some fun, and expected it. Jessop is one of the best revolver-shots in the army, and a jolly good sportsman.

'We left Philosophe at ten, and got into "Northern Up" trench, turning eventually into "London Road," and were soon in the "Maroc" sector. It was full moon, and very clear except for a few fleecy clouds which occasionally blurred the heavy shadows cast by the moonlight. On the way along "Calonne North" we met Bracewell's sergeant, who is a first-class signaller and a very decent fellow.

'I had asked him to join us, if he could spare the time. He told us that his main "Test Point" had been wrecked that afternoon by a 5.9, and that he had been putting his lines through by alternative routes; he was tired, but would be pleased to come along with us.

'We outlined our plans, and impressed on him the necessity of great caution in approaching the supposed lair of the Boche. My idea was to go quietly to some point near Fosse 11, and lie there listening carefully for the working of any mechanical part of our friend the spy's apparatus; to do this nightly till we had covered all the ground in earshot; and, in case of failure, to try

something else. If the "infra red ray" were being used, an insulating shutter would have to be introduced to produce the Morse signals, and it was unlikely that this would be absolutely

silent. The sending-key of any sort of apparatus would give slight sounds which might be detected by close listening.'

(Continued on page 300.)

A MEDICINAL HERB-GARDEN.

By HARWOOD BRIERLEY.

A COMPLETE herb-garden such as the writer has the pleasure of tending would contain at least thirty-nine kinds of plants. None of these would be ordinary vegetables such as onions, or green salad like lettuce; there would not be a single drug-plant such as foxglove, belladonna, or stramonium, as these things are toxic, whereas all herbs are beneficent, or at least harmless. The medicinal herb-garden should show at least thirteen old-world curatives of high reputation, not one of them resembling rank weeds growing by waysides—agrimony, betony, and yarrow, for instance—but all responding to the arts of cultivation, as they did in medieval times and in monastic gardens. Adjoining the herbs medicinal there would be considerable space devoted to salad, seasoning, or pot-herbs designed, possibly, in part for the market. Among these would be sweet basil, herb-burnet, chervil, sweet cicely, chicory, chives, corn-salad, fennel, land-cress, marjoram, parsley, purslane, sage, herb-savours, sorrel, spearmint, common green mint, tarragon, common thyme, and lemon thyme. The scent, spice, and seed herbs would be angelica, aniseed, caraway, coriander, dill, lavender, santolina, and southernwood.

As regards the purely curative herbs, their reputation appears to have been half-ruined by astrologists, casters of horoscopes, compounders of simples, and elderly country residents who believed their education was complete. The real, the unchanged and unchangeable, value of these medicinal plants to any household in the parish was well known a very long time ago to the saintly George Herbert, pastor of Bemerton, who acted as physician alike to the souls and the bodies of his parishioners. As disease cannot be touched by herbs, George Herbert alleviated or cured the ailments to which his parishioners were prone before virulent disease attacked the tissue-matter, and hereditary maladies were kept under by this means without resorting to drugs, the continued use of which will ruin any constitution. Through the present writer's herb-garden—for centuries a waste of stones, nettles, thistles, hogweed, &c.—goes a semi-private road which the parishioners and visitors use at their pleasure, and while some of the older folk do not hesitate to ask for any herb they fancy when passing by, they often vouchsafe in return information regarding their experiences of some particular species in the past, and what deceased kinsmen or old friends used this or that herb for.

Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) heads the list alphabetically and also in popular esteem. This particularly homely old favourite of our forebears is seen in comparatively few gardens to-day, and is seldom used by well-to-do people in good faith. A hardy herbaceous perennial, it may be grown from seed, or propagated by means of side-shoots or root-divisions. It does quite well in poor soil with a north or an east aspect, and will even sow itself in old stone walls, like hyssop and pellitory. When once established, a clump of balm will last for many years, and will endure a deal of cutting back without apparent injury. The leaves are not large; they are soft, dark green, fragrant when crushed, and contain a volatile oil. The leaf-stalks are cut off in early autumn, and dried partly in the sun, partly in the shade, for winter use. Balm-tea is a hot infusion of the leaves, green or dried, with a little sugar added. The odour of balm is very mild and agreeable, quite distinct from that of any other herb. Melissa, as the botanical name of balm, is taken from Princess Melissa, daughter of a king of Greece, who, along with her sisters, nursed the infant Jupiter, and beat upon bronze pots and pans to attract bees. These insects came daily to feed the infant deity on honey derived from the syrups of balm, thyme, and similar plants. Melissa has since become a synonym for 'honey-bee'; it is used as a Christian name, and is the generic name of balm. All balms and balsams are emollient and demulcent; they assuage pain and heal. Eau des Carmes, or carmelite water, and the balm-wine praised centuries ago by John Evelyn of Wotton Manor, are got from this beneficent herb. The 'tea' is a tonic and a stimulant, promoting cheerfulness. It is used for indigestion, for headaches, for vertigo, and overheated blood; also as a sudorific in colds and incipient fever. It should be mentioned that the 'Balm of Gilead' in Holy Writ is a resinous substance.

Borage (*Borago officinalis*) is, or was, 'used in medicine,' as the specific name *officinalis* tells. Is it possible to state expressly when and how suffering mankind should use borage to-day? It is easily grown from seed, or a plant left standing will sow itself after the seed has ripened, with the result that borage usually looks like an escape from a flower-garden, with intense blue drooping flowers and a very rough, hairy foliage. As a blue flowering plant it is, however, superseded in every respect by the taller, bushier, and more brilliant *Anchusa italica*, and bees resort

to both. There is no objection to the extremely cool and juicy young leaves of borage being used as a salad. The old herbalists employed them in making a cordial which acted both as a sudorific and as an expectorant. We must admit that borage is a little out of date as a tonic and an exhilarant with some slight intoxicating power (hence its place as an important ingredient in 'claret cup'—a not too heady beverage sipped by the fair sex at early Victorian balls). The flowers and the leaf-juice were stirred into negus and into cool tankard, the latter being a mixture of wines, lemon-juice, borage, and sugar. The motto of borage is, 'I give courage,' perhaps of the Dutch kind!

Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*) was first recommended early in the Christian era by that renowned physician Asclepiades. Perhaps no other plant used for common medicinal purposes to-day has such a time-honoured reputation. It stands pre-eminent in the catholicon of herbs, and in the herb-garden is a regular crop. Chamomile is a native of Britain, a plant of very easy culture, flourishing on almost any soil, and is usually propagated by dividing the roots in spring, and planting them six to nine inches apart in an open situation. The name chamomile signifies 'earth-apple,' owing to a fancy that its fresh blooms have an apple-like odour. Although the whole plant is odoriferous, its virtues are concentrated in the double flower-heads, which have to be gathered as they come forward, spread out, and dried gradually before the florets are fully expanded. The blooms will keep on appearing for some months.

Chamomile-flowers grown in the land of lavender and peppermint, about Mitcham and Hitchin, used to fetch any price up to £9 per hundredweight before the great European war. Put up in penny packets, now sold for three-pence each, these were circulated in great quantities throughout the United Kingdom, and found their way even to the smallest village shops. Chamomile-tea, which settles as clear as Scotch whisky, is a bitter aromatical tonic of the first order—quite the correct thing for indigestion, headache, flatulence, and kindred ailments. It alleviates pain, reduces excessive perspiration, prevents nightmare, promotes peaceful sleep. It is requisitioned for spasms and colic, and as an antidote to the excessive use of tobacco. A strong infusion is emetic, and a weak infusion in small doses is good for infantile diarrhoea, as also for pains when teething; and its action is carminative and anodyne. Hot fomentations are used for toothache, face-ache, and neuralgia; for inflammation of the bowels; for burns, sprains, &c.

Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*) is by no means an ordinary herb, and it is employed for rather unusual purposes. Sometimes it crops up like an outcast near old-fashioned country-seats, or as an escape from a neglected herb-garden, but is perhaps oftener seen in the background of a

herbaceous border, where it is pointed out as a curiosity. Comfrey becomes a bushier plant than foxglove or mullein, bearing pendent lilac flowers of unusual shape. 'Kumfri,' as the pronunciation goes, is, in the first place, demulcent and expectorant, the home-made comfrey-beer of Nottinghamshire being a popular beverage, considered useful for loosening phlegm and acting on the kidneys. Quite recently this herb was described, by one who had prescribed its use for half a century, as one of the most valuable species growing on God's earth, and as a perfectly safe medicine in all cases of inflammation of the lungs, stomach, and kidneys. Its root or its leaves can be made into a lotion for neuralgic pains, and into warm poultices for pulmonary complaints, bleeding of the lungs, &c. 'Knit-back' and 'knitbone' as local names agree with the generic term *Symphytum* or *Symphytuma* of botanical science, derived from a Greek verb meaning 'to unite' (that is, fractured or broken bones); moreover, 'comfrey' is undoubtedly a corruption of the Latin *confero*—meaning 'I bring together,' or unite. Accordingly our forebears employed it as a vulnerary in painless surgery; indeed, many bone-setters to-day apply poultices of powdered comfrey-root in all cases of fractured or broken bones. A little juice from the raw root squeezed into a fresh wound will help to unite the fibres of torn flesh as readily as anything which can be purchased at the pharmacy.

Garlic (*Allium sativum*) cannot be deprived of a place in the medicinal herb-garden, as it is something very much more than a seasoning or flavouring bulb (used in Spain, Italy, and France to excess, maybe) with a rank, clinging odour. The large, white-skinned, compound bulbs are sold by seedsmen and bulb-merchants in February and March. Each one is broken up into about ten 'cloves' to be planted separately early in the third month on light rich soil six inches apart. When the leaves wither the whole crop is taken like shallots, dried in the sun, and stored. To-day garlic is more used than ever by doctors and nurses; during the war it was in constant and increasing demand, sold and bought by the ton. The Hindus have used garlic-plasters for ages. For the sores and wounds of soldiers in France garlic-juice diluted with three or four parts of distilled water was the standard dressing. Many modern antiseptics used in fashionable practice injure the tissues, but garlic applied to a wound stops the infection and quickly heals. It is also considered a certain cure for jaundice. Sufferers 'as yellow as a guinea' have been rubbed from top to toe with garlic-juice and lard, the result being astonishing. Tuberculosis may be prevented if it is eaten regularly, and it is even regarded as a capital remedy for consumption in the early stages.

Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*) means 'hoary-leaved, strongly scented plant,' its leaves being downy, gray, and, for a common medicinal

herb, large. Grown from seed, slips, side-shoots, or root-divisions, it may be made a paying crop if cultivated in a business-like manner on a rather moist loam. For use at home two or three roots would probably be sufficient, all the best stalks to be cut off at the end of summer, and dried.

- Well-made horehound-beer possesses stimulant and tonic properties which put in the shade all chemically compounded drinks and aerated waters. Manufacturers of candies, lozenges, and other sweetmeats have long used both horehound and common wild coltsfoot for the same purposes. They are described as pectorals, and used abundantly for debilitating and chronic coughs, also for asthma.

Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*) is of the easiest culture, from seed or otherwise. Sometimes it is found growing on ill-cultivated soil in unlikely places, even on mouldering walls of long-lost monastery gardens; and it looks quite at home adhering in clumps to the sides of neglected stone-built garden walls. Here we have a very nice little aromatic evergreen herb which bears fragrant violet-blue flowers. The monks of old may have been specially attracted to it because of its sacred associations as a Bible-herb—*ēzōph* in the Hebrew, *hyssōpos* in the Greek. Probably this particular *ēzōph* was implied when the inspired writer prayed, 'Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean.' Although containing an essential oil, it is not exactly an aperient, but rather a cleanser of phlegm and other impurities, such as clogged pores of the skin, by means of increasing the perspiration. Our fore-elders used to gather the leafy tops with their capsules at the end of summer and dry them for an infusion called hyssop-tea, whose qualities were tonic, stimulant, diaphoretic, &c. Children were given a weak infusion when being nursed for measles; adults drank it at full strength for hoarseness and huskiness, feverish colds, and even coughs.

Pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*) is a very ordinary-looking, creeping, mint-like, little plant used medicinally for at least 2000 years. Its root-stock will travel a long way in a damp low soil, and will need ruthless checking if space is much limited. The English name appears to mean 'royal penny mint,' but not from the legend that Queen Elizabeth used to purchase a pennyworth frequently at the stalls of poor women standing in Covent Garden Market, for the term was in use before her day. Only the leafy stalks are sold for medicinal purposes. Pennyroyal is a stimulant, a diaphoretic, and emmenagogue, most useful for nervous affections, giddiness, female irregularities, hysteria, and—may we add?—brain disorders. It is also a good blood-purifier. Lancashire pork-butchers often make the flavour of it very marked in their black puddings, of which the famous Bury variety in particular is considered a great dainty throughout the north of England.

Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) has long been

a paying crop round about Mitcham and other districts where lavender, dill, and caraway are grown to such perfection. Like spearmint and pennyroyal, it may be started in any naturally moist, shady, or enriched sandy soil by inserting pieces of its running white-stock, and the laws which govern its successful growth are quite uncomplicated. Black peppermint, which is a variety of the common green kind, is favoured in the districts where distilling is done, owing to the more powerful oil it yields. But black peppermint seems a tender plant on cold soils in the north, and it will perish during a hard winter unless it is covered in the autumn with two or three inches of fine mould, which must be removed as soon as congenial weather comes in spring. In any form peppermint is stimulant, antispasmodic, invaluable for flatulence and colic, and in daily use as a cordial and a carminative. It is impossible to say how much the old churchwardens and yeomen farmers were indebted to their nightcap of gin-and-peppermint.

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) flourishes in a rather dry soil, and is propagated by dibbling in side-slips during spring-time or in September. Rosemary is a nice-sounding, old-world name, which accounts for its occurrence in baptismal registers, being taken as a compound of Rose and Mary. Unfortunately for the assumption, this half-shrubby evergreen bears no flower of medicinal or decorative use; moreover, its generic and specific names mean 'sea-dew used in medicine.' We can find no good reason why Shakespeare and others should call it an emblem of remembrance and of faithful love, and why it should at any time have been specially selected to plant upon the grave of a beloved one. Still, like lavender, southernwood or lad's-love, and santolina—which usually grow side by side in herb-gardens for old acquaintance' sake—rosemary inevitably awakes all kinds of ancient memories. All these fragrant herbs may be put into pot-pourri for bowls, or into the linen-chest, or used anywhere for a safeguard against moths; and in winter-time they are sure to be reminiscent of the summer garden, 'sweet to the end with scents of yester-year.' We used to hear tell of the powdered leaves being preserved with sugar for a sweetmeat, and this, like home-made 'rosemary honey,' served as a flavouring for confectionery. For headaches the old folk had faith in its powdered leaves taken as snuff, usually in conjunction with a warm infusion called 'rosemary-tea.' Oil of rosemary is expressed from the green leaves, which may be scalded to apply as a household hair-wash with or without a block of camphor. Pour boiling water on the stalks and the green leaves, and let this decoction simmer near the fire for some hours, but not boil. Daily applications by gentle rubbing are serviceable when the hair falls out, and in some cases will promote a crop

of new hair. Rosemary-tea acts similarly as a good tonic, being stimulating to the nervous system, helpful to the circulation of the blood, and possessed of antispasmodic properties.

Rue (*Ruta graveolens*) was 'herb grace' before the days of Shakespeare's *Perdita*, but for a long time better known in the North Country by the insufferable corruption of 'yarby-grass.' An Aristotelian myth gives rue as a charm against witchcraft; later we are told that a leafy sprig was dropped into holy water used by priests at the asperges or sprinkling of the congregation at the commencement of a solemn service. Ophelia says, 'We may call it herb-grace o' Sundays.' Certainly rue is of neat, graceful growth, with small bluish-green leaves which last through the coldest winter. This foliage is standardised by botanists—hence the thalictrum, or false and hardy maidenhair fern, bears the common name of meadow-rue; while *Asplenium ruta-muraria* is the tiny wall-rue fern; and the favourite garden galegas, with the lilac-and-white flowers, are known as goat's-rue. 'Herb-grace' has failed to retain all the vogue it enjoyed for centuries as a medicinal herb, yet no herb-garden could pretend to be complete without it. It is easily propagated from slips or side-shoots, and may safely be relegated to the poorest bit of soil or the worst position. Rue will not suffer rash or hard cutting up to the time of high summer, but all the seed-vessels should be clipped off after flowering, as if these are allowed to mature the plant will suffer, probably die. The leaves may be taken either green or dried and powdered at the end of the summer, for making the bitter infusion called rue-tea—which has been disesteemed as 'acrid, pungent, nauseous, and with rank, ungrateful odour.' Still, there are rheumatically old folk who declare themselves benefited by a single leaf of rue dropped into their regular tea-pot while the brewing takes place. Rue is used for flatulence, for assisting the secretions, exciting the circulation of the blood, and giving relief to rheumatic sufferers. It is also sold for the cure of roup in poultry.

Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) is the most disliked of medicinal herbs, although it certainly has handsome, curly, rich green leaves of strong

growth, much valued for garnishing and for decorative effects with flowers.' For the sake of this fern-like foliage and the flat-headed bunches of buttony yellow flowers, tansy has been introduced into a thousand gardens. The world will never see the end of tansy, or *tanisie* in the French, which is a corruption of the medieval Latin *Athanasia*, synonymous with a Greek word meaning 'not death'—hence 'immortality.' The yellow buttony flower-heads last a long time; the running root-stocks take such a firm hold of the ground that they are difficult to extirpate, and the longest frost does not injure them in the least. But what is to be done with tansy as a herb? Meat rubbed with a green leaf, so rich in essential oil, was considered quite safe from the blue-bottle fly in hot and sultry summer weather. Our forefathers had little to say against the vigorously aromatic and bitter flavour of tansy, which they used to flavour puddings, omelets, and cakes. Churchmen used it during Lent as a representative bitter herb, the leaves being always chopped very fine. Used with discretion and in moderation when savoury dishes are required, it is not likely to offend the palate. As a curative herb it is tonic and diaphoretic; good in cases of colic and excruciating gout; also an old-fashioned emmenagogue. Its chief virtue, however, is that of being a vermifuge for children.

Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*) is closely allied to southernwood and tarragon. It grows tall, and its stalks are clothed with beautiful indented foliage. Wormwood is quite easy to grow from seed, slips, or side-shoots, flourishing especially in a rather moist loam, and is cut after high summer for autumn drying. This herb has various uses apart from the French liqueur absinthe of ill-repute. We find it sold for ailing poultry, and the seed-stalks to place in chests and cupboards for repelling clothes-moths. The name suggests that it is anthelmintic and a vermifuge; that it will put a stop to the operations of wood-worms. Like horehound, it makes a good herbal beer. In cases of sore throat it should be used with new milk for poulticing, and a gargle should also be made of it, great relief being obtained in eight hours. Wormwood-tea is also an excellent bitter tonic.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE MAN OF SOLITUDE.

I.

IN a large room overlooking St James's Square a man sat writing. In the shaded light his face showed haggard, and his eyes gleamed with the brilliancy of one whose blood is lit with a fever.

The clocks had just struck nine when he paused in his work, and crossing to the French windows, which opened on a little terrace, looked out at the darkened square. The restless music of London's life played on his tired pulses. He heard the purring of limousines gliding into Pall Mall, and the vibrato of taxi-cabs whipped into

action by the piercing blast of club-porters' whistles. The noise of horses' hoofs on the pavement echoed among the roof-tops of the houses, and beneath those outstanding sounds was the quiet staccato of endless passing feet, losing itself in the murmur of the November wind as it searched among the dead leaves lying in the little park.

He had remained there only a few minutes, when, as though he had lost too much time already, the writer returned to the table and resumed his pen.

There was a knock at the door, and the writer looked up with a start. 'Come in,' he said; and a man-servant entered.

'Will you be wanting anything, Mr Selwyn?'

'No, Smith.'

'You haven't been out to dinner, sir.'

'I am not hungry.'

'Better let me make you a cup of tea with some toast, and perhaps boil an egg.'

'N—no thanks, Smith. Well, perhaps you might make some coffee, with a little buttered toast, and just leave them here.'

'Very good, sir.'

Although less than a year had elapsed since Austin Selwyn had first dined at Lady Durwent's home, experience, which is more cruel than time, had marked him as a decade of ordinary life could not have done. His mind had been subjected to a burning ordeal since summer, and his drawn features and shadowed eyes showed the signs of inward conflict.

As he had said of himself, all his previous experiences and education were but a novitiate in preparation for the great moment when truth challenged his consciousness and illuminated a path for him to follow. From an intellectual dilettante, a connoisseur of the many fruits which grace life's highway, he had become a single-purposed man aflame with burning idealism. From the sources of heredity the spirit of the Netherlands fighting against the yoke of Spain, and the instinct of revolt which lies in every Celtic breast, flowed and mingled with his own newly awakened passion for world-freedom.

He had left Roselawn with a formal good-bye taken of the whole family together. He had avoided the eyes of Elise, and she had made no attempt to alter the impersonal nature of the parting. Reaching London, he had been offered these rooms in St James's Square by an American, resident in London, whose business compelled him to go to New York for an indefinite period. As Selwyn felt the need for absolute aloofness, he had gladly accepted.

Hardly waiting to unpack his 'grips,' he at once began his battle of the written word, his crusade against the origin and the fruits of Ignorance as shown by the war.

Always a writer of sure technique and facile vocabulary, he let the intensity of his spirit focus on the subject. He knew that to make his voice

heard above the clamour of war his language must have the transcendent quality of inspiration. No composer searching for the *motif* of a great moving theme ever approached his instrument with deeper emotional artistry than Selwyn brought to bear on the language which was to ring out his message.

He felt that words were potential jewels which, when once the rays of his mind had played upon them, would be lit with the fire of magic. Words of destiny like blood-hued rubies; words fraught with ominous opal warning; words that glittered with the biting brilliance of diamonds—they were his to link together with thought: he was their master. The necromancy of language was his to conjure with.

Day after day, and into the long hours of the night, he wrote, destroying pages as he read them, refining, changing, rewriting, always striving for results which would show no signs of construction, but only breathe with life. When fatigue sounded its warnings he disregarded them, and spurred himself on with the thought of the thousands dying daily at the front. He saw no one. His former London acquaintances were engrossed in affairs of war, and made no attempt to seek him out. It was his custom to have breakfast and luncheon in his rooms; at dinner-time he would traverse the streets until he found some little-used restaurant, and then, selecting a deserted corner, would eat his meal alone. The walk there and back to his rooms was the only exercise he permitted himself, except occasionally, when, late at night, cramped fingers and bloodshot eyes would no longer obey the lashing of the will, and he would venture out for an hour's stroll through night-shrouded London.

Prowling about from square to square, through deserted alleys, and by slumbering parks, he would feel the cumulative destinies of the millions of sleeping souls bearing on his consciousness. Solitude in a metropolis, unlike that of the country, which merely lulls or tends to the purifying of thought, intensifies the moods of a man like strong liquor. He who lives alone among millions courts all the mad fancies that his brain is heir to. Insanity, perversion, incoherent idealism, fanaticism—these are the offspring of unnatural detachment from one's fellows, and in turn give birth to the black moods of revolt against each and every thing that is.

Living as he did in a sort of ecstasy by reason of his suddenly realised world-citizenship, Selwyn's incipient feeling of godlikeness developed still further under the spell of isolation. The fact that he trod the realm of thought, while all around him men and women grappled with the problems of war, only accentuated this condition of mind.

He suffered—that was true. He missed the companionship of kindred spirits, and sometimes his memory would play truant, recalling the pleasant glitter of sterling silver and conver-

sational paste which accompanied his former London dinner-parties. He did not dare to think of Elise at all. She was the intoxicating climax of his past life. She was the blending of his life's melodies into a brief, tender nocturne of love that his heart would never hear again.

In place of all that, he had the spiritual vanity of martyrdom. Few voyagers but have felt the exaltation of mid-ocean: that desire of the soul to leap the distance to the skies and claim its kinship to the stars. It comes to men on the Canadian prairies; it throbs in one's blood when the summit of a mountain is reached; it is borne on the wings of the twilight harmonies in a lonely forest.

Unknown to himself, perhaps, that was Selwyn's compensation. From his hermit's seclusion in the great metropolis he felt the thrill of one who challenges the gods.

II.

His man-servant had hardly left the room when the bell in the front hall rang, and Smith reappeared to announce a visitor.

'Who is it?' asked Selwyn.

'A Mr Watson, sir.'

'I wonder if it can be Doug Watson of Cambridge. Bring him right up.'

A moment later a young man entered the cosily shaded room, and they met with the hearty hand-clasp and the sincere good-feeling which come when a man who is abroad meets a friend who is a fellow-countryman. The new-comer was younger than Selwyn, and though of lighter complexion and hair, was unmistakably American in appearance. Like the author, he was clean-shaven, but there was more repose in the features. His face was broad, and in the poise of his head and thick neck there was the clear impression of great physical and mental driving-power. Although still a student, the mark of the engineer was strongly stamped on him. He was of the type that spans a great river with a bridge; that glories in the overcoming of obstacles by sheer domination of will.

'Well, Doug,' said Selwyn as they drew their chairs up to the fire, 'when did you leave Cambridge?'

'Last week,' said the other. 'I couldn't stand it any longer with every one gone. I don't think that one of the bunch I played around with is there now.'

'That was a bully week-end I had with you at the university.'

'We sure had a good time, didn't we?'

'But how did you know I was here?'

'Jarvis sent me a note that he and his wife were running back to New York, and that you were taking his rooms. Damn fine place, isn't it? There's a woman's touch all over here. But you're looking precious seedy.'

'I feel all right.'

'You don't look it.'

'I have been very busy, Doug.'

'Glad to hear it. Putting over a killing in the literature game?'

'The biggest thing yet,' said Selwyn, opening a chest of drawers and searching for the cigars. 'I am making a sincere attempt to write something which will sway people. Have one of these?'

'Thanks. I guess I'd better smoke one while I have the chance. It might get the sergeant-major's goat if he found a buck private smoking half-crown cigars.'

'You haven't joined the army?'

'Not yet; but I shall to-morrow. You can do it by graft, old boy. For three weeks I've courted a colonel's daughter so as to get next to the old man, and to-morrow I receive my reward. I am to become a full-fledged Tommy Atkins.'

'And the daughter?'

The younger man grinned and cut off the end of his cigar with a pocket-knife. 'Can you see the colonel's daughter "walking out" with a Tommy? My dear Austin, patriotism excuses much, but the social code must be maintained. I'd render that in Latin if I wasn't so rusty on languages. How are chances of your coming along with me to-morrow?'

Selwyn reached for an ash-tray and matches. 'America is neutral,' he said quietly.

'America is not neutral,' replied Watson with a decisiveness that one would hardly have suspected to lie beneath the calm exterior and the veneer of good-breeding polished by Cambridge associations—a veneer that made his occasional lapses into crudity of language seem oddly out of place. 'The German-Americans, the Irish-Americans, the Jewish-Americans, the God-knows-who-else-Americans may be neutral, but the America of Washington and Lincoln, the America of Lee and Grant, isn't neutral. Not by a long sight.'

'Doug,' said Selwyn reproachfully, 'you are the last man I thought would be caught by this flag-waving, drum-beating stuff.'

The younger man's brows puckered as he looked through the haze of tobacco-smoke at his host. 'Austin,' he said abruptly, 'you've changed.'

'Yes,' said Selwyn thoughtfully. He was going to say more, but, changing his mind, remained silent.

'I thought you looked different,' went on Watson. 'What's up?'

Selwyn's eyes narrowed and his lips and jaw stiffened resolutely. 'I am writing,' he said, enunciating each word distinctly, 'in the hope of arousing the slumbering conscience of the world against this war.'

'Canute the Second,' commented Watson dryly.

'Doug,' said the other, frowning, 'I deserve better than sarcasm from you.'

'I'm sorry,' said Watson with a laugh, 'but I can't just get this new Austin Selwyn right

off the bat. Of course war is wrong—any boob knows that—but what can you hope to do with writing about it?’

Selwyn rose to his feet, and thrusting his hands in his pockets, strode up and down the room. ‘What can I hope to do?’ he said. ‘Remove the scales from the eyes of the blind; recall to life the spirit of universal brotherhood; destroy ignorance instead of destroying life.’

‘Some platform!’ said Watson, making rings of tobacco-smoke.

‘Take yourself, for example,’ said Selwyn vehemently, pausing in his walk and pointing towards the younger man. ‘You are a man of international experience and university education. On the surface you have the attributes of a man of thought. You are one who the world has a right to expect will take the correct stand on great human questions. Yet the moment the barriers are down and jingoism floods the earth you give up without a struggle and join the great mass of the world’s drift-wood.’

‘H’m,’ mused Watson, ‘so that’s your tack, eh?’

‘I tell you, Doug, you have no right to fight in this war.’

‘Thanks.’

‘You should have the courage to keep out of it. Even assuming that Germany is wholly in the wrong and Britain completely in the right, can’t you see that when the Kaiser and his advisers said, “Let there be war,” you and I and the millions of men in every country who believe in justice and Christianity should have risen up and answered, “*You shall not have war*”?’

Watson rose to his feet, and crossing to the fireplace, flicked the ash from his cigar, and leaned lazily against the stone shelf. ‘You’re a member of the Royal Automobile Club, aren’t you?’ he drawled.

Selwyn nodded and resumed his nervous walk.

‘Take my advice, Austin. Every time you feel that kind of dope mounting to your head, trot across the road to the club and have a swim in their tank. You’d be surprised how it would bring you down to earth.’

‘You talk like a child,’ said Selwyn angrily.

‘Well,’ retorted the other, ‘that’s better than talking like an old woman.’

With an impatient movement of his shoulders the younger man left the fireplace, and walking over to the piano, picked up a Hawaiian ukulele which had been left there by Mrs Jarvis. Getting the pitch from the piano, while Selwyn continued his restless march up and down the room, he studiously occupied himself with tuning the instrument, then strummed a few chords with his fingers.

‘Sorry not to fit in with your peace-brother-peace stuff,’ said Watson amiably, strumming a recent rag-time melody with a certain amount of

dexterity, ‘but I always played you for a real white man at college.’

‘Doug,’ said Selwyn, stopping his walk and sitting on the arm of a big easy-chair, ‘if there is a coward in this room, it’s you.’

The haunting music of the ukulele was the only response.

‘Here you are at Cambridge—an American,’ went on Selwyn. ‘Just because the set you know enlists with an accompaniment of tub-thumping’—

‘That isn’t the way the English do things,’ said Watson without pausing in his playing.

‘My dear fellow,’ said Selwyn, ‘don’t let the pose of modesty fool you over here. They profess to hold up their hands in horror when we get hold of megaphones and roar about “The Star-Spangled Banner,” but what of the phrases, “The Empire on which the sun never sets,” “What we have we’ll hold,” “Mistress of the seas”? Is there so much difference between the Kaiser’s “*Ich und Gott*” and the Englishman’s “God of our far-flung battle-line”? Jingoism! We’re amateurs in America compared with the British—and you’re caught by it all.’

‘Nothing of the sort,’ said Watson, putting down the ukulele. ‘All I know is that Germany runs amuck and gives a mighty good imitation of hell let loose. I am not discounting the wonderful bravery of France and Belgium, but you know that the hope of everything lies right in this country here. Well, that’s good enough for me. I’m a hundred per cent. American, but right now I’m willing to throw over my citizenship in the United States and join this Empire that’s got the guts to go to war.’

‘Listen, Doug,’ said Selwyn, moving over to the younger man and placing his hands on his shoulders; ‘can’t you see that Germany is not the menace? She is only a symptom of it. War, not Germany, is the real enemy. I admire your pluck: my regret is that you are so blind. The whole world is turning murder loose; it is prostituting Christian civilisation to the war lust—and you imagine that by slaughter Right may prevail. The tragic fallacy of the ages has been that men, instead of destroying evil, have destroyed each other. If every criminal in the world were executed, would crime end? Then—do you think the annihilation of this or that army will abolish war?’

‘I haven’t your gift of plausible argument,’ said Watson, ‘and I suppose that theoretically you are sound in everything you say. Yet, instinctively, I know that I am doing the right thing.’

‘A woman’s reasoning, Doug,’ Selwyn relit his cigar, which had gone out. ‘For a few days after the outbreak of war I will admit that I doubted, myself, and wondered if, after all, there was a universal heart-beat. Then came the news of the silent march of those thousands of women down Fifth Avenue,

marching to the beat of muffled drums as a protest against war—not against Germany—higher than that. It was a symbol that the cry of Rachel for her children still rings through the centuries. It was the heart of America's women calling to the mothers of France, Germany, and Britain against this butchery of their sons.'

Selwyn sank into a chair, and a look of weariness succeeded the momentary flush of excitement.

'That ended my last doubt,' he went on quietly. 'I knew then that if I could summon the necessary language to express the vision I saw, my message would sound clear above the guns. I completed three articles—"A Fool There Was," "When Hell Laughed," and "Gods of Jingoism." I gave them to my London agent, but you would have thought they held germs of disease. He brought them back to me, and said that no one would dare to publish them in England. In other words, the English couldn't stand the truth. I sent them on to New York. This is my agent's reply.'

He took a letter from a file on the table and handed it to his guest. 'Read it,' he said.

With an inscrutable smile the Cambridge-American looked at the paper and read:

'NEW YORK, 10th October 1914.

'DEAR MR SELWYN,—You will be pleased to know that I have succeeded in placing your articles "When Hell Laughed," "A Fool There Was," and "Gods of Jingoism" with a prominent newspaper syndicate. The price paid was \$800 each, and I herewith remit my cheque for \$2160, having deducted the usual commission. I have every reason to believe that any further articles you send will meet with a ready market, especially if they follow along the same lines of exposing the utter futility of war. As a matter of fact, this syndicate is prepared to pay even a higher price if these articles, which will be published all over the United States, meet with the approval they confidently expect.

'Assuring you of my desire to be of service to you, I remain, yours very sincerely,

'S. T. LYONS.'

'Very nice, too,' murmured Watson at the conclusion of the letter. 'Who says that high ideals don't pay?'

'What do you mean?' said Selwyn sternly.

The younger man got up from his chair and looked at his watch. 'Don't get shirty,' he said. 'I was only thinking that 800 per is a fairly healthy figure for that dope.'

'I don't give a damn for the money,' said Selwyn hotly, 'except that it shows there is a demand in America for the truth. Britain has always been afraid to face facts—thank God, America isn't.'

'Well,' said Watson with a slight yawn, 'it's quite obvious that we're as far apart as the poles on that question, so I think I'll cut along.'

'Stay and have a cup of coffee. There's some being made; it will be here in a minute.'

'No, thanks. To be brutally frank, Austin, the ozone around here is a little too rarefied for me. I'm going out to a cab-stand somewhere to have a sandwich and a cup of tea with any Cockney who hasn't joined the Citizenship of the World.'

With the shadows under his eyes more pronounced than before, but with the unchanging look of determination, Selwyn helped the younger man on with his coat, and handed him his hat and stick. 'I am sorry you won't stay,' he said calmly, 'for your abuse and sarcasm are nothing to me. When I took this step I foresaw the consequences, and, believe me, I have suffered so much already that the loss of another friend means very little.'

The powerfully built young American twirled his hat uncomfortably between his fingers. 'Look here, Austin,' he said vehemently, 'why in blazes can't you get all that hot air out of your system? Come on—meet me to-morrow, and we'll join up together. It'll be all kinds of experience, you'll get wagon-loads of copy, and when it's all over you'll feel like a man instead of a sissy.'

With a tired, patient smile Selwyn put out his hand. 'Good-night, Doug,' he said. 'I hope you come through all right.'

When he heard the door close downstairs as Watson went out, Selwyn re-entered the room. The light of the electric lamp glaring on his manuscript pained his eyes, and he turned it out, leaving the room in the dim light of the fire. The man-servant entered with a tray.

'Will you have the light on, sir?'

'No, thanks, Smith. Just leave the things on the table.'

'Thank you, sir. Good-night, sir.'

'Good-night, Smith.'

The room was strangely, awesomely quiet. There was no sound from the deserted square; only the windows shook a little in the breeze. He reached for the ukulele, and staring dreamily into the fire, picked softly at the strings until he found four notes that blended harmoniously.

The fire slowly faded from his gaze, and in its place, by memory's alchemy, came the vision of *her* face—a changing vision, one moment mocking as when he first met her, turning to a look of pain as when she spoke of Dick, and then resolving into the wistful tenderness that had crept into her eyes that evening by the trout-stream—a tenderness that vanished before the expression of scorn she had shown that fateful August night.

The night stole wearily on, but still Selwyn sat in the shadowy darkness, occasionally strumming the one chord on the strings, like a worshipper keeping vigil at some heathen shrine and offering the incense of soft music.

(Continued on page 293.)

MODERN USES OF NICKEL AND COBALT.

NICKEL is known to most people chiefly as the outer coating of nickel-plated ware, and as a component of the alloys which are used for coinage in certain countries. Lately we may have heard, perhaps without quite understanding what is meant, that finely divided metallic nickel is used as a 'catalyst,' or a carrier of hydrogen in the hydrogenation or hardening of oils for use in the manufacture of margarine. But nickel has a far more important use as an ingredient of nickel-steel, which is one of the strongest and most ductile types of steel manufactured. Nickel-steel contains about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of nickel, and is used in the manufacture of armour-plate, ordnance, projectiles, and gun-shields, as well as for motor-car parts, its employment for the last-named purpose being on a rapidly expanding scale.

For bridge-building, the qualities of toughness and strength which nickel-steel possesses are particularly valuable, and it has been employed in the construction of the Manhattan and Queensborough bridges in New York City, in the St Louis municipal bridge over the Mississippi, in the Kansas City viaduct and bridge over the Missouri, in the emergency dam, locks, and spillways in the Panama Canal, and in the reconstruction of the Quebec bridge over the St Lawrence River.

Monel metal, consisting of about two-thirds nickel, 28 per cent. copper, and about 5 per cent. of impurities, including manganese and iron, is used for propeller-blades, valves, tie-rods, shafting, and pump-rods. Bullet-casings contain 15 to 20 per cent. of nickel, which is added to give a surface which will not be destroyed by the rifling of the barrel. Alloys used for nickel coins usually contain about three parts copper and one part nickel. 'Nickel-silver' alloys consist of nickel alloyed with copper and zinc, and are used for table-ware, railway-car fittings, &c.

One point about nickel which is of special interest to all British people is that over 80 per cent. of the world's production of this metal is mined in the British Empire—namely, in Ontario. Though nickel is found and produced in small quantities in many places, there is only one other important producing country, the French island colony of New Caledonia, in the Pacific Ocean. Included in the proposals that have been made for the adoption of a decimal coinage in the United Kingdom is one for the use of certain nickel coins. The resort to nickel in our coinage would utilise an Empire product in place of a certain amount of copper, a large proportion of which we get at present from the United States.

For many years the nickel-copper ores mined at Sudbury, in Ontario, where the most extensive nickel-ore deposits in the world are situated, were smelted to a crude matte containing about 80

per cent. of the combined metals, nickel and copper, and sent to the United States (New Jersey) and to Wales (Clydach) for refining. Naturally a desire soon arose among Canadians for the establishment of a nickel-refining industry in the Dominion, and an agitation in favour of this has been going on for years. In 1915 a Commission was appointed by the Government of Ontario to inquire into the resources, industries, and capacities of the province in connection with nickel and its ores. For a quarter of a century two questions have been uppermost in the numerous discussions that have taken place concerning Ontario's nickel industry: (1) Can nickel be refined economically in Ontario? (2) Are the nickel-deposits of Ontario of such a character that the province can compete successfully as a nickel-producer with any other country? Both these questions the Commissioners answered in the affirmative. They found that the nickel-ore deposits of Ontario are much more extensive, and offer better facilities for the production of nickel at a low cost, than those of any other country; and that the most satisfactory method of refining in Ontario will be the electrolytic, because (1) electric-power is cheap and abundant; and (2), practically no chemicals being required, there is an almost complete saving of the precious metals found in association with the nickel, especially platinum and palladium.

As a result of the work of the Ontario Nickel Commission, nickel-refining may now be regarded as established in Canada, and there is reason to hope that it will develop until the whole of the nickel produced in the Dominion is also refined there. The International Nickel Company of Canada, Limited, a subsidiary of the International Nickel Company, which is American, has erected a refinery at Port Colborne, on Lake Erie, which commenced operations in July 1918. The British-America Nickel Corporation has been started with assistance from the British Government, and is exclusively British. It has been steadily at work developing the Murray Mine, a very extensive deposit, and constructing a smelter and a refinery. The latter is being erected at Hull, on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River, from which power will be obtained. It will have a producing capacity of six thousand tons of refined nickel yearly.

Another point of interest in connection with the refining of nickel in the Dominion is that the precious metals, platinum, palladium, iridium, and other rare metals of the platinum group, which are contained in the ore in minute quantities, will be recovered in Canada and credited to the Dominion. The smelting process concentrates these rare metals in the matte, which, as we have seen, was formerly shipped for refining to the United States, where the precious

metals were separated. Their recovery is a difficult task, but the great value of the metals justifies every effort being made to ensure this end. Palladium, which has long been used in dentistry, and is now replacing platinum both in dental work and in jewellery, is found in the largest quantity, and is followed by platinum, iridium, and rhodium in the order named. By either the Mond or the electrolytic process of nickel-refining it is possible to save practically the whole of the precious metals, and both methods actually recover a large proportion in the form of a by-product which is sold on the basis of its content of precious metals. The matte smelted from the ores obtained from the Vermilion Mine is unusually rich in platinum, and is treated in a separate operation, so that the precious contents may be recovered.

An account of nickel should not omit some mention of cobalt, which is associated with nickel in the minds of all who have studied elementary chemistry. One of the chief localities where this metal is obtained is the district named Cobalt, in Ontario. The silver-cobalt ores in this district produce about 15 per cent. of the world's output of silver. The world's consumption of cobalt at present is not great, but it is capable of considerable expansion. The compounds of cobalt, especially the pigments, smalt, cobalt blue, &c., were for centuries the only forms in which cobalt was used. But the metal itself is now of growing importance. Experiment has shown that, in electroplating, a solution

of cobalt is deposited fifteen times faster than nickel, that the cobalt deposited at this speed is much harder than the nickel deposited in any commercial nickel bath, and that consequently a less weight of this hard cobalt deposit will offer the same protective coat as a greater weight of the softer nickel deposit. Cobalt-plate takes a high and brilliant polish which possesses a slightly bluish tinge. It is believed that as a result of these discoveries there will soon be a large demand for cobalt for electroplating.

Steel containing about 4 per cent. of cobalt, in addition to tungsten and chromium, is used for making high-speed machine-tools which retain their cutting-edge at or near a red heat. Nickel-steel tools, on the contrary, soften at the edge when hot. An alloy of cobalt and chromium with tungsten takes a cutting-edge equal to the best steel, and can be used for table-knives, pocket-knives, surgical and dental instruments, spoons, forks, and scissors. But the special value of this alloy lies in its resistance to oxidation and to the action of organic acids. The alloys thus formed possess the property of preserving a cutting-edge at high temperatures, and this quality and their extreme hardness render them, it is claimed, superior to all high-speed steels. They are known as 'stellite' alloys, and are suitable for lathe-tools, boring-tools, drills, and saws. Table-knives made of stellite alloy have remained brilliant and untarnished after six years' use, whilst retaining a good cutting-edge.

SHARK-BAITING AT PANAMA.

By Captain MONAHAN.

I.

H.M.S. BLARNEY CASTLE lay in the offing of the most wonderful canal ever built by man. Yet, instead of dilating upon the colossal ingenuity that was to enable their cruiser to burst through Central America into the Pacific, the officers were engaged in planning a shark-catch!

The idea of the thing originated during the 'dog-watches,' that brooding period after tea when all sorts of schemes are hatched in the navy. On this occasion something really had to be done; everybody felt so incensed at leave not being granted to go ashore at Colon. This seemed most unreasonable, because, owing to certain parleys with the Panama Canal officials, the cruiser could not possibly 'go through' before morning—and there was to be a dance at the George Washington Hotel that same night.

At first nothing more exciting than a 'dip' was contemplated. The officer of the watch accordingly made a signal to one of the other men-o'-war inside the breakwater. 'Do you

permit your people to bathe here?' he inquired. The answer came back quickly enough: 'No; we content ourselves with the canvas-bath—that and catching sharks.'

The suggestion was quite enough for the surgeon-lieutenant, who had never seen a shark landed, and was madly anxious to try his luck. 'What about it?' he asked the officer of the watch in his usual impetuous manner.

'Better see the commander first,' advised the latter officer, who was standing by the starboard gangway, telescope under his arm. In other ways too he looked a proper sailor, with azure-blue eyes, and bow-legs that made him cant the soles of his purser's crabs.

The commander was down in the wardroom, in none too good a humour either. Understanding the messman to have come off from Colon with plenty of oysters, he had promptly ordered a dozen of them, with, of course, the traditional bottle of stout. In place of the eagerly-longed-for 'pearly whites' on a glistening background of natural camouflage, the marine waiter had put before him a dish of the most revolting-

looking oysters ever set down before man. Torn asunder from their external skeletons, the poor, creamy, crumpled-up invertebrates lay huddled together on the plate, as if in shrinking anticipation of their acrid enemy, tabasco sauce, being dropped on them at any moment. 'Where's the messman?' the commander angrily demanded, thinking the fault must be in the serving.

The messman appeared, and urbanely explained that, inasmuch as the oysters came out of a Yankee tin, it was impossible to oblige the commander with shells, much as he would like to do so.

Then the surgeon-lieutenant appeared. 'May we catch sharks, sir?' he breathlessly inquired.

Contrary to the expectations of onlookers, the commander did not jump down the young doctor's throat. The poignancy of his oyster grief vanished immediately, and his decorated breast became filled with hope. Not so many weeks ago he had rashly promised some shark's teeth to a ripping girl at the Grafton Galleries dance. At the time he did not have the least idea how the thing was to be done, seeing the *Blarney Castle's* job then consisted in convoying between Plymouth and Halifax. Now there rose in the commander's mind a picture of his triumphant entry into her Cadogan Gardens home. No wonder he surprised the ward-room by answering the doctor's query in the service affirmative, 'Yes, please;' adding, 'But remember the teeth belong to me, and let me know when you get a bite.'

II.

Catching sharks in tropical waters may sound easy, but it is more difficult than one is apt to suppose. To begin with, the chief boatswain had to be asked for the shark-hook which every one of His Majesty's ships carries in order to provide amusement for the ship's company when occasion offers. The warrant-officer in question handed it over in a grudging sort of way, as if former experiences warned him trouble was brewing. He had been in the *Blarney Castle* last commission, and was possibly thinking of what occurred off Chesapeake Bay. Almost an entire school of sharks had been nipped within an hour; and there had been the very devil to pay all over the ship.

What to bait the hook with? A remarkable degree of unanimity prevailed on this point. Every one seemed to regard the voracious monster as being swinishly inclined. As the engineer-lieutenant said, 'A shark goes mad at the mere prospect of a meal of pork; and whenever he finds himself next to a lump of it, he simply can't do anything else except turn over on his ugly back, and gulp it down at all costs.'

Pork being agreed upon as the ideal dietetic inducement, the next thing was to approach the paymaster-lieutenant-commander, as being responsible for all victualling stores. As usual,

that officer was very, very busy. However, on being promised a lime cocktail, he gave his consent, providing it was convenient for the ship's steward to open a cask of the salty stuff. In due course that worthy signified his pleasure at being able to oblige the surgeon-lieutenant ('That means at least a bottle of beer,' the latter reflected), and would he let him know at once the number of pounds required?

This started another frantic 'cag.' One officer made everybody quail by claiming it would take at least fifty pounds to bait for the ordinary man-eating shark. However, upon the captain of marines relating the experience of the Royal Corps in the Indian Ocean, which had been singularly successful on a four-pound basis, it was decided to ask the ship's steward to supply this modicum for a start. The square piece of pork soon appeared on deck. The doctor had a great antipathy toward this form of meat, so his friend, the engineer-lieutenant, graciously consented to affix it to the shark-hook.

The next thing to settle was what kind of a line to use. Hemp, of course, was most convenient; but somebody said if the shark swallowed the hook he would be quite capable of biting through any hemp rope attached to its swivel. The chief bos'un was again consulted. Apparently this officer had developed a deep-rooted dislike toward any one wishing to nip a shark. Such a stodgy pastime did not fit in with his conception of enjoyment, which happened to be amateur theatricals. It did not occur to him that his beery and pantomimic performances of a few days before (Christmas Day) had been a nuisance to everybody on board. That was his method of amusing himself. He could not make allowance for shark-hunting being somebody else's. It may be that the heat, which was terrific in the warrant-officers' Mess, had affected him. At any rate, he was very rude to the young doctor. 'Do you want me to catch the blinking shark for you?' he roared, taking up a signal-pad and writing something on it. 'There,' he said, 'is an order for twenty fathoms of two-and-a-half-inch hemp-line. You can take it or lump it, as you please. It's the best I can do for you.'

Even when the shark-hook (with its piece of beautifully pink salt pork) was connected up with the line the bos'un had so unwillingly furnished, there was something further to be determined. What sort of shark lurked in the vicinity—ground or otherwise? The chief gunner opined in favour of ground-sharks, declaring the hook ought almost to touch the bottom. Other officers disagreed with him, and scoffed at the ground-shark theory. The great bulk of the shark, these authorities contended, requires several feet of water to float it comfortably, and he is not the kind of fellow who stints himself with no other object in view than scratching his belly on the bottom of the sea.

In order to meet these divergent views, the pacific engineer-lieutenant suggested the happy medium of suspending eight feet or so of the baited line from a floating spar. This was finally done, enough of the rope being paid out to keep the white spar well clear of the stern-end of the ship.

III.

It may be thought that, after all the trouble they had taken, the officers would have watched that line like a cat watching a mouse. Circumstances, however, were against their devoting any more time to it. In the first place, shore leave being granted after all, it was as much as they could do to dress in time to catch the 6.45 P.M. boat. Even on returning they were in a far too exalted state, discussing the various girls they had met and danced with at the George Washington Hotel, to descend to the level of such a debased sport. At least, when the possibility of a 'catch' was mentioned by the Sindbad-looking officer before referred to, he was badly 'sat upon' by the 'pilot.' 'There's a time and a place for everything, Strongbow,' the navigating officer sententiously rejoined, 'but after the gloriously artistic evening we've all had'—here the pilot struck his breast ecstatically—'the very idea of such loathsome creatures being within ten thousand miles of yon lovely womanhood'—pointing to the brilliant glare of lights on the Colon front—'is enough to banish sleep from my dazzled eyes for ever and ever, amen;' at which every one hurrahed sleepily, because the pilot was capable of snatching more 'forty winks' a day than anybody else in the Mess.

Nobody lost any time after that in 'getting his head down,' as sleeping is gracefully spoken of in the service. The young doctor and the engineer-lieutenant slept on the quarter-deck, from which—even in the tropical darkness—the tell-tale spar could be discerned bobbing up and down merrily in the swirl of the incoming tide. As if to enable their masters to keep an eye on the unstable mark, the servants of these two officers had placed their stretcher-like couches near where the still loose line trailed over the stern-end of the *Blarney Castle*.

The temptation was too much for the captain of marines. That jolly 'soldier' had missed the last boat, and only came off to the ship about 2 A.M. in a police launch. It seemed to the marine (in his hilarious condition) that those couches ought to be connected up with the shark-line, else (hic) how would the officers know when they had a bite? Thinking meant doing with the soldier at that refreshing hour of the morning, and the thing was done in a jiffy.

A young Scottish 'sub' named M'Crie was still keeping that most detested of all vigils, the middle watch, when the quartermaster reported the 'two officers' as 'making 'orrid noises and cuffing each other at the *hafter* end of the quarter-deck.' It may be explained that night-

mare was never more common in the navy than at present, after the strenuous sea exertions of the last few years. In this instance there was some excuse for the doctor and the engineer-lieutenant getting into a sort of somnambulistic panic. Their respective couches had been suddenly and fearfully dragged from beneath them; and the best of unwakened friends coming into rude contact with each other, they had engaged in a pommelling-bout. Now, after being separated by M'Crie and the quartermaster, they were regarding one another rather sheepishly. No time could be wasted on explanations, however, if the couches were to be saved. They were already dangling half-way over the captain's stern walk, and some powerful force still tugged at them violently. 'A shark!' the quartermaster cried, taking a riskful leap over the railing and using his jack-knife to such good effect that the officers' beds were pulled back out of harm's way.

Next came the task of getting the quarry on board. Block and tackle had to be used to drag the brute along the ship's side as far forward as the port-battery. Of course, the shark kept lashing up the sea in his fury to break away; and the crescendo of the awful struggle was reached when his nose was got out of water, and he felt the lack of the oxygen his gills were no longer in a position to extract from the sea. It was at this juncture that it became possible to engirdle him firmly with a stout noose passed down the line which had nipped him. After that it did not take long to hoist him inboard, and put him out of misery with a few revolver-shots.

After breakfast the surgeon-lieutenant could scarcely force his way through the dense cordon of curious men on the battery-deck. 'Hostility' ratings formed a goodly sprinkling of the ship's company, and most of them had never seen a shark before. What a ghastly sight it presented in the morning sunlight! The enormous jaws had been prised widely open with a block of wood, showing the slimy, capacious mouth, as well as giving a view of the inner aspect of the horrid-looking gills. These latter had several tubes of white flesh running across them, like so many reeds of a pipe-organ. There being neither wind-pipe nor lungs, the throat was nothing but a highly distensible tube leading down to the enormous belly, where the baited hook had penetrated deeply. Although the dead thing (which had very small eyes) measured 9 feet 6 inches, a glance at the teeth showed it to be only about half-grown. It had only two rows of teeth; and the teeth themselves were not nearly so formidable in appearance as one had been led to expect. Apart from the prominent fin surmounting the rough, suede-tinted back (and enabling the species to be readily distinguished from the dog-fish), the shark had a peculiar spear-like attachment on the end of his tail. This is nearly always taken advantage of in consummating the capture. At the critical

moment a running haul-bowline is slipped over this useful appendage, and drawn taut so that he is prevented from cutting any further capers.

IV.

Getting the shark aboard was an easy enough matter. Effecting a riddance of him turned out to be an affair of an altogether different calibre. By this time the *Blarney Castle* had entered the Panama Canal, where it is strictly forbidden to heave anything overboard. This meant, of course, the carcass could not be disposed of until the cruiser had penetrated to the Pacific, sometime during the afternoon. Apart from its malodour (resented by everybody except the surgeons, who sniffed it with affected relish, and said it reminded them of the good old days of the dissecting-room), there were several reasons why the continued presence of the shark's body was anything but a happy omen on board. The bos'un, for instance, felt extremely dissatisfied because the wretched thing went on soiling his deck. Then the matter affected him from the point of view of stores. He was custodian of the shark-hook; and in hoisting the hated fish into an erect posture for photographic purposes, the strain had proved too much for the hook (which the bos'un swore ought never to have been employed for such an object), with the result that it snapped in two. This happened when the *Blarney Castle* was rising rapidly in the famous Gatun Lock; and the American girls looking down on them from the canal-bank shrieked with laughter at the sight of the ungainly mass flopping to the deck with a half-ton crash. Such a *contretemps* could not but upset the commander's somewhat acute sense of the fitness of things in general and ladies' opinions in particular. It was not by any manner of means the only untoward incident of the past twelve hours. To go back to the early morning: the officer of the watch had failed to call the commander when the shark was found to be on the line; and the senior officer in question had been extremely desirous of seeing it come aboard. Then, as if to add insult to injury, during the forenoon the ship's company had made surreptitious but free use of the blacksmith's pincers, so that there was not a tooth left for anybody; and he had promised that Cadogan Gardens girl a set of them!

Nor was the young doctor in any too jubilant a frame of mind. The engineer-commander had tickled his professional vanity by intimating he would like a scientific demonstration of what a shark's interior looked like. The surgeon-lieutenant immediately sent for'ard to the sick-quarters for his surgical-apron, operating-gloves, and amputating-knife. The sun was very hot, the stench in the vicinity overpowering. The engineer-commander fainted shortly after the doctor had made his preliminary incision. Unhappily the captain came along at this in-

opportune moment, and censured the medical officer for behaving in such a tactless manner. At the same time the skipper prohibited any further meddling with the carcass until the Pacific was in sight, so that it could be thrown overboard immediately afterwards. 'My own personal opinion is that the carving had better be left to the ship's butcher,' the captain added ironically. All the surgeon-lieutenant could do under the circumstances was to have word passed on to the butcher to be sure and give him a call when he started the hacking. This request was not prompted by idle curiosity on the medical officer's part. He had set his heart on getting out the backbone intact, this part of the shark's anatomy being much sought after as a walking-cane.

The surgeon-lieutenant overlooked the torpifying effects of a tropical afternoon; and the bottle of stout he had had for lunch did not help matters. By the time he had come out of the usual naval 'caulk' (and the butcher's mate asserted he was told to 'go away' when he had attempted to rouse him), the *Blarney Castle* was well out on the Pacific, and the filleted remains had been derisively cast into the sea, much to the relief of everybody's olfactory organs.

'The next shark we catch will be a private concern,' the doctor remarked to the engineer-lieutenant at tea, after bewailing the loss of his walking-cane; 'and perhaps some one else will have a chance of going in the ditch,' he added, looking hard at the soldier, who had somewhat facetiously declared his intention of sleeping on deck, now that they were out of the shark zone!

THE WITCH.

MUMBLING, mysterious, mordant-mooded,
March comes in by the woodland way,
Clad like an old witch, cloaked and hooded,
Drenched with December, dreaming May.

Shades of the long night still enfold her,
Still is her robe slashed gray with sleet;
Drift of the snow still damps her shoulder,
Splash of the mire still flecks her feet.

Gloomy she tramps through the woodland alleys,
Wan with the woe of the leafless trees. . . .
Hark! A song from the waking valleys
Parts the cloak on the witch's knees!

Lifts the hood from her green-clad shoulder,
Lights the fire in her wondrous eyes!
March grows young as the year grows older,
Spring is born as the winter dies.

Willowy wand in her hand displaces
Broom of the wind. She's a laughing maid,
Charming the flowers to the open spaces,
Calling the birds to bower and glade.

Out in the dew that the dawn discovers
Watch for the witch on her woodland way!
Look in her eyes and be glad, ye lovers!
Under her hood are the dreams of May!

WILL H. OGILVIE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

I.—THE BADGER.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

THOUGH now scarce or utterly exterminated in many districts where once it was abundant, the badger can hardly be set down as a rare animal. In parts where it still exists in comparatively large numbers its presence is unknown except to a few local followers of woodcraft, for the badger is so much of a recluse, so strictly nocturnal in its activities, and, above all, so cautious in secreting its runways where one would least expect to find them, that the naturalist must first know something about Brock's habits in order to locate him.

Coniferous forests are the badger's chief abode in the British Isles, and it is particularly partial to pine-woods generously surrounded by cover. This is probably because pines grow as a rule on water-washed hillsides and ridges where the ground is of sandy formation, which suits Brock's subterranean architecture. Fir-forests, where the undergrowth is rank with bracken and bramble, similarly meet his tastes, and in certain parts of the New Forest, particularly the vicinity of Boldrewood, badgers are as numerous to-day as ever before. In fact, provided one is acquainted with the district, I know of no better country than the New Forest for studying the badger at home.

Amidst the game-preserves of Northamptonshire the badger still holds out in many localities, and considerable warrens are to be found if one knows where to look. In parts of Wales it is common; in fact, Wales may be set down as its true home, so far as Britain is concerned, and the keen and plucky terriers used for badger-hunting are bred chiefly in the Principality. In most parts of Scotland the badger is now rare, though occasional families are to be found in remote Highland localities.

Judging from its markings, one would conclude that the badger is truly a beast of the night. In daylight it is conspicuous, the markings of the face seeming to catch and hold the light; but when at night-time Brock moves along the silver patches of moonlight and the ebony, shifting shadows, he himself is a shifting shadow of ebony and silver—so wonderfully camouflaged

that the keenest night-watcher must keep very wide awake indeed if he is to see anything at all.

I know of one warren situated in the heart of a small, dense pine-forest, surrounded by open fields. In passing to and from this forest during their nocturnal pilgrimages the badgers prefer always to follow the course of a hedgerow rather than venture into the open moonlight. They will even make a detour of two or three fields to avoid passing an open gateway, and in this way they gain a strip of wild undergrowth bordering a stream, which they visit regularly for the roots of the common wild hyacinth. The undulating portions of the New Forest are drained by means of narrow canals or gutters, which follow the ridings, generally being about two feet in depth and a foot in width. In due course these canals become overgrown with grass, a pitfall for the unwary, and they are very considerably used by the badgers as runways in passing from one place to another. It is possible for the animal to escape unseen within a yard or so of one's feet by means of these artificial cuttings; but their use entails a counterbalancing disadvantage from Brock's point of view, in that, though he is unseen, he himself cannot see, and should his keen nostrils fail to give him warning, he can very easily be surprised as he noses about the trench-bottom.

Seton states that a badger spends thirty hours underground for every hour it spends on the earth's surface, which is probably a pretty accurate estimate. Its whole mode of living is to come up for a few hours, gorge itself to the extreme limits of repletion, then remain underground or about the warren in a more or less torpid state till again hungry—possibly a period of four or five days.

In soft, sandy ground Master Badger, when disturbed, will sometimes bury himself where he stands, sooner than take to his heels, going practically straight down, like a mole; indeed, his powers of digging are almost proportionate to those of the mole. For this reason it requires a keen and plucky dog to keep a badger in one place in its earth while the diggers get down to it. A half-hearted dog, that does not keep its quarry employed defending itself the whole time,

is of no use to the badger-digger, for the badger immediately turns its tail to the dog and begins to scratch, throwing out a blast of sand behind that no animal can face, the dog having to draw off, blinded and suffocated, while Brock rapidly extends his tunnel. If one can succeed in stopping up the pocket behind the badger it can scratch no further, being unable to dispose of the earth it loosens, and thus it becomes jammed up, powerless to escape.

II.

The badger-warrens I have studied were all of them models of system and cleanliness. The animals never occupy a warren for more than two or three months at a spell; it is then completely forsaken for a corresponding period, and thus given a chance thoroughly to sweeten up, the colony removing themselves in the interim to another country residence, probably not more than a mile distant. In the meantime their old residence is taken over by rabbits. As regards the numerous stories one hears about Brock as a rabbit-killer, I can only say that I know of numerous warrens in which rabbits and badgers share the tenancy. Generally the rabbits occupy one end, while the badgers occupy the other, but all the holes are interconnected, and the little community appears to dwell in an atmosphere of perfect goodwill.

Brock is a slow-footed animal, and though, perhaps, he would possess few scruples if the opportunity of dining off Brer Rabbit occurred, it is not worth his while to hunt his active neighbour when there is so much other food ready to hand.

Badgers are a good deal troubled with neighbours of a more personal and intimate character, and the cleanliness they exercise in their home-life has not a little to do with these gentry. One can always tell whether or not a badger-warren is occupied by the condition of the bedding that litters the ground and carpets the entrance of every earth—the dry grass or bracken they use being strewn everywhere about the warren and along the runways. During every night of activity, which appears to be about one night in five, the animals, having fed, spend the small hours raking the old bedding out of the warrens and substituting new, dry material. A bed is never allowed to become old and stale, and the huge dump-heaps at the burrow-entrances will, if examined, be found to consist of 50 per cent. old bedding, drawn out and intermingled with the sand. Very often a single dump-heap of this kind would comprise several cartloads—the work of generation after generation of badgers who have occupied their spare time in tidying up and enlarging.

From the mouth of the main burrow there generally exists a clearly defined runway to the patch of open ground at which the bedding material is collected. Dry grass is preferred on account of its softness, but often badgers make

shift with bracken. Following the runway, one arrives at an opening amidst the trees (probably within a distance of fifty yards), from which all the low herbage has been dragged and clawed up, so that the whole little plot has an untidy appearance. (Indeed, the entire area of the warren is untidy owing to the litter of bedding, this being the chief indication that it is a badger-warren). This is the hayfield of the colony.

The grass or the bracken as collected is rolled into tightly packed balls, a number of which appear to be made in readiness for transportation when the badgers leave the field, as one often finds these balls lying forsaken on the ground; and the amount of bedding rolled into such small compass is surprising. The animal carries the ball between its chin and its forepaws, cuddling the bundle against its chest and half-pushing, half-supporting it in this way.

In addition to their nests underground, badgers make use of sunning-nests, which they construct for temporary use at the mouth of the main earth. This is a point concerning which many naturalists profess disbelief; but having seen such nests and photographed them, I am naturally satisfied.

The sunning-nest is a large and untidy bundle of bedding, trodden out to the curvature of the animal's body, just as a cat or a dog hollows out a bed for itself. Always it is placed directly above the mouth of the earth, so that, should its occupant be disturbed, he or she has nothing to do but roll out and tumble underground in the twinkling of an eye. Also, the nest is so situated that it catches the sunlight falling through the trees during the warmest hour of the day.

Though there are indications that a nest has at one time been in use at the mouth of the main burrow of almost every warren, one may search far and diligently before actually finding a nest itself; for, having sunned himself so long as the light lasts, it would appear that Brock drags the material into the earth after him, making good use of it below rather than allowing it to become damp and rotten on the earth's surface. Thus if one locates a sunning-nest, and returns only an hour or so later in order, perhaps, to photograph it, a hundred to one it will be gone—especially if one handled it on discovery. Nor has any man I have met actually caught a badger asleep in its sunning-nest. One might as well attempt to catch a fox asleep in a hen-house. Smith, the keeper at Boldrewood, tells me that on several occasions he has arrived to find the nest still warm by contact with the badger's body, but Brock himself had heard or winded the intrusion and tumbled underground with seconds to spare.

In sanitation the badger stands out as a model of system and virtue many beasts would do well to copy, the perfection of his sanitary arrangements being unrivalled by any woodland creature with the exception, perhaps, of the beaver. Only

once have I found any traces of uncleanness about the warren, which in this instance was occupied by young badgers, who evidently had not learnt the full value of cleanliness.

One of the most distinct runways from the main earth will be found to terminate, after a few paces, at a hollow in the ground—often the pit left after the filling in by the earth-stopper of an old burrow, which the family has not troubled to reopen. Here vertical holes (about six inches deep and four inches wide) are dug, each hole being used so long as its capacity permits, when another is dug close to it, and so on till the bottom of the pit becomes covered with these scratchings. Thereupon it is forsaken and an adjacent plot taken up, every warren having several of these special allotments, old and new, within easy reach of the burrows.

III.

Badgers, like bears, possess the habit of measuring their full height against some obstacle which affords exercise for their claws, and thither, to the recognised scratching-post, the whole family adjourns at more or less regular intervals to leave the sign of their passing. One sees the claw-marks of father and mother high up on the scale of reach; lower down are the claw-marks of the cubs, each having registered its height; and from surrounding signs we should judge that this is a recognised rendezvous of the family.

There is every reason to think that these scratching-places afford a system of intercommunication for the badger population of a given district, for I have noticed the claw-marks of strange badgers on a tree-trunk habitually visited by one family in a locality where badgers were none too plentiful. For example, an old dog-badger living alone has his own individual scratching-log, which he visits, perhaps, once every ten days. Near to the log is a boulder of rock having one sharp edge against which he invariably rubs himself when calling. Another badger crosses the range, and, guided by some subtle sense, it visits this place. It registers its height against the trunk, and scratches its neck on the other side of the sharp edge of rock. The owner of the rendezvous returns. He knows immediately that another badger has been there. Whether he is sufficiently astute to read if it is larger or smaller than himself is, of course, open to question, but at any rate the main question at stake is instantly conveyed to his conception. If it is a nomadic old dog-badger that has passed, he is not interested; but if, on the other hand, an eligible lady-caller has seen fit to leave the sign of her passing, he is all on edge. In all probability he follows, and so, in due course, they make each other's acquaintance.

Intercommunication in the wild exists for but one purpose—that of bringing the sexes together. The wolves have their calling-posts, the beavers have their castor-signs, the weasels

have their musking-places, and it is reasonable to think that the scratching-post of the badger answers the same purpose. It is the marriage-exchange of the district—the agony-column of the local press. Of course, a badger may exercise its claws against any tree it happens to pass, but always there is one tree in particular recognised for this purpose.

Moreover, a badger living in solitude resorts to the practice more regularly than the mated couples—may, indeed, have several calling-places all up and down its range, and the necessity for claw-exercise alone cannot demand such activity. It would seem that the more earnestly a dog-badger desires a mate the more blatantly does he advertise the signs of his stature, and the more diligently does he search for the records of other badgers left in the same way. That the habit plays some important part in the multiplication of the species can hardly be doubted, and possibly the old male badger wandering restlessly from place to place is searching chiefly for such signs.

IV.

I have studied the badger very closely, and I can honestly say that I have yet to discover this creature guilty of a crime sufficient to warrant its destruction even in a single instance. There is no doubt that should he stumble across a game-bird's nest Brock will devour its contents as greedily as he will devour the contents of a wasp's nest, but he certainly does not go out of his way to look for the nests of game-birds. In one case a pheasant brought off her brood amidst some long grass directly overlooked by an occupied warren, and within forty yards of it, and had the hunting of eggs been in any way the badgers' line of business, they could not have failed to locate this feast. The fact is that normally in the spring the badger is surrounded by such an abundance of food which requires no hunting that there is no need for it to hunt live prey; and since it is a slow-moving beast, it would not be exactly successful as a huntsman even were it so disposed. True, Brock has flesh-tearing teeth—and goodness knows he needs them for purposes of self-defence—but, like the black bear, he can and does subsist very comfortably on an exclusively vegetable diet with a little rubbish thrown in should he actually stumble across it in his short-sighted, pig-like forages. Except for the spring (when the badger has vegetable foods everywhere), the sort of game man protects is chiefly of the variety demanding and often defying the swiftness, cleverness, and long-sightedness of Reynard at his best. At all events the keepers of the New Forest, who know as much about badgers as any one, have no quarrel with them except that their many earths require a good deal of stopping before each meet of the fox-hounds, which is the only reason why badgers are kept in check in this region.

Roots, insects, worms, beetles, frogs, and

berries, when in season, are the chief food of Brock at home. In the forests of the Vosges Mountains, south of Verdun, there are many badgers, and during the war they seemed to lose much of their fear of man, often appearing on the mountain-roads quite near the muleteers, and occupying the forests right up to the fighting-line, apparently undisturbed by the noise of the guns, since no one had the time to hunt them. Here their food consisted entirely of the wild raspberries that are abundant on the open hillsides, while earlier in the season beetles and other insects formed their staple diet. In the New Forest they appear to live chiefly on beetles, destroying simply thousands of the common black-backed beetle, to be found in the roots of moss, the wings of which they do not digest. In winter roots, or almost anything soft they can nose out of the ground, are acceptable; in fact, the badger will eat nearly anything it happens to stumble across.

The badger does not hibernate in the true sense of the word. During a spell of wild winter weather it may considerably extend its periods underground—may not emerge, indeed, for two or three weeks; but immediately the conditions change it is up and about, as lively as at any other time of the year. In high, wind-swept country it makes this winter denning more of a permanency; while in warmer latitudes—the southern states of America, for example—the badger does not den up at all. During the chief period of hibernation Brock generally stops the mouth of the den to exclude draught, which would seem to indicate that his respiration at such times becomes very low; indeed, it must be something very near a death-like stupor that tides so heavy-feeding an animal over so long a period without food. But with practically every beast hibernation is merely a matter of convenience, which can be put off when desired, and the black bear of the Far North, which hibernates normally in the true sense of the word, is ready enough to remain awake and active when kept in captivity and liberally fed—even though its home be an Arctic trading-post. In this country, then, the badger hibernates if its environment and the conditions of the season demand it, but normally its hibernation is on a par with that of the squirrel, eagerly cut short should the wintry weather relent.

v.

I imagine the young, varying from three to five in number, are born in February, as I have seen their tracks on the 15th of March at the earliest. Generally they are to be seen at the mouth of the earth in March, seldom venturing for more than a few yards till early in April. In May the home-den is forsaken, the whole family journeying to a new warren. Sometimes, but not always, the dog and the 'sow' badger remain together the whole year round.

Badgers are not playful animals, and except in their cubhood they seldom frolic, devoting their time to the more important business of nosing for food. The old game of King of the Castle is said to be systematically indulged in by the cubs, even their mother occasionally lending a hand. One of the youngsters mounts a dead tree-stump or a boulder of rock, and from this point of eminence menaces his brothers with naked fangs. The others then set to work to drag him down, attacking from every point of the compass, while the central figure twists and turns, till finally he is dislodged and another scrambles into his place. And so the game goes on during the chilliest hour before the dawn; but it is a game unlike those of our own little people in that it is played in silence—such is the degree of caution instilled into the young by their parents.

This game is said to be a recognised institution of the badgers, each family having its own 'castle' and its special little plot laid aside, the ground soon becoming trodden hard and bare of verdure by the beating of active paws. Normally the youngsters just roll each other about, butting at each other and pulling at the loose skin of each other's necks, much like little bears, which they closely resemble in many ways.

Badgers are good-tempered beasts, and the old saying 'surlly as a badger' lacks support in actual fact. Naturally Brock is surly when imprisoned in a box and tortured by men and dogs, but I believe that in their home-life badgers live in perfect harmony, with never an ill word. And the devotion of the mother is heroic. She has been known to hold the den while her little cubs made good their escape, facing hopeless odds, and gamely meeting her death in covering their retreat. On this occasion the warren was invaded because, as the farmers said, the sow-badger had been proved guilty of killing young lambs. When she was dead and the cubs were gone the lamb-killing still continued, and finally it was traced to some far more likely, though less evident, cause.

Of course, there are exceptional badgers, just as there are exceptional terriers, but I doubt very much whether any terrier could hold its own in single combat, either closed or open, with an old fighting male badger or with a sow defending her young—taking it that the badger had not previously been scared out of its wits. Though retiring and peace-loving by disposition, this animal is a fierce and terrible fighter when roused, and long persecution has taught the badger to use its fangs and claws with deadly effect. Even when terrified by man, and forced to make a stand amidst surroundings and conditions new to it, a good badger will hold its own for an indefinite period against entirely hopeless odds; and fighting amidst its own chosen surroundings, uninterrupted by man, it would very speedily wear out and probably kill

a terrier handicapped by the conditions that were in the badger's favour. In other words—let a badger choose its own ground and do not interfere, and it will go badly with the terrier facing it, even though the terrier be of the best fighting blood obtainable.

There is much to rouse our sympathies in the character of this quiet dweller of the forest shadows, and it is sincerely to be hoped that such sympathies may prove instrumental in relieving this ancient and much-persecuted creature of some of the miseries that have so long and so unjustly been meted out to it. One sees in the badger a brave, indigenous beast struggling to retain a footing in the land of its heritage against the cruelty and ignorance of those who

still seem to regard it as designed for the 'sport' of man. The badger was once diurnal to almost the same extent as it was nocturnal. Where undisturbed by man it is still diurnal in its habits. In this country, by sorrowful experience, it has become solely nocturnal. It has retreated to the depths of our deepest forests in the hope of finding security from man, and every movement of its life is characterised by the sober desire to avoid contingencies with man and his dogs. Because the badger is a brave and able fighter, it has been used as a means of trying out the mettle of beasts as brave and able as itself, which, in the broad light of things, savours of the barbarous, and of a spirit hardly worthy of the lovers of cricket.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XIV.—STRANGE CRAFT.

I.

ONE slushy night in December Selwyn was returning from a solitary dinner at a modest Holborn restaurant, when a damp sleet began to fall, making the sickly street-lamps darker still, and defying the protection of mufflers and heavy coats. With hat pulled over his eyes and hands immersed in the pockets of his coat, he made his way through the throng, while the raucous voices of news-venders cried out the latest tidings from the front.

To escape the proximity of the crowds and the nerve-shaking noises of traffic, he turned down a wide thoroughfare, and eventually emerged on Fleet Street. Again the seething discontent of rumbling omnibuses and hurrying crowds irritated him, and crossing to Bouverie Street, where Mr Punch looks out on England with his genial satire, he followed its quiet channel until he reached the Thames.

In contrast to the throbbing arteries of Holborn and Fleet Street, the river soothed his nerves and lent tranquillity to his mind. Following the Embankment, which was shrouded in heavy darkness, he reached the spot where Cleopatra's Needle, which once looked on the majesty of ancient Egypt, stands, a sentinel of incongruity, on the edge of London's river. Giving way to a momentary whim, Selwyn paused, and finding a spot that was sheltered from the sleet, sat down and leaned against the monument.

In the masque of night he could just make out the sketchy forms of a river-barge and two steamers anchored a few yards out. From their masts he could see the dull glow of red where a meagre lamp was hung, and he heard the hoarse voice of a man calling out to some one across the river. As if in answer, the rattle of a chain came from the deck of some unseen craft, like a lonely felon in a floating prison.

The river's mood was so in keeping with his own that Selwyn's senses experienced a numbing pleasure; the ghostly mariners of the night, the motionless ships at their moorings, the eerie hissing of the sleet upon the water, combined to form a drug that left his eyelids heavy with drowsy contentment.

How long he had remained there he could not have stated, when from the steps beneath him, leading towards the water, he heard a man's slovenly voice.

'Are you going to stay the night here?'

As apparently the remark was intended for him, Selwyn leaned forward and peered in the direction from which the voice had come. At the foot of the dripping steps he could just make out a huddled figure.

'If you're putting up here,' went on the speaker, 'we had better pool resources. I've got a cape, and if you have a coat we can make a decent shift of it. Two sleep warmer than one on a night like this.'

In spite of the sluggish manner of speech, Selwyn could detect a faint intonation which bespoke a man of breeding. He tried to discern the features, but they were completely hidden beneath the pall of night.

'Well,' said the voice, 'are you deaf?'

'I am not staying here for the night,' answered Selwyn.

'Then why the devil didn't you say that before?' For a moment the fellow's voice was enlivened by a touch of brusqueness, but before the last words were finished it had lapsed into the dull heaviness of physical lethargy. 'Tell me,' said the stranger, after a silence of several minutes, 'how is the war going on?'

'You probably know as much as I.'

'Not likely. I've been beating back from China for three months in a more or less derelict tramp. Chased into every blessed little port,

losing our way, and cruising for days without water—we were a fine family of blackguards, and no mistake. Grog could be had for the asking, and a scrap for less than that—but I'd as lief not ship on the *Nancy Hawkins* again.'

Selwyn leaned back against the obelisk and speculated idly on the strange personality hidden in the dark recess of the descending stairs. It was not difficult to tell that, though he spoke of himself as a sailor, sailing was not his calling. There was a subtle cadence of refinement in his voice, an arresting lilt on certain words, that remained on the air after the words had ended.

'Did the Germans get to Paris?'

'No,' said Selwyn; 'though they were very near it.'

'Good! How did our chaps do?'

'I believe they fought very bravely, but were pretty well wiped out.'

'I suppose so,' said the other quietly—'wiped out, eh? Tell me—did the Colonies throw in their lot with us?'

'All of them,' said Selwyn, 'even including South Africa.'

'What about Canada?'

'She has over thirty thousand men in England now, ready to cross.'

'Splendid!' muttered the fellow. 'So they're British after all, in spite of the Yankees beside them. . . . The cubs didn't leave the old mother to fight alone, eh? Jove! but it's something to be an Englishman to-day, isn't it?'

Selwyn made no response, but his brow contracted with the thought that even the flotsam, the dregs thrown up on the river's bank, were imbued with the overwhelming instinct of jingoism. He glanced up from the steps, and saw on either side of the obelisk a sphinx, woman-headed, with the body of a lioness, monuments to the memory of Cleopatra. How little had been accomplished by humanity since the first sphinx had gazed upon the sands of Egypt! It had seen the treachery and the lust of Antony, the slaughter of men by men led blindly to the carnage. . . . Was not the smile, perhaps, its hoarded knowledge of the futility of the ages?

'Can you give me a match?' asked the man from the steps. 'Everything on me is soaked. I'll come up if you have one, but I don't want to shift otherwise.'

'Don't bother,' said Selwyn, getting up and stamping his feet to restore their warmth. 'I'll bring you one, and then I'll have to move along.'

He produced a silver match-box, and feeling his way carefully down the slippery steps, handed it to the stranger. Acknowledging the action with a murmur of thanks, the fellow took it, and making a protection with his cape, struck a match to light his pipe. It flickered for a moment and flared up, illuminating his features grotesquely.

Selwyn uttered a sharp ejaculation of surprise and stepped back a pace. 'Durwent!' he cried.

'Eh?' snapped the other, dropping the match on the wet stone, where it went out with a faint splutter. 'What's your game?'

'I could not see you before,' said the American quickly; 'but though I only heard your voice once, there was something about it I remembered.'

The Englishman struck a second match, and with a casual air of indifference lit his pipe.

'Thanks,' he said, handing the box to the American. Selwyn reached forward to take it, when suddenly his wrists were caught in a grip of steel.

'Damn you!' said Dick Durwent hotly, springing to his feet. 'Are you tracking me? I didn't come back to be caught like a rat. Are you a detective? If you are, by George! I'll drown you in the river.'

'Don't be a fool,' said Selwyn, writhing in pain with the other's torture.

'Who are you?'

'My name is Selwyn. I am an American; a friend of your mother and sister.'

'Where have you seen me before?'

'At the Café Rouge—a year ago.' Beads of perspiration stood out on Selwyn's head, and his body was faint with the pain of his twisted wrists.

'You're not lying?' said Dick Durwent, slowly relaxing his grip, and peering into the American's eyes. 'No. I seem to remember you somewhere with Elise. I'm sorry.' He released the clutch completely, and resumed his seat on the steps. 'I hope I didn't hurt you.'

'No,' said Selwyn, rubbing each wrist in turn to help to restore the circulation.

Durwent laughed grimly. 'It's a wonder I didn't break something,' he said. 'Once more—I'm sorry. But you can understand the risk I am running in returning here with the police wanting me. They're not going to get me if I can help it.'

'Why didn't you stay away?'

'With the Old Country at war! Not likely. Do you think I should ever have gone if I had known what was going to happen?'

'What are your plans?'

'Fight,' said the other briefly. 'Somewhere—somehow. I'll get into a recruiting line about dawn to-morrow. . . . But—what can you tell me about Elise?'

'I have neither seen nor heard of her since August,' said Selwyn, wondering at the calm level of his own voice in spite of tumultuous heart-beats.

'Too bad. Then you don't know anything about the rest?'

'No. I'— He paused awkwardly. 'I suppose you haven't heard about your brother?'

There was no response, but Selwyn could feel the Englishman's eyes steeled on his face. 'He was killed,' he went on slowly, 'last August.'

Still there was no sound from the younger son, now heir to his father's title and estates. For the first time Selwyn caught the ripple of the river's current eddying about the steps at the bottom. From the great bridges spanning the river there was the distant thunder of lumbering traffic.

'I understand that he died very bravely,' said the American in an attempt to ease the intensity of the silence.

'Yes,' muttered Durwent dreamily, 'he would. . . . So, old Malcolm is dead. . . . Somehow, I always looked on his soldiering as a joke. I never thought that those fellows in the Regulars would ever really go to war. . . . Yet, when the time came, he was ready, and I was skulking off to China like a thief in the night.'

The Englishman's voice was so low that it seemed as if he were talking more to himself than for his listener.

'What happened to that swine?' he ejaculated suddenly. 'I mean the one I almost killed. By any chance, did he die?'

'I saw in a paragraph last week,' said Selwyn, 'that he was out on crutches for the first time. The paper also commented on your complete disappearance.'

'I wish I had killed him,' said the young man grimly. 'If I ever get a chance I'll tell you about him. I was drunk at the time—that's what saved his life. If I had been sober I should have finished him. Well, it's a damp night, my friend, and I won't keep you any longer from a decent billet.'

'Look here, Durwent,' said Selwyn; 'come along to my rooms. You're soaked to the skin, and I could give you a change and a shakedown for the night.'

'Thanks very much; but I'm accustomed to this kind of thing.'

'You won't be seen,' urged Selwyn. 'I have accepted so much from your family that you would do me a kindness in coming.'

'Well, I must say I'm not married to this place. If you don't mind taking in a disreputable wharf-rat'—

'That's the idea,' said Selwyn, helping him to his feet. The Englishman shivered slightly.

'You haven't a flask, have you?' he queried. 'I didn't know how cold I was.'

'I haven't anything with me,' said the American; 'but I can give you a whisky and something to eat at the rooms.'

'Right! Thanks very much.'

Tucking the cape under his arm, and shaking his waterproof cap to clear it of water, Dick Durwent followed the American on to the Embankment, where the two sphinxes of Egypt squatted, silent sentinels.

II.

To avoid the crowds as much as possible, the two men followed the Embankment, and had

reached the Houses of Parliament, intending to make a detour into St James's Square, when Selwyn felt a hand upon his shoulder. He turned quickly about, and Durwent moved off to one side to be out of the light of a lamp.

'Sweet son of liberty,' said the new-comer, 'how fares it?'

It was Johnston Smyth, more airily shabby than ever. Over his head he held an umbrella in such disrepair that the material hung from the ribs in shreds. A profuse black tie hid any sign of shirt, and both the legs of his trousers and the sleeves of his coat seemed to have shrunk considerably with the damp.

'How are you?' said Selwyn, shaking hands.

'Temperamentally on tap; artistically beyond question; gastronomically unsatisfied.' At this concise statement of his condition, Smyth took off his hat, gazed at it as if he had been previously unaware of its existence, and replaced it on the very back of his head.

'Things are not going too well, then?' said Selwyn, glancing anxiously towards Durwent, and wondering how he could get rid of the garrulous artist.

'Not going well?' Smyth straightened his right leg and relaxed the left one. 'In the last three weeks a pair of pyjamas, my other coat, two borrowed umbrellas, and a set of cuff-links have gone. If things go much better I shall have to live in a tub like Diogenes. But—do the honours, Selwyn.'

'I beg your pardon,' said the American. 'Mr—Mr Sherwood,' he went on, taking the first name that came to his lips, 'allow me to introduce Mr Johnston Smyth.'

'How are you?' said the artist, making an elaborate bow and seizing the other's hand. 'As you may have gathered from my costume and the ventilated condition of my umbrella, I am not in that state of funds which lends tranquillity to the mind and a glow of contentment to the bosom. Yet you see before you a man—if I may be permitted a sporting expression—who has set the pace to the artists of England. I am glad to know you. Our mutual friend from Old Glory has done himself proud.'

With which flourish Smyth left off shaking hands and closed his umbrella, immediately opening it and putting it up again. Dick Durwent replaced his hands in his pockets, and Selwyn heard his quivering breath as he shivered with cold.

'However,' went on the loquacious artist, 'though my art has been heralded as a triumph, though it has filled columns of the press, though my admirers can be found on every page of the directory, I can only say, like our ancient enemy across the Channel, after Austerlitz, "Another such victory and I am ruined!" . . . Selwyn, shall we indulge in the erstwhile drop?'

'Have you a flask?' broke in Durwent, his dull eyes lighting greedily.

'I think not,' said Smyth, handing the umbrella to Selwyn, and carefully searching all his pockets. 'I am afraid my valet has neglected that essential part of a gentleman's wardrobe. But what do you say, gentlemen, to a short pilgrimage to Archibald's?'

'No, Smyth,' said the American, putting his hand in Durwent's arm. 'For certain reasons, Mr Sherwood'—

'Ha!' said Smyth, with a dramatic pose of his legs, 'Archibald is the soul of discretion. Compared to him, an Egyptian mummy is a pithy paragrapher. *Mes amis*, Archibald's is just across the bridge, and I can assure you that the Twilight Tinkle, in which I have the honour to have collaborated, is guaranteed to change the most elongated countenance of glum into a globular surface of blithesome joy.'

'No'—began Selwyn impatiently.

'Let us try it,' said Durwent eagerly. 'I think this chill has got into my blood. I'd give a lot for a shot of rum or brandy.'

'We can have anything in my rooms,' protested the American. 'You want to get your wet things off—and, besides, it's a risk going in there.'

'No risk—no risk,' said Durwent, laughing foolishly and rubbing his hands together.—'Where is this hole, Smyth?'

'Gentlemen,' said the artist, 'after the custom of these military days, I urge you "fall in."'

Getting in the centre and adjusting his hat at a precipitate angle on the extreme left of his head, Smyth took Dick Durwent's arm, and extending the other to Selwyn, marched the pair across the bridge, holding the absurd umbrella over each in turn as if it offered some real resistance to the scurvy downpour.

(Continued on page 311.)

INDIAN FRONTIER REMINISCENCES.

By C. G. NURSE.

I.

THE staff-officer at Bombay placed in my hand a paper which read as follows: 'You will proceed to join the —th Bombay Infantry at Sibi, travelling expeditiously by sea and rail at the public expense.'

'Where on earth is Sibi?' I inquired.

'It is quite a small place in the Quetta district, and I expect you will find your regiment in camp, so you had better take a tent.'

'How do I get there?'

'By sea to Karachi, and thence by rail. There is a boat leaving here on Saturday; if you will call at the office again to-morrow, I will arrange for your passage, and have your railway warrant ready.'

I had recently arrived in Bombay from England as a probationer for the Indian Staff Corps (now the Indian Army), after serving four years in a British regiment. During a previous tour of duty in India I had passed in Hindustani, and, finding home service rather slow and decidedly expensive, I had determined on an Indian career. At the time of which I am writing—namely, the year 1885—service in the Quetta district was not at all popular with either Europeans or natives, and I was by no means overjoyed when I learned my destination. However, it is no use quarrelling with the decrees of either Fate or one's military superiors, so I prepared to make the best of it, and in due course reached Karachi. Here I met a deputy-surgeon-general, who had recently returned from a tour of inspection in the Quetta district. I eagerly inquired of him particulars regarding the country and the climate, and did not feel at all reassured when he informed me that the water contained germs

of nearly every possible disease, and that he had, in fact, taken with him his own supply for drinking purposes. I afterwards ascertained, much to my relief, that he was considered almost a monomaniac on the subject, and there was a standing joke at the club about 'splitting a bottle of water with Dr H—.'

On arrival at Sibi I found that my regiment was no longer there, but had gone on to Quetta. Sibi was in those days the terminus of the railway, and the journey on to Quetta through the Bolan Pass had to be performed by road, the distance being about sixty miles. The country through which I passed was weird in the extreme; great bare hills rose on either side of the road, which wound ribbon-like through dark gorges, until the *kòtal*, or highest point, was reached. Then came a descent for a space into the barren Dasht-i-be-daulat (literally, 'wealthless plain'), which extends to within a few miles of Quetta.

It is always something of an ordeal for a young man to find himself in a new corps, when not only the personalities and tastes of his brother-officers, but even the ideas and habits of the rank and file, are strange to him. However, my new comrades did their best to put me at my ease; and the colonel, after giving me a few days to settle down in my new surroundings, placed me in charge of the regimental transport, which consisted of 250 mules and their attendants.

I knew nothing about mules, and very little about natives; but it was a fine opportunity of gaining experience, and I did my best to maintain order among a rather unruly crowd of men and animals. The lot of the muleteer (or *drabi*, as he is generally called, this being the native rendering of the English word 'driver') is never a very easy one, and in those days was particu-

larly hard in the Quetta district. These men had to travel long distances with Government stores under most uncomfortable conditions; and even when at Quetta their quarters consisted of wretched huts, affording but scanty shelter from cold and wet. On winter mornings a certain amount of *fortiter in re* was necessary to get them out of their huts for 'stables.' I found that a little red pepper thrown on the fire would render a hut untenable in the shortest possible time; and, once the men were outside, they could easily be induced to attend to their duties. The majority of the men were 'scallywags' and ne'er-do-wells, whose chief relaxation was gambling, but I never had any serious trouble with them. A little sympathy goes a long way with natives of India, and when they found that I was ready to listen without impatience to long stories about their domestic concerns, they would come to me for advice on all kinds of subjects, from the recovery of a gambling debt to the punishment of a runaway wife. A native always likes to have some one to whom he can relate his troubles; and if my advice was not always followed, at any rate I obtained considerable insight into Indian habits and modes of thought.

II.

The late Sir Robert Sandeman was, in the 'eighties, the chief power in Baluchistan, and his influence among the turbulent tribesmen was immense. Stout of figure, rosy of face, and careless in his dress, he looked like a burly farmer from East Anglia. He thoroughly understood the local tribesmen, and, if his methods of dealing with them were at times unconventional, he usually managed to 'make the punishment fit the crime.'

A year or so before my arrival in Baluchistan, a young subaltern, one of my contemporaries at the R.M.C., Sandhurst, was murdered in a rocky gorge a few miles from Quetta. A considerable number of the inhabitants of a neighbouring village were implicated in the crime; the ring-leaders were duly arrested and punished, and Sir R. Sandeman ordered the village to which they belonged to cultivate for ever on behalf of Government a piece of land near Quetta in expiation of their offence, and as a warning to others.

Sandeman was quite fearless, and must have had many narrow escapes. A friend once told me that, during the latter part of the Afghan war, he was in command of Sandeman's escort in a very wild part of the country, where the tribal chiefs had been summoned to discuss certain matters that were at issue between them and the British Government. The chiefs were inclined to resent interference, but Sandeman harangued them, and spoke his mind in no measured terms, standing among them quite unarmed. He had sent his escort some distance away, and the officer in command noticed that

while he was speaking two of the tribesmen were seated behind a rock with their rifles levelled at him. After the meeting he mentioned the matter to his chief, who said, 'I was quite aware of it; but I should be unworthy of my post if I allowed myself to be influenced by fear of personal danger.'

Another conspicuous figure frequently seen at Quetta was the late Sir James Browne, always known as 'Buster Browne,' who was then in charge of the construction of the Harnai railway. This undertaking involved such enormous expense that the head of the financial department remarked that 'Browne must think in *lakhs*.' He was a man of powerful build, who had been a famous athlete in his youth. He was once at a gathering of tribesmen when a local wrestler was boasting of his prowess, and challenged all comers. Browne, who was then well over forty-five, accepted the challenge, and easily defeated his adversary, who retired with a broken collar-bone.

III.

Quetta was, in the days of which I am writing, still in the making, and a considerable number of R.E. officers were employed there, superintending the building of barracks and Government offices. The senior R.E. officer was a man of very mild appearance, who had the reputation of being 'as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove.' He was, however, a glutton for work, and did his best to keep those under him up to the mark. One of his officers, a young R.E. captain, though of undoubted ability, was of an extremely leisurely nature. On one occasion his chief sent for him, and inquired whether certain plans, which he had had ample time to prepare, were ready. The reply was in the negative.

'But what have you been doing for the last fortnight?' inquired the colonel.

'I have been writing a little poem, sir,' replied Captain L—, producing a manuscript from his pocket. 'Perhaps you would like me to read it to you.'

The climate of Quetta is pleasant enough during the greater part of the year, though it is hotter in summer and colder in winter than that of the British Isles. April is often a delightful month, and the fruit-trees in blossom make one dream of an English spring. But during the 'eighties it was so unhealthy that we used to say that the year might be divided into the pneumonia season, the fever season, the cholera season, and the autumn, when one might contract any or all of these diseases. Nearly all the houses leaked abominably, and I frequently had to move my camp-bed all over the room in seeking for a dry spot. The death-rate was very high, and the Indians, especially those from the Bombay side, hated service in Baluchistan. Servants were difficult to obtain, even at very high wages, and were

apt to desert as soon as the weather became unpleasantly cold. Natives of this class, when they become ill, generally make up their minds that they are going to die, and, in fact, often succumb because they will not make a fight for life. They do not all, however, settle their affairs as carefully as was the case with a servant of one of my brother-officers. He was taken ill about the 23rd of the month, and died on the 25th. When his master came to overhaul his effects, he found that his household accounts had been made up to the end of the month, even to the pettiest detail.

During the mid-'eighties Rudyard Kipling, then quite unknown to fame, was working at Lahore on the staff of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, in which paper some of his early verses and short stories appeared from time to time. I remember being much impressed with his power as a writer when I read 'The Strange Story of Morrowby Jukes, C.E.,' which appeared about this time in a small volume entitled *The Quartette*. I believe that this was his first story that was published outside the pages of a newspaper; the remaining stories were contributed by other members of the Kipling family. The booklet in which they appeared is now very scarce, and is eagerly sought after by collectors of first editions of his works. I do not know whether he ever came to Baluchistan, but in 'The Story of Uriah' he sends Jack Barrett to Quetta as being the most unhealthy station in India. Many waters have passed under the bridges since those days; Kipling's works are known and read wherever the English language is spoken; and Quetta has now become one of the most popular stations in the East!

Although there was no church at Quetta at that time, we had a chaplain, and were occasionally visited by the Bishop of Lahore, whose diocese extends to Baluchistan. The bishop, like the apostles of old, was content with very humble accommodation, and on one occasion put up in the dāk bungalow, where he was found by the padre preparing his sermon under the shelter of an umbrella, which he had spread to keep off the rain which was dripping freely through the mud roof. Divine service for the troops was always held in the open, and after one of the bishop's visits the chaplain received from a member of his flock an envelope containing the following lines:

May the Bishop of Lahore come to Quetta no
more,
For his sermon's too long, and the sun is too
strong
For Tommy Atkins to stick it.

A few months after joining my new regiment, I began the study of Persian under the auspices of a local *munshi*. After I had made some progress in the language, in order to improve my command of the colloquial, I used to spend an hour every afternoon in the bazaar, sitting

outside a fruit-seller's shop, talking to him and to any one who would speak Persian to me. One day I asked my friend the fruit-seller whether he knew any English, and he replied, 'One word only.'

'What is it?' I inquired.

'*Ickshaw tree exes.*'

'That does not sound like English. What does it mean?'

He put his hand behind the cushion on which he was sitting and produced a half-empty bottle of Exshaw's Three Star brandy.

I inquired how long he had acquired the habit, and he replied, 'Of course, I am a Mussulman, and only take it medicinally for internal pains, which,' he added, with a twinkle in his eye, 'come on every evening'!

IV.

When I had become fairly conversant with my duties in a native regiment, I was sent to take over command of a detachment at Rindli, a small place at the foot of the Bolan Pass. The climate of these regions is intolerably hot in the summer, and there is a saying current in this part of the world: '*Sibi o Dàdar dashteed, Dozakh chira sakhteed?*' ('When thou hadst Sibi and Dàdar, why didst thou create Hell?'), Sibi and Dàdar being the two best-known villages in the neighbourhood.

During the latter half of 1885 war with Russia seemed almost inevitable, and enormous quantities of stores and transport animals had been collected at Rindli, to which point the railway had been extended. It was one of the duties of my detachment to guard these stores, which, as the war-cloud dispersed, were either sent back to India or sold locally for a tithe of their original cost. I saw ponies sold for about a rupee each, and one of my friends bought a couple of them, which, after training, became fair polo-ponies, and eventually realised several hundred rupees.

My detachment consisted of about sixty men, with one subadar, a fine old gray-bearded Sikh of about fifty years of age. On my arrival I found that the native officer was ill, and was being treated in his own quarters by a native hospital assistant. I paid him a short visit, and found him very despondent about himself. A few evenings later, just as I was retiring for the night, I received an urgent message from him that he was dying, and wished to see me. I hastened to his quarters, which were in a separate room attached to the building occupied by the N.C.O.'s and men.

The subadar made an effort to sit up in bed and salute me; he apologised for disturbing me at such an unusual hour, and said, '*Huzur*, I wish to speak to you alone.'

Three or four Sikhs were present in the room, so I sent them outside, and said, 'Subadar sahib, now speak whatever is in your heart.'

'Huzûr, I am very weak and ill, and what I have to say to you must reach no other ears. Is the door securely fastened?' I assured him on the point, and he proceeded: 'I am certainly going to die. I have in a belt round my waist forty *tolas* of gold' (value about eighty pounds). 'No one knows of this, and if I die, unless your Honour sees to the matter, the money will be taken by those who were just present. I want you to see that the gold reaches my wife, and if you will undertake this I can die content.'

I tried to persuade him that he was not so ill as he imagined, but gave him the required promise that, in the event of his death, I would see that his savings reached his wife. I had seen the subadar only once before, and it was, therefore, not in any way due to my personal influence that he should turn to me in an emergency. The men who he feared would steal his money were his constant companions, shared his meals with him, and some of them were his blood-relations, while I was practically a stranger. But I was a 'sahib,' and he felt that he would rather trust me than those of his own race and caste.

I have told the story at some length to illustrate the prestige that a British officer commands with natives of India. I served in the Indian Army for upwards of twenty years after the above-recorded incident, and, so far as I am able to judge, this prestige had in no way diminished, at any rate among the fighting races, up to the time when I retired. I may mention that the native officer did not die, but, after a period of sick-leave, returned to duty, and eventually obtained his pension.

Sikhs were at that time freely enlisted in the Bombay regiments, and, owing to their soldier-like qualities and capacity for command, a good proportion of them became native officers. The jemadar who was sent to take the old subadar's place was also a Sikh. I should, perhaps, explain, for the benefit of readers who do not know northern India, that men of this class never cut their hair, but fasten it in a knot underneath the *pugri*. There was a small camping-ground near the native infantry lines at Rindli which we were ordered to keep clear, so that it might be available whenever troops halted there on their way to and from Quetta. One day when I went to visit my men the jemadar rather excitedly reported to me that the leader of a Pathan *kafilâ* had tried to encamp on this ground during the early hours of the morning.

'But, sahib,' he added, 'I drove him away, leaving my mark on his face.' Then, producing an old and very dirty official envelope, he drew from it a handful of grayish hair, which he explained had been torn out of his head in the struggle.

An hour or two later an elderly Pathan appeared with his face bound up. He in turn showed a handful of his henna-dyed beard,

which he asserted had been pulled out by the native officer. Both parties were quite ready for another scrap, but I managed to prevent any actual conflict by suggesting that if the Pathan were not satisfied he had better apply to the civil authorities for a summons. I knew very well that this would involve him in delay and consequent loss of money, and he finally pocketed his pride and departed, muttering guttural curses in Pushtu.

v.

During my tour of duty at Rindli one of the staff-officers of the Quetta district came there on inspection duty, and stayed with me for a few days. I was very glad of his companionship, as he was a genial personality, and possessed a ready wit. A change in the command of my regiment took place about this time, and my new C.O. passed through on his way to Quetta. I heard of his arrival at the dâk bungalow, and consequently put on my uniform, in order to call on him and make his acquaintance.

My friend the staff-officer, seeing me in uniform, inquired where I was going, and when I informed him, he remarked without a moment's hesitation, 'So you are going to place the egg of politeness under the hen of authority in order that it may hatch into the chicken of promotion, as you would say in Persian.'

He knew that I was studying the language, and his remark was a very good imitation of the picturesque phraseology of a Persian sentence.

The duties that an officer has to perform when serving on the outskirts of the Empire are extraordinarily varied, and while at Rindli I had to superintend the interment of several Europeans in the little cemetery. One of them was a Roman Catholic, and, there being no priest available, nor any one belonging to that community who could read sufficiently well to conduct the funeral, I was obliged to read the burial service in Latin out of a prayer-book lent me by a Goanese cook. Another was the infant son of an Englishman working as a foreman or petty contractor on the Harnai railway, and this was rather a pathetic case. The father came to my house one morning, bringing a tiny coffin, and asked where he could find a minister. There was no padre of any denomination within reach at the time, and he consequently asked me to arrange for the funeral and read the service. On our return from the cemetery, he remarked, 'I should not have come all this way to bury a girl; but as it was our only son, my wife insisted on his being properly buried. I shall let her think that a minister performed the ceremony; and, at any rate, the poor little fellow lies in consecrated ground.'

After spending several months at Rindli, I was relieved by another regiment, and took my detachment back to Quetta to rejoin head-

quarters. The railway was then being built up the Bolan Pass, and a considerable number of Europeans were employed on its construction. Some of them had their wives with them, and life being hard and dull, they conceived the project of having a dance to relieve the monotony of existence. My regiment was asked for the loan of our band for the occasion, and any officers who could be spared from duty were invited to the dance, which was to take place about thirty miles from Quetta. The line was sufficiently forward for construction trains to run, and an engine and a couple of carriages were detailed to transport band and guests to the scene of gaiety. When the train conveying the party had covered about half the distance from Quetta, the driver stopped the engine, and sent word to the colonel, who was among the guests, that he would not move another yard till the band played. The man had been drinking heavily, and argument proved quite useless, so at last an order had to be given for a march to be played, when the journey was duly continued.

About this time I paid a flying visit to Peshin, one of the out-stations of the Quetta district. The garrison, which was accommodated in a large mud fort, consisted of a squadron of native cavalry and a Baluch regiment, and was under the command of Colonel (afterwards General) Nicholson. Tall and heroic in appearance, he

was at that time one of the most notable figures on the frontier, and many stories were told of his intrepid feats. He was somewhat unconventional both in his ideas and in his methods. On one occasion a man of his regiment shot at him on parade; the bullet missed him, and Colonel Nicholson, instead of having the man arrested and tried by court-martial, promptly rode at him, and, dismounting, gave him a thorough thrashing. Nicholson married, somewhat late in life, the talented lady who, under the *nom-de-plume* of 'Laurence Hope,' wrote *The Garden of Kama*, which contains poems of great beauty. Some of her verses, notably 'Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar,' have been set to music, and are now widely known.

On the completion of two years' service in the Quetta district, my regiment was transferred elsewhere, and I did not revisit Baluchistan for nearly twenty years. Quetta had by this time changed out of all recognition; substantial bungalows and excellent barracks had been erected, and, thanks to an improved water-supply, the station has now become one of the healthiest and most popular in the Indian Empire. The hills in the neighbourhood afford a fine training-ground for troops, the garrison is sufficiently large to support an excellent club and a pack of hounds, and any military officer who now finds himself under orders for Quetta may consider himself in luck's way.

THE INFRA RED RAY.

PART II.

I.

GRANT HASWELL took a last sip of his coffee (now quite cold), lit another cigarette with the stump of the one he had smoked to perilously small dimensions, settled himself more comfortably on the 'moleskine' bench, his legs outstretched beneath the table, and leisurely resumed his narrative.

'Crossing the ruined railway in the shadow of a partly demolished bridge, we glided into the shadow of a long brick wall holed by shell-fire. It had grass growing beside it, which deadened our footfalls. We proceeded to the right, or in the direction of the *crassier* which sloped up from our front line, and should have been in full view of the enemy had it been daylight. An occasional Very light caused us to pause on our way, till we reached the end of the wall and passed through a shell-hole on to the shale of the *crassier*, which sloped up at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The fine shale made our footfalls silent, and the clear silhouette of the *crassier* gave us no anxiety regarding a lurking observer above us.

'In this way we got round to the side immediately facing Fosse 16 and the German position,

and began to ascend in the direction of a mass of timber and wreckage near the old engine-house on the plateau-like top. Here we halted, and lay down in a depression between two sets of tram-rails. It was a perfect night for the work we had in hand, and the silence was unbroken except when a machine-gun rattled through half a belt somewhere in the distance. We lay there and listened intently for any suspicious sound, and as we strained our ears we heard the dull whirr of an electric motor and the thud of a pump somewhere in the ruined buildings of the fosse.

"Water-Supply Corps," whispered the sergeant; "we get our drinking-water out of this pit." Then he added, "There's an O.P. in those buildings too; we're wired up to it."

'A sound close at hand made us all suddenly alert. It came from a pile of sleepers, arranged in a square, some of which were splintered by a shell which had left a crater near by. It was a dull, mechanical beat, with pauses, sometimes, of nearly a second between the groups of beats. "Morse," whispered the sergeant, pulling out a muddy notebook and pencil. Two long beats, pause; three long beats, pause; one short, one long, one short. "Mor," he translated. The

sergeant continued writing for several minutes, till the sounds ceased and we read: "Morgen um neun uhr—Nein—B6. C.5.8" ("To-morrow at 9.0—No—B6. C.5.8").

"That's a map of reference," said Jessop quietly, "and the position referred to is a dump of T.M. ammunition. Jove, what casualties we'll have if they explode it! I must leave you now and get it shifted," he added.

"Don't worry; we'll make him cancel those arrangements if we can," I assured him. "Wait here whilst I have a nearer look at this outfit."

II.

'Directed by the occasional clicks which showed that the spy was answering a message being sent to him, I crept slowly forward, and soon came on a battered wrought-iron pipe, buried in the shale and projecting from it a couple of feet. It was about eight inches in diameter, and the projecting end was riddled with bullets or shrapnel and much corroded from exposure.

'As the apparatus worked I could see nothing—no light, no movement whatever. Then from a few yards away I heard a muttered exclamation. It was German, and it came from the hollow pile of sleepers. I crawled slowly forward, and saw an infinitely small speck of light issuing from a chink beneath the bottom sleeper of the pile. I placed my eye to this small opening and looked down. Below was a well-lighted table covered with maps and sketches, notes filed on pieces of wire or weighted with a piece of shale, and parts of what seemed to be an apparatus involving lenses or reflectors, a plush-lined receptacle for which lay against the wall in the centre. On an empty ammunition-box sat a man in the uniform of a British private soldier, his jacket open at the neck and steel helmet beside him on the floor, whilst against the wall was a service rifle, a coil of insulated wire, and a field telephone. His uniform was dirty, and on the sleeve was a square of soiled blue-and-white serge. He was sitting looking down, with his head supported by an arm, the elbow of which rested on the table. Above his head the iron pipe through which I had heard the signals projected from the wall in front, and attached to the end of it was a piece of apparatus connected with the table by two strands of twisted insulated wire, which disappeared through two holes drilled in it, reappearing in the same way by two more holes, opposite a Morse key, with which the man was toying with his free hand. I could not see his face, nor any entrance to his retreat from the top or the sides, and the floor was too much in the shade for me to discern any opening there.

'I returned quietly to my companions and informed them of my discovery, and it was decided that Jessop should keep the German

covered with his revolver, whilst I and the sergeant endeavoured to find the entrance to his dug-out.

'We saw Jessop to the chink, and he said that his bullet would easily find a way through in case of necessity, though, as the spy was still dozing, it seemed unlikely that he would have need to use his weapon. I felt pretty sure that there was some kind of trap-door and tunnel leading to the place, for such an arrangement could almost have been made by hand in the loose shale, provided timbering were employed. We therefore first searched the face of the *crassier* below the dug-out, but were disappointed in our quest. We then came up to the pile of sleepers, and, with them as a centre, crawled round among the wreckage in gradually widening circles till we came on an ordinary iron man-hole such as is used for the inspection of drains in our streets at home. This fitted well, and showed no sign of having been recently opened, though at one point there were fairly new scratches in the thick rust. The ground round about was hard, and smooth flints had been used to metal it. On examining the man-hole carefully—for the moonlight was good—I noticed that in spaces between the cover and the frame there was no trace of dust or sand—a surprising circumstance in view of the strong breeze we had had in the early part of the day.

'The usual lifter holes were clogged up with mud and rust, and only a steel chisel-edged bar could have been inserted in the small chink between the plate and the frame. For the moment we were at a loss. It was now one o'clock, and unless the T.M. ammunition-dump was removed before 9 A.M., or the people in the vicinity warned, a disaster would take place at that hour.

'The sergeant suggested that the pumping-station close by might have some tools useful for opening the man-hole, and in leaning over to whisper this suggestion he accidentally put his weight on the side of the man-hole on which we had noticed the scratches. The lid lifted, and his foot disappeared with a scraping noise as the heel slipped over the rusty metal. Immediately he uttered a stifled cry of pain as the lid swung half-way back, imprisoning the ankle. I jumped forward and brought the lid into a vertical position once more, and he pulled out his leg, fortunately not much the worse for the accident.

'No sound showed that we had disturbed our spy, and together we peered down the man-hole. Leaning over, the sergeant felt the brick sides with his hands, and in a few seconds whispered that he had discovered iron rungs set in the brick-work. We descended, I lowering the lid of the man-hole with my head as I got down. The depth was about ten feet, and we found ourselves in black darkness in a space that barely left room for movement.'

III.

'My electric torch has red and green tints for the lens, and slipping in the red one, I switched the lamp on, thus getting a dim but sufficient light. On one side at the bottom the bricks had been removed, and a tunnel about two and a half feet square could be seen. It had been dug through the shale and ingeniously revetted with iron-wire grills (from the windows of the wrecked offices of the pit, we afterwards discovered), supported by trolley rails and odds and ends of iron-work picked up about the place.

'We had cautiously wormed our way along this tunnel a distance of about eight yards, when rays of light appeared filtering through the joints of a square wooden door just above my head. We listened, and hearing no sound, I gently applied pressure to various parts of the door till it yielded and lifted slightly.

'The man we had seen through the chink was still dozing as we had left him. I slowly lifted the door and raised myself to my feet. As I did so a sound caused by the door's having slipped from my hand awoke the German, and he turned suddenly. I recognised him immediately. It was Über-Leutnant von Hilsener, our friend's nephew, who escaped, you remember, when we laid the old boy by the heels.

'His hand flew to his pocket as I said, "Von Hilsener, you are twice covered. Even if you killed me, you would die in the same instant." He was a brave man, this German, and I verily believe that, had he not known me before, he would have died there and then fighting. As it was, curiosity, so strong in men of his profession, made him risk having to face a firing-squad afterwards, in order to talk with me. He whipped his hand from his pocket empty, and stood regarding us (for the sergeant had now appeared through the trap) with that haughty look the well-bred German officer so well knows how to affect.

"You will move to the far side of the dug-out," I said, "and make no attempt to destroy your apparatus; otherwise, I regret to say, I shall have to employ drastic means of keeping you out of further mischief." Von Hilsener bowed, and moved in the direction indicated. "Now, listen," I went on. "If you will agree to do all I suggest to you, I will use all my influence to save you from a fate which it is unnecessary for me to name to one so well versed in military routine as yourself. We have met before, and I admire your courage as I had reason to fear your resource. You will call up your friends over the line and tell them, in reference to the message you last sent, that the map reference was inaccurate, and you will give them one which my friend will provide. When you have done so I shall hand you over to the proper authorities, and tell them such details regarding yourself as will ensure your avoiding a disgraceful death. Do you agree?"

'Von Hilsener glanced towards the apparatus

above the table and looked me full in the face. "On one condition," he said: "that you tell me of my uncle's fate."

"Your uncle is well; I cannot say more. Do you agree to my conditions?"

"*Donnerwetter!* ja, I suppose I must," growled Von Hilsener.

"Go and fetch Lieutenant Jessop, sergeant," I said, watching my prisoner carefully.'

IV.

"Hello, Jessop!" I cried when he came in; "just look up that piece of waste-land near the brick-stacks on the map there. Got it? Right-o. What does it read?"

"C4. D.2.5," he returned.

"Right.—Von Hilsener, will you please call up and correct the reference you gave?"

"I cannot call up till two o'clock, when they will be looking out," he replied; "it is still ten minutes to two."

"Very good; tell us about the system," I said, wetting the end of my finger and touching the surface of a lens which was lying near the plush-lined case.

"They are not rock-salt, or how do you English call it?" he said. "You will see that our chemists and opticians have much further advanced than yours."

"Ours will soon discover what they are," said Jessop, the collector of information.

"Didn't you try concave polished reflections in the quest?" I asked, remembering our experiments.

"Yes; but our method is the best," said the German with pride. "You will not easily discover the secret composition of our lenses, as you have never equalled Jena glass."

"It is two o'clock," said Jessop.

'Von Hilsener moved towards the key, and I signed to the sergeant to write. The spy pressed the key in a succession of "dashes," and waited. A needle on a white dial quivered, then moved from side to side. Von Hilsener touched a switch, and then put an ear-piece to his ear with a metal clip. A low musical buzz filled the dug-out, and when the needle moved it became more pronounced. The German handed me the ear-piece, and putting it to my ear, I heard the Morse signals clearly cut from the continuous buzzing. He resumed the ear-piece and began to work the key, the apparatus clicking to each movement of his hand. When he had finished the sergeant read out the message, which, translated, became: "Reference last message alter map reference to C4. D.2.5. AAA. nothing adieu." Von Hilsener bowed, and signified that he was ready to follow me.

"You had better bring your rifle and Tommy's kit," I said. "Leave anything you choose with Lieutenant Jessop for his collection of curios;" and I looked at him warningly.

'He smiled his thanks, and threw a decoration

from his vest on the table, together with a bundle of papers in a leather roll.'

V.

'At nine o'clock the Boche artillery began an hour's shelling with shells up to eight inches on C4. D.2.5, and the expert in charge of the late radio-station of Von Hilsener heard what they said about it afterwards.

'The apparatus was similar to the one we had worked on, except that in place of our concave mirrors the lenses were of some compound which would not cut off heat-rays as glass does. They are being investigated. Electro-magnets moved the shutter, and the thermopile had an ingenious amplifying device which gave "buzzer signals." The spy had lived several months in our lines, posing as a signal service linesman and drawing our rations.

'He got his news by personal observation, and

by chatting with working-parties or overhearing scraps of conversation. He did not appear too often in the trenches, and used times when reliefs or bad weather would help to prevent his being stopped and questioned.

'A man of great personal courage, he probably came into our lines at night with one of our working-parties from "No Man's Land," disguised as a British Tommy, with his small apparatus concealed in his pack, having first given his friends the time and the place to pick up his first message. Having once established communication, he had made himself comfortable in a dug-out; and as his cells became exhausted he had obtained new ones from some of our linesmen, or taken them from a station telephone, leaving exhausted ones in place of those stolen whilst the operator was not looking. He was not shot, and, I believe, like his uncle, he is still well—and safe.'

ARCTICA.

IT was evening when we left Tromsø. For days we had sailed up Norway's fjords, basking on deck in glorious sunshine, and enjoying the beauties, the wonders, and the novelties of a foreign land. Two days had we spent in that quaint little capital of the north—Tromsø—days filled with memories of curiously painted wooden houses, of the lingering smell of drying fish, and of the stalwart race of vikings who, fighting year by year against rugged nature, win a competence and are content. The last boatload of provisions from the shore had been stowed away, smoke was belching from the funnels, and the hiss of steam somewhere seemed to suggest that the engines were straining at their iron leashes. A bell jangled on the bridge, a flag fluttered, and we were off once more. The yellow evening sun lit up the fjord, and a faint offshore breeze, stirring the pine-clad slopes, brought to us the sweet scent of the trees, the last we should see for some time. The warm sunny days seemed lost to us, and the sharpening evening wind whispered of the chill seas beyond.

The morning found us threshing our way through a heavy swell in the Arctic Ocean. Around, as far as eye could see, stretched a waste of sullen heaving waters, gray as the banked clouds above, which shut out the sun from that desolate sea for three whole days. Save once, no other ship appeared, and then it was a small sealing-schooner with a heavy list that scudded past, a solitary figure in dripping oilskins waving an arm in salutation to the big gray vessel, whose errand so far north must have puzzled him not a little. Colder and colder it became, and soon white patches could be seen here and there on the

waters—bergs over which an occasional roller burst into showers of spray. Once or twice, too, there was a swirl of a big body, a momentary glimpse of a curving tail, and a whale would disappear in the depths. Hitherto the water had been green, but a change was noticed, and that colour gave place to a deep blue; we were out of Arctic waters and had entered the Gulf Stream. Although it had come from our home shores it did not befriend us, for before long a thick fog enveloped the ship, and gray sky and bleak sea were lost from sight. Around us only a small patch of oily water could be seen, and with engines running slowly we pushed on into the unknown.

The third day out the fog lifted a little, and away on the starboard bow we saw a pale-yellow patch of light on the sky. To the greenhorn this conveyed nothing, but there was a commotion on the bridge, and telescopes and binoculars were directed towards it. There was a consultation and comparing of notes, and our Norwegian pilot, generally taciturn for lack of English, made the curt remark, 'Land is.' It was the famous 'ice-blink' that denotes the presence of land, and right ahead of us was the mainland of Spitzbergen. Soon we were abreast of this most mysterious land of the Far North, and for hours we sailed up the western coast, passing huge frowning peaks, mostly snow-clad, but in many places showing scarred black rock faces. Great corries were there, giant bowls filled with snow, whose whiteness in the sunlight was almost blinding. Overflowing from the lips of the corries and sweeping down from the mountains behind we could see rivers of ice—some a few yards across, others with a width of many miles. No two glaciers seemed alike: some

ended inland, others reached the sea; this one had a smooth surface, while that was riven and crevassed in all directions. Over all there rested an eerie silence broken only by the beat of the waves along the shore.

There is an atmosphere of mystery over the Spitsbergen Archipelago, assigned the other day to Norway by the Powers. The scenery is magnificent, but it is utterly desolate. There are no real inhabitants—the only people there being new-comers, anxious to exploit the valuables these shores conceal. In some parts there are reindeer and Arctic foxes; in others not even a bird relieves the deadly stillness. It is like a land whose people have been swept suddenly out of existence, except that hardly a trace of early occupation can be found. A few hunters and trappers have explored some parts for their own purposes, and many whalers make use of the great sheltered bays and harbours, but otherwise the islands seem to have lain forgotten through the past ages. Of the hardy Norsemen, the viking longships, and the men of the northern sagas but few traces can be found. Possibly the certainty of loot and plunder drew them rather to the south, to our own shores. Nevertheless, their early chroniclers mention a land, which they call Svalbard, which is probably Spitsbergen. It seems utterly impossible that these hardy navigators could overlook the great islands which lie so comparatively near their homeland, while penetrating to Greenland and America. Little record is left, however, and the actual exploration of this Arctic land was left until fairly late in history. While the rest of the world map was sectioned off and coloured according to ownership, this patch remained a No Man's Land.

Two grim mountains guard the entrance to Ice Fjord, and between them we sailed into that wide waterway which reaches right into the heart of Spitsbergen. The sheltered water gleamed deep blue in the sunshine, save where a berg, cast adrift from its parent glacier, glided past like a castle of marble, fantastically decorated with towers and turrets. Many seals disport themselves in the fjord, and every little while an inquisitive head pops up to view, with keenest interest, the passing of our ship. Once, too, we nearly ran down a large Arctic gull which was asleep on the surface, and which was roused by the cry of its more alert partner. The shores were less barren there, and luxuriant moss with coloured saxifrage relieved the monotony of the rock-strewn beaches. Behind rose the mountains, looking weird with their horizontal strata; while bands of white gypsum at intervals on the hill-faces gave an air of ornamentation to the gray slopes. Above, glistening and inviting, lay the everlasting snows.

Ashore, we found fulmar petrels and eider-ducks by the hundred, while often a baby tern would scuttle past with the jerky motion of a

clockwork toy. Being quite wild, the birds showed little fear of strangers, and the little snow-bunting hopped about our feet with all the abandon of a farmyard chicken. Their nests lay in among the mosses, which grow in rather an odd fashion. The ground, probably by influence of the frost, cracks into five-sided or six-sided figures, and it is in these cracks that the moss grows, so that, from above, the appearance is not unlike that of a garden with boxwood borders.

Although we were within about twelve degrees of the Pole, the cold was by no means intense. The sun shone on steadily, and lit the islands by night as well as by day. The only difference to us was that the brightness of the sun's glare at home gave place to a yellowness very much like that of a summer sunset, owing to the very low angle which the sun makes with the horizon in high latitudes. At first it seemed curious to waken up in the middle of the night and find the sun blazing down on the roof of the tent, but the novelty soon wore off.

After exploring a while in these new fields, we sailed to visit our Norwegian friends, who have opened up their Spitsbergen estates and founded a thriving settlement. We passed up a lovely fjord, unspoiled in any way, and rounding a green headland, came upon Longyear City. Here was a large jetty with hoists for coaling ships. Trucks clattered down the hillside, rumbled along the jetty, and were drawn up a slope at the extreme end, where two huge iron funnels directed the stream of coal on to the vessel below. A cluster of wooden buildings marked the settlement, and the unclaimed ground between the houses formed the main (and only) street. An overhead cableway was carrying coal from the mines to the bing, and a network of telephone-wires, with a wireless station in the distance, showed that the engineers and the managers were in no way behindhand—except, perhaps, in the matter of road-building. The coal was being dug out of a hillside seven hundred feet above sea-level, where the temperature in the workings is so low that roof and floor are frozen hard and are shining with ice. Machinery and mining-plant could be seen everywhere, and an atmosphere of hustle surrounded the whole place. Indeed, our engineer guide excused the nature of the road on the plea that they had no time for luxuries. Although there are only some four months in the year when Spitsbergen is approachable, the commercial possibilities of the land have been amply demonstrated.

And what of the future? Estates are being staked out; plans are being set afoot to open up the country. Soon, no doubt, some parts at least will yield up their charm and their aloofness. Civilisation and commerce, hand-in-hand, are advancing over virgin soil, and although progress is our watchword, some of us will regret the coming of the period of the enterprise of man, involving as it does the passing of the period of the grandeur of unsullied nature.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

FAIR EXCHANGE.

By HILTON BROWN.

I.

IF you desire to impugn the veracity of this tale, or to criticise, or to ask obvious and unnecessary questions, I must refer you to my friend Mr Andrew M'Caskie, chief engineer of the Coromandel Company's six-thousand-ton freighter, the *Thousand Lights*. I had the story from M'Caskie, and as I received it so I pass it on; but beyond that I take no responsibility. M'Caskie has an imagination, and it is within the bounds of possibility that the whole story was put into his mind by the sight of the *Ben Rinnes* lying over against us in the harbour of Madras.

He told me the tale as we sat upon the fore-hatch of the *Thousand Lights* and drank much better whisky than was at that same time procurable on the mainland. The *Thousand Lights* is one of the Coromandel Company's newer boats, with a cruiser-built stern, so that when she is loaded up and sits down in the water up to the neighbourhood of her Plimsoll marks, one end of her is exactly like the other. She carried a couple of paravanes forward, and there was a palpable scar where she had been fitted with a decent funnel in place of the deck-high affair she used during the war. Here and there you could still catch the outlines of her camouflage painting, and it was the first voyage, M'Caskie said, she had unshipped her gun. I remarked that it would be long before any of us would be able to look without a shudder on such grim mementoes of the worst four years our merchant service ever went through; and gazing round the quiet harbour of Madras, with the banks and the High Court buildings cutting up into a champagne-coloured afterglow, I added that it was a great thing to think there was peace upon the waters once more. M'Caskie looked sceptical.

'Men go down to the sea in ships,' said he absently; 'and so long as that continues to be the way o't, there'll be little peace on the waters. Man, it's a queer thing how the mind o' man turns jist natural-like to evil.'

He lit his pipe for the twentieth time and surveyed the placid waters of the harbour.

'Ye see that Ben Line boat lying over there?' said he. 'Yon's the *Ben Rinnes*. Phemison's her skipper—a decent, well-doin' body. But I

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never see a Ben Liner without thinkin' o' Patagonia Pringle an' his deeds.'

'Why "Patagonia"?' I asked.

'This lad Pringle,' said M'Caskie, 'had started out as an engineer o' sorts on South American railways. And whenever he got a dram inside him he wud sit and lay down by the hour about thae parts. All about Punta Arenas and Gallegos and sic-like places, which would seem to be poor kind o' spots for a lad o' spirit by his account o' them, and all about hunting guanaco an' a wheen other uncocs. As a natural result o' all this folk called him Patagonia Pringle, an' by that name ye'll find him recognised to this day in any port between Batavia and Suez, an' maybe beyond. Man'—M'Caskie swung round on me with the fire of the incorrigible raconteur in his eye—'did ever ye hear o' his latest ploy, him an' the *Ben-a-Bhuird*, o' which boat he's skipper at the moment o' speakin'—if he isna in the Glasgow jail?'

It was a drowsy evening, with a light breeze from the nor'-nor'-east, just enough to lend spirit to the evolutions of a neat little water-wag coming in through the harbour entrance. M'Caskie has the sort of voice that sends children to sleep like a woman's. It was a good two hours till dinner-time. I set my back against a coiled hawser and surrendered myself to the spell.

II.

'This lad Pringle,' proceeded M'Caskie, 'was taken on by the Ben Line on account of his having an uncle or some sic-like body in their London office. I mind fine the day I first met him. Third officer on the *Ben Vrackie* he was then, an' I do declare it was in this very same port. Sirs, he was an impident smatchet, too. A well-set-up lad he was, wi' black hair an' gray eyes, an' he looked at his betters as much as to say, "Whatna orra-like character's this?" A fearless, impident monkey. I've met an' forgathered with him any time off and on these twelve or thirteen year, an' I last set eyes on him no' six weeks back, jist after the conclusion o' this affair I am speakin' o', an', upon my word, there was little change to be seen in him one way or another. As for the natural and inborn wickedness o' the man, that'll never change till the crack o' judgment. Time an'

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time again have I said to him, "Mend your ways, Patagonia, or ye'll come to grief yet," and all the reply I wud get wud be an ill name. Still, I ken he set more weight on my words than he was wont to do wi' most. "Ye auld wife, M'Caskie," he wud say, "they'll need to rise gey and early to keep upsides wi' me;" and that was the sober truth. For an auld wife o' an engineer that's spent most o' his days an' nights with his nose in a cylinder-head, I flatter myself I'm as ill to beat as most; but Patagonia—man, he was altogether by-ordinar'.

'You're wandering, M'Caskie,' I told him.

He roared for the steward, and had our glasses replenished. 'It wasna so much that,' said he, 'as that I was ettlin' at a starting-point. It's ill tellin' where to begin.'

He struck another match and let it burn out while he pondered.

'Ye know the port o' Bahoa?' said he at last. (Bahoa was not the name he used, but for reasons which will emerge it is the name I choose to employ. The real name would be as familiar to you as Colombo or Chittagong.)

'By name only,' I replied.

'That'll suffice,' said M'Caskie. 'Maybe thirty miles north-west of Bahoa there's a bit rock—it's little more—they call Kimbi, an' I was thinkin' I might do worse than begin with the night that Sandy Skinner stuck the old *Amethyst* o' the Jewel Line fair an' truly on the south end o' that same island. How he contrived to do so Providence alone can tell—maybe it was a judgment on him for packing thirteen hundred rubber coolies on to a boat that was never designed for more than eight. Be that as may be, there she sat on the southernmost rock o' Kimbi, with the saloon passengers raisin' the de'il's despair o' a commotion, and there she was sendin' up all kind o' signals when Pringle came along wi' the *Ben-a-Bhuird*. There was a bit o' a sea running, so Pringle stood by off an' on till it cam' light, and then he took off the passengers and put back with them into Bahoa—an' a fine shipload of it he had. Says Pringle to Skinner, "Have ye any casualties?" "God be here!" says Skinner; "what way can I tell ye? There's more coolies on board that ship than ever shipped on it, and by all ways o' lookin' at it this is a bad night's work for me. But I dinna think," says he, "there's anybody lost except the butler." This butler, I should tell ye, was a very black half-caste out o' Goa by the name of Antonio, and it was jist a matter of hours since Pringle had seen him with his own eyes doin' all manner o' clever aquatic feats in the Bahoa harbour. "That's odd, then," said Patagonia. "Yon fellie could swim like a fish. How did he come to be drowned?" "I dinna ken," said Skinner, "an' I dinna care." "Maybe he was drunk," said Patagonia. "Maybe so," said Skinner; an' they spoke no more about it.

'But for some reason or another the thing stuck

in the back o' Patagonia's mind, an' he worked round till he lit on one o' the *Amethyst's* crew that had seen Antonio go overboard. He learned from this chiel that Antonio was solemn-sober, that he tripped over a rope on the port side o' the ship an' went down into fairly still water. Big seas were breakin' over the starboard deck, but the ship, d'ye see, had made a sort o' harbour for herself on the port side. Anyway, souse in went Antonio—an' never came up! He hit nothing on the way down, for the ship had a big list to port; he jist went straight into the water an' sank like a stone. "That's no' natural," said Pringle; an' he went straight off an' sought out Gemmell, the port officer.

"See here, Gemmell," says he, "I want a loan o' two of your divers."

"Ye're welcome," says Gemmell. "For as long's this maunderin' devil Skinner's in the port limits, there'll be no work done by anybody. Take the whole staff," says he, "an', for Heaven's sake, take Skinner too." Patagonia didna take Skinner, but he took that man of the *Amethyst's* crew that had seen Antonio go overboard, and he put the *Ben-a-Bhuird* sharp about an' off back to Kimbi as hard as he could skelp. "When things are no' natural," he said to me afterwards, "ye'll find they generally pay to investigate." Ay, ay! Weel, he put his divers on board the *Amethyst*, an' over the side they went, an' it wasna many minutes when they had news o' Antonio. They put him in the bight o' a rope, an' he wasna well off the sea-bottom when the lads that was haulin' on the rope cried out that he weighed "half-a-ton." "That's no' natural again," says Patagonia. "Pull, boys; pull." The lads pulled on it till their shoulders cracked, an' in due course up came Antonio. Sirs, that man was wearin' three sets o' combinations, two shirts, an' three complete suits, with an odd waistcoat over an' above all, an' every single stitch o' every last garment o' these was sewn solid with—what d'ye think?

I shook my head.

'Sovereigns! Many good, honest British sovereigns, an' five-dollar pieces o' gold beside! Losh! the man was armoured wi' the solid gold like the carapace o' a crab!'

'I might have guessed it,' said I.

'Ye might—*now*,' said M'Caskie. 'It doesna need any superfluity o' business acumen for to realise that when ye can buy a sovereign in such an' such a country at anything from ten rupees to eleven-eight, an' sell that same in any given bazaar in the whole o' south India for eighteen rupees, then ye've got a commodity which, considerin' its weight an' bulk, will offer ye a very handsome profit. Always provided, that is, ye can pass it on shore without at the same time passin' yerself into the penitentiary! Ay, jist that. As I said a few minutes syne, the world's full o' wicked men, and two-thirds o' them follow the sea for a trade, an' they're no' the sort o'

lads to keep their hands off a proposition o' that nature. All that we ken fine to-day; you know, an' I know, that it's a thousand to nothing that the game's goin' on at this very moment in this same harbour of Madras. But I wud have ye to observe that at the time the *Amethyst* went ashore on Kimbi the exchange was jist beginning to rise; an' the thing was still almost in the nature of a gamble. For aught I wud jalouse to the contrar', Antonio may have been the pioneer o' the trade—in which case he's showed the road to a sight o' better men than himsel'. Be that as may be, it was an eye-opener for Patagonia. "I've a grand nose for money," said he, "an' fine I knew this wud pay for our trouble. When things turn out no' natural, *always* investigate. An' there's that fushionless auld tup Skinner wud ha' gone on to the end o' his days doin' no more than ship a wheen deck-passengers that never took a ticket! Gie that chap a decent funeral," says he (meaning, of course, Antonio), "for he's been a friend to me an' mine. God-sake," says he, "I'll retire on him yet!"

III.

M'Caskie paused, and I am afraid the steward went to work again. Another match was struck and allowed to flicker aimlessly away. Suddenly across the still harbour from the *Ben Rinnes* came the rattle of a bell, whereat M'Caskie pulled out a solid-looking watch and surveyed it.

'Seven to the tick,' said he appreciatively. 'Ye can aye set your watch by a Ben Liner's dinner-bell. An' it's no' so many weeks syne that I was stepping down the east quay o' Bahoa harbour and heard the *Ben-a-Bhuird's* bell give jist that same clatter, and ran into Patagonia himself on the way back to his ship. Ay, ay! Head in the air he went, as cool and as canty as ye like—though I'll wager he was the best-watched man in Bahoa that night.

"Give ye good-even, Mac," says he; "will ye step on board for a snack?"

'I looked him up an' down. "I think I'll no' the night," I says. "I'm feared I might see that which I had better not."

"Ye'll have good sight, then," said he. "Three times in two days have the port police been over this ship, once when I was there and twice when I wasn't, and you can take it from me that they scraped her from keel to masthead and from bow to propeller. An' what did they find?" says he. "Devil a thing but what's down in the invoices. It's hard," says he, cocking his impudent head, "that an honest man's to be denummed like this."

"Very like," says I; "but, anyway, I'll be stepping."

'Weel, I don't suppose I was many yards down the quay when I came upon Quint, who was deputy commissioner o' the Bahoa port police—an' a sharp lad, too. Ay, he was that. He had hold o' me before I could pass him, an' fine I knew

what he was after. But Quint was an Englishman, an' so he must needs be beating all round and about the bush as if a blind bairn couldna see the purpose behind it all as plain's a barracouta above sandy bottom on a sunny day. He wrought this way an' that, an' syne out it came.

"See here, M'Caskie," says he, "you're an old friend. Can ye no' give us a hand here?"

"I'm at a loss to understand yer meaning," says I.

"Man," he cried, fair screechin' wi's temper, "I can *smell* that gold within yards o' me. I have my hand almost on it. I know that damned fellow's got the best part o' a hundred thousand pounds in gold on board that boat somewhere; I know where he got it from, an' I know where he wants to put it off—where he *must* put it off—an' that's here, and no other place. But where *is* it?" he cries. "Where *is* it?"

"What way do ye no' search the ship?" I asked him.

'He girmed in my face. "As if ye didna ken fine," says he, "that I've been over that ship wi' my best men time after time. But," cries he, fair yammerin' wi' rage, "can I open every case in the hold? Can I tap every bulkhead, or prise every locker on the boat? Can I tear the shirts off every blasted one of his officers and engineers and what not? No; without a warrant, that's what I can *not*. An' a warrant's jist what I canna get."

'Oh, sirs, he was fair dancin' wi' fury.

"Ye're excitin' yersel', Quint," says I, "to no purpose. It stands to common reason that he canna get the stuff ashore under your eyes, and, as you say, get it ashore here he must. What can he do, then, but sink it alongside? Sweep after he's away."

'He up an' called me all the names in the book.

"Ye doited auld carline," says he, or words to that effect, "d'ye expect *me* to believe that o' *him*? Sink it alongside! Why, the head lascar's baby bairn wudna try foolishness o' that sort wi' *me* here. There ye stand jist takin' a loan o' me. For aught I ken, ye're in't yersel'. Sink it alongside! Damn the fear! He'll get it on shore, an' as like's not he'll get my own men to carry it off for him."

'I left him there stutтерin' an' swearin', an' I went for a stroll up the town. Comin' back, here's Patagonia himsel' strolling about in the shadow of the *Ben-a-Bhuird*—she was hard alongside—smokin' a cigar an' lookin' as if the place belonged to him. He had the brass, that lad; ay, he had that. If there was one police inspector on the quay, there was ten, an' I could hear launch callin' to launch all over the harbour like a flight o' duck.

"Ay, M'Caskie," says he, "an' how's a' wi' you?"

"It's like to be some close wi' *you*," I told him. "I presume this is by way o' a final fling,

an' ye'll retire from the job after it; but ca' canny meantime."

"Yon's a bonny wee brig ower there," says he. "She's the *Sarasvati*. She's owned by an Armenian—one Pieris. A scoundrel, they say he is, too."

"He'll no' be much worse than you," I says. "Man, Pringle, what under the heaven above us is the use o' draggin' bonny wee brigs in front o' me? I'm past chasin' red herrin' at my time o' life. I ken, an' you ken, that she's jist a dirty little scut o' a thing that was built for carryin' Burma rice when the Indian market was short, an' is now in the coastin' trade with teak. I wudna gie ye a couple o' lakhs for hull and cargo."

"Oh, I dinna ken," says he. "She's a decent wee briggie; an', anyway, M'Caskie, she's no' any sort o' a red herrin'. I jist wanted to draw her to your attention. Man, man," he cries so loud that I thought the nearest policeman must hear, "do ye think I'm daft? Ye auld dotterel, I couldna win off this ship wi' a Maundy-money bit, let alone a barrel or two o' sovereigns. D'ye think I dinna see't? Man, when I go on board that boat, there'll be one policeman lyin' in my bunk, an' another keekin' in at the port-hole. A scoundrel I may be, if ye say so, but I'm not a lunatic. I've done my business here, an' I'm off to-morrow."

"Patagonia," says I, as solemn as I could, "ye've got gold on that ship, and ye have not put it ashore yet. If ye tell me ye'll quit Bahoa with that stuff still on board, I'll tell you ye're a liar."

'He threw away the end o' his cigar.

"You prove your words," says he, "an' I'll prove mine."

IV.

'Weel, next mornin' I was jist sittin' down to a pickle ham-an'-eggs when I hears the *Ben-a-Bhuird's* siren shriekin' like a wild beast, an' here she comes slewin' round with two tugs pushin' her, headin' out of the harbour. I took my glasses, and in front of the port office I saw Quint an' Gemmell—him that Patagonia borrowed the divers off for Antonio—standin' cranin' their necks as if they didn't know what to make of it. More by token, I saw the cone hoisted for a cyclone, and already there was a bit o' weight in the seas coming in; but the *Ben-a-Bhuird* went out coalin' up as if for a race, and the freshening wind blew her smoke-screen all over the harbour. She went off full lick to the nor'-west, an' in a couple of hours' time she was no more than a smudge on the horizon.

'Weel, the cyclone blew up in the night all right—nothing to write home over, but a nasty blow for all that. It's well known that the man who designed Bahoa harbour was a congenital eediot, or else never meant it as a resting-place for ships, for it opens full into the teeth of the seas. The auld *Thousand Lights* here was like to leave her berth at one time, but we got

through the night as we've got through worse, an' in the forenoon I took a stroll down to the port office. There I fell in wi' Gemmell.

"M'Caskie," said he, "that fellow's got the luck o' the devil."

"What now?" says I. "Is he on to Kimbi?"

"Far from it," says he. "He wasna the length o' Kimbi when he picked up a derelict. Derelict, man, mark ye—none o' yer tows or salvages! Clean derelict! A well-found ship, an' about two lakhs' worth o' timber in the hold of her. It beats a'. He'll be in here with her this afternoon."

'I said jist what came into my mind—though how or why it came there Heaven alone knows.

"No' the *Sarasvati*?" I says.

"How did ye hear that?" says Gemmell.

'I minded mysel' in time. "It was jist a bit rumour," said I; "some one was mentionin' that name."

"I dinna understand how thae things get out," he snaps; and away he went into his office.

"Now," thought I to mysel', "what's next?"

'Weel, we werena long kept waitin'. Two had hardly chapped on the port-office clock when up goes the signal for a steamer sighted, and it wasna many minutes later when up went a flag I didna require my glasses to read—the red house-flag o' the Ben Line. "Here he comes!" thinks I. Losh me! but I was as excited as a bairnie at a circus. "What's next?" thought I; an' I slipped on my oilskins and went off to the quay. It was a dirty afternoon; the first blast and rain o' the cyclone had worn by, but there was a big ugly sea comin' slap over the wall, an' every cable and hawser in the harbour was strainin' an' groanin' like a chorus o' frogs in the paddy-fields. On the quay were Gemmell an' Quint an' a wheen more, all drooked as deuks. I jalouse the *Ben-a-Bhuird* would be about a mile out—maybe less—with the brig in tow.

"The luck o' the swine!" says Quint through his teeth. "He may have failed here, but no sooner's he out o' the place than a present of three or four thousand falls into his lap. I'd give the eyes out o' my head," says he, girning like a madman, "to take that from him. I'd give"—

'Slap across the middle o' his words comes a roar from Gemmell like a fog-horn. "Jehoshaphat!" he roars. "He's lost her. His hawser's broke. Lost her outside the port limits. Get the tugs out, boys, for the love o' glory, an' we'll take her from him yet!"

'Sirs, sirs, ye never saw such a collieshangie! Thae two tugs went out o' the harbour-mouth like deer, shipping the seas green at every yard; Gemmell was dancing about like the daft, an' Quint was tearin' the hair out o' his head and barkin' the skin off his hands wi' hammerin' them on the stone o' the wall. It was grand! "What next?" thought I. Meanwhile the *Ben-*

a-Bhuird had got the way off her and had slewed round a bit to port, but she was unhandy in the seaway out there, and the brig was fair slippin' away from her. Outside Bahoa harbour, as ye're perchance aware, the current sets strong to the south, an' the brig was away into this like a gull. "She'll beach!" roars Gemmell. "She'll break!" an' he fell to cursing the tugs something shameful. I never knew who were on the tugs, but bonnier work I never saw. They cudna have seen a dozen yards in front of them, what wi' the rain and the wind an' the green seas coming over them; but they contrived somehow to get up wi' that brig and get one on each side o' her, an' by means of a double hawser slung between them, or something o' that kind, they nursed her right into the surf, till at last in she came wi' a sweep an' sat nicely down on the sands wi' a comfortable dunt an' not a spar broken.

'I thought Gemmell and Quint had fair gone gyte; ye wud ha' said, to see's, we were one an' all far gone in liquor. I dare say I was near as bad myself as any o' them, for I was taken up with the work o' thae tugs, which was as nice as ever I saw, an', forby, I kept askin' mysel' the old question, "What's next?" Ye must remember I'd kent Patagonia intimate-like for a matter o' thirteen year, an' he was a man who was ready at any time for anything, an' any man less likely to lose the best part o' a lakh over a bad hawser, an' that with the tow practically safe home an' delivered, I could not put a name to. Moreover, I thought o' Patagonia's own words—"When things turn out no' natural, always investigate." Howsomever, I held my peace, it being, as I had said all along, no affair o' mine.'

V.

'I suppose Quint had the best part o' a hundred police skelpin' round that derelict inside o' twenty minutes, an' Gemmell would ha' drawn a cordon o' launches round outside o' her if he could have risked them in that sea. The tugs lay off jist to make matters sure, an' he also brought out a couple o' drifters. It was as good's a play.

'Meanwhile the old *Ben-a-Bhuird* looked fair taken aback; she had come in almost to the mouth o' the harbour, and then slewed round to the back o' the north quay, where ships rarely lie on account o' the pull o' the tide an' the current, an' there she lay with a dribble o' smoke coming out of her funnel. About five she signalled for the pilot's launch, and jist after dusk off came Patagonia with his witnesses and his credentials to put in his claim. I absented myself from the meeting, having been down to look at the brig, and there I had seen another thing "no' natural"—which same thing Gemmell must ha' seen if he hadna been blind drunk wi' self-conceit. Did ever ye see a derelict? Weel, I've seen a wheen o' them, but never saw I a

derelict that had been abandoned in sic good trim as this one.

"Losh me!" thought I; "it was surely a chicken-hearted company that abandoned you!"—and, indeed, she'd ha' floated for weeks. However, she'd been in native hands, so there was no saying; they lose their heads like.

'Patagonia stated that he had found her abandoned jist on this side of Kimbi, gave his latitude and longitude and so on and so forth. Then he wanted his claim to be recorded.

"No' so fast," said Gemmell. "You never brought that derelict in. So far as you're concerned, she'd be decoratin' the Indian Ocean at this moment. You lost her. She was salved here by the port authorities."

"Salved be sugared!" says Patagonia. "She's mine. She's the Ben Line's for a third of the value of hull and cargo, bein' a derelict, as I've said."

"Fair an' softly," says Gemmell. "There's a law for all these things. I don't pretend to be a lawyer, but that brig's now in the hands of the Receiver of Wrecks, and there she remains till the legal rights of the case are settled. Meanwhile, Captain Pringle, you can sling your hook, an' I don't think it'll be worth your while to come back for all you're likely to get out o' this."

"I've got my work to do," says Patagonia. "I can't hang off an' on here waiting for a parcel o' sea-lawyers. Let me tell you, Gemmell, the Ben Line's behind me; an', by the Lord, if you keep us waiting for the money, the board'll sue you for compound interest! What's compound interest on three lakhs, eh?"

'That frightened Gemmell a bit, they said, but Quint cut in. "Dinna be a fool," says he. "There's no court wud listen to any such suit for ten minutes. That wreck's with the Receiver—that's us—and we've got her, an' there she'll bide."

'Patagonia went white to the lips—but it's maybe as weel to bear in mind that that man could work his face like a handful o' putty.

"Oh, you've got her, have ye!" cries he. "Well, see if ye'll keep her." And then, they said, he sort o' bit his lip as if he'd let slip more than he meant, and marched away out o' the office an' back to the *Ben-a-Bhuird* without another word.

"I kenna why folk say that lad's so clever," says Gemmell. "I can see what his game is as weel's I can see you. He'll bring his boat down in the night and try to get the brig off. She's settin' pretty firm, but he might do't. Get out ilka tug an' dredger in the place, an' ship flares, an' play the searchlight on the *Ben-a-Bhuird* every ten minutes.—Quint, you an' me'll spend the night down by the wreck.—Keep her, lads—we'll keep her if he brings up the whole Gairman Navy wi' the *Emden*'s ghost at their head!"

M'Caskie tilted his tumbler and called the steward for the last time. "I'm no' wearyin' ye?" he asked.

'No,' I said. 'But I think I know what's coming.'

'Keep's a'!' exclaimed M'Caskie; 'by the time we'd gotten that length wi' the matter, so did I. But no' Gemmell an' Quint—no' by a long chalk. My! ye should ha' seen their faces when the next day broke an' there wasna a sign o' the *Ben-a-Bhuird* between Bahoa an' Borneo. Eh! but I laughed at them. Gemmell was that drunk and dozed wi' conceit that he wud still have believed that Patagonia had given it up an' slunk off in the ríght wi' his tail atween his legs, but Quint had more sense. "What!" says he; "Patagonia Pringle abandon a lakh or more for nothing? Not much! We've been done after all, an' if I lose my job it's what I deserve." "Lads," says I, "have ye but reflected that last night was the first night that ye havena been sittin' round the *Ben-a-Bhuird* like corbies round a deid heifer, an' that last night ye had no watch on her at all except a searchlight every ten minutes? Even that ye stopped an hour or two afore the light; an' what's a searchlight every ten minutes on a dark night with a heavy sea running and your ship the best part o' a mile away?" Eh, sirs, I thought they wud ha' struck me; yet it was elementary—ingenious, I grant ye, but elementary after all.'

'M'Caskie,' I said, 'you seem to me to know

a great deal about this. Tell me, *did* Captain Pringle get that gold ashore, or did he not?'

'It's beyond my power to say,' said M'Caskie suavely. 'But if he did not—we'll put it conditional-like—if he did not, then he left that derelict and his share in her, which was at least one lakh o' rupees, an' all for nothing; an' he left Bahoa full o' old scores which he hadna paid off, an' couldna. If ever there was anything "no' natural," it wud be sic-like things happenin' to Patagonia Pringle.'

'You're a canny Scot, M'Caskie,' I persisted, 'and it isn't my business, but you seem to me to know a thundering lot about this affair for a plain sea-going engineer. I hæ ma doots.'

'Ye're no' the only one,' said M'Caskie. 'It's a case of maybe ay an' maybe no. But there's just one thing,' he said, as I went over the side, 'that I've often wondered over, an' that is whether or not that lad Pieris ever got the money for his ship. As I've been told it, he made a hard bargain and got the money afore ever he parted wi' the ship; but if I ken Patagonia, he didna.'

'But Pieris could have blown the gaff,' I pointed out.

'No' very weel,' said M'Caskie, beaming amiably over the rail. 'Ye see, he was a dealer in sovereigns.'

ARCHÆOLOGY FROM THE AIR.

ONE generally associates archæology with the earth, and it may surprise you to know that ancient remains can be studied from an aeroplane. But this *is* so; for one of the most important aspects of the study of antiquities is the 'bird's-eye view' of an ancient site. Hitherto one has had to be content with maps and plans of such sites—which are, of course, only 'bird's-eye views' laboriously constructed on the ground. But now it is possible to take photos from a point in the air, vertically above a buried town. Photos so taken reveal startling facts which are hidden from the ground observer. It was in this way that the remains of the ancient city of Eski Baghdad, in Mesopotamia, were found. On the ground the city appeared only as a meaningless maze of low mounds and scrub. From above it was seen to be laid out in square blocks like an American town, with ornamental gardens on a large scale.

But there is a field nearer home awaiting an airman with an interest in such things. Every one who has flown in France during the war will remember the long, straight Roman road from Amiens to Vermand through Villers-Bretonneux, and what a fine landmark it was. Running absolutely straight for thirty-four miles, it could not be mistaken, and it has the additional advantage of running due east and west, so that

if in doubt one had only to fly west along it until one picked up a village that one knew. It probably saved many pilots from landing on the wrong side of the lines. This road crosses the Somme battlefield at its widest point, and is still in use as a main thoroughfare. Any one, therefore, can see it without difficulty. There are, however, other Roman roads in France and England which ran quite as straight, but which have now fallen into disuse. Their course is marked by a straight and continuous line of hedges and footpaths. Such roads are equally useful as landmarks, but they must be learnt before they can be so employed.

There is another Roman road which before the war was not much used, but whose course was approximately followed by a modern track—the road from Vermand (a Roman town) to Bapaume through Rocquigny. I had often seen this road on the map, and longed to investigate it more thoroughly; but it was on the wrong side of the lines at the time. An opportunity came when I was flying over it in March 1917, when the Germans were about to retreat to the Hindenburg Line. I was probably the last person ever to see that Roman road, for upon the day I flew over it the tide of battle was on the point of reaching it, and when I flew over it again in

1918 it was entirely submerged beneath a sea of shell-holes.

Another Roman road which I found a most useful landmark was that from Vermand to Bavai, which forms the north-western boundary of the great forest of Mormal, west of Maubeuge. This road degenerates south of Le Cateau into a mere cart-track, but the line of it is straight and clear, and one had only to pick it up at Mormal (which could always be seen) and follow it south until one could distinguish Vermand. That done, one could generally locate one's exact position; it was the work of only a moment to do all this. I have many a time used this Roman road to find points when photographing 'counter-battery areas.'

The Roman road from Cassel runs due south, and also forms an admirable landmark. Once, when flying over Armentières (a part of the line with which we were both unfamiliar), my pilot told me he was lost, and wished to be directed back to the aerodrome. We were on our way home, and I knew exactly where we were, as I had been following our course on the map. However, to save tedious directions, I told the pilot to fly due west, knowing we should strike this road before long, as, of course, we did. Then I bade him follow it southwards. He recognised its remarkable straightness (though it is not a first-class road), and could follow it until the hangars of Estrées-Blanches came into sight. This place, as the name shows (*estrées* = streets) was evidently a Roman station, and the crossing-place of several Roman roads. The road from Calais to Arras runs through it; the legions homeward bound from Britain must often have passed along it. It was the 'leave-route' of Roman Britain.

But not only can one thus follow the course of already known Roman roads; one can also spot fresh ones more easily from the air than in any other way. At Estrées-Blanches I found what

I believe to be a hitherto unknown Roman road approaching the village from the south-west. It was indicated by a succession of 'linchets' or cultivation terraces, all in the same alignment. I was unable to verify my observation by a reconnaissance on the ground; but from my experience of the behaviour of field-boundaries in England, I feel pretty sure that the inference was correct. When one sees a line of hedges running straight for some distance, at an angle to the rest and without any regard for the lie of the land, one will generally find that these hedges have been planted along the stony ridge of a Roman road. I have actually rediscovered the course of Roman roads in this way by studying the field-boundaries on the six-inch Ordnance map. In this country, thanks to the admirable large-scale Ordnance maps, one is more fortunately placed than in France, where before the war the 1:50,000 map was the largest scale map published of the whole country. But good as are the six-inch maps, naturally they do not show quite enough in this respect; for often the only trace of a Roman road which now survives is a broad belt of lighter-coloured earth across a ploughed field. It is difficult to detect this from the ground—one is too close to be able to see it standing out as such. But from the air it is quite easy. This belt is due, of course, to the fact that even after the raised causeway of the road has been spread out flat by centuries of cultivation, its constituent matter, mixed with the natural soil, invariably renders it lighter in colour—mainly owing to the presence of more stones and sandy grit in it.

Here is a fine opportunity for some enterprising airman to add to our knowledge of Roman Britain. There are other ways in which he might 'archæologise' in the air, both in this country and in the East; but that is another story.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

III.

'THIS way, gentlemen,' said Smyth, leading them up an alley, across a court, and into a lane. 'Permit me to welcome you to Archibald's.'

They entered a dimly lit tavern, where a dozen or so men sat about the room at little tables. Instead of the usual pictures one sees in such places, pictures of dancers with expressive legs, and race-horses with expressive faces, the walls were hung with dusty signed portraits of authors, artists, and actors, most of whom had attained distinction during the previous half-century. Sir Henry Irving as Othello held the place of honour over the bar,

with Garrick as his *vis-à-vis* on the opposite wall. The divine Sarah cast the spell of her eternal youth on all who gathered there; and Lewis Waller, with eyes intent on his sword-handle, seemed oblivious to the close proximity of Lily Langtry and Ellen Terry, those empresses of the dual realms of Beauty and Intelligence. Without any companion portrait, the puffy sensuality of Oscar Wilde held a prominent place. And between the spectacled face of Rudyard Kipling on one side and the author of *Peter Pan* on the other, Forbes-Robertson in the garb of the Melancholy Dane looked out with his fine nobility of countenance. The room was heavy with tobacco-smoke, which seemed to have been accumulating for years, and to have darkened

the very beams of the ceiling. Over the floor a liberal coating of sawdust was sprinkled.

'Strange place, this,' whispered Johnston Smyth as they took a table in an unfrequented corner. 'It's an understood thing that the habitués of Archibald's are trailers in the race of life. If you have a fancy for human nature, gentlemen, this is the shop to come to. We've got some queer goods on the shelves—newspaper men with no newspapers to write for; authors that think out new plots every night and forget 'em by morning; playwrights that couldn't afford the pit in the Old Vic.—Do you see that old chap over there?'

'The little man,' said Selwyn, 'with the strange smile?'

'That's right. He's been writing a play now for twenty years, but hasn't had time to finish the last act. "There's no hurry," he says; "true art will not permit of haste"—and the joke of it is that he has a cough that'll give him his own curtain long before he ever writes it on his play. There he goes now.'

The old playwright had been seized with a paroxysm of coughing that took his meagre storehouse of breath. Weakly striking at his breast, he shook and quivered in the clutch of the thing, leaning back exhausted when it had passed, but never once losing the odd, whimsical smile.

'What about something to drink?' broke in Dick Durwent hurriedly, his eyes narrowing.

'Directly,' said Smyth, beckoning to the proprietor, a small man, who, in spite of his years and an oblong head undecorated by a single hair, appeared strangely fresh and unworried, as if he had been sleeping for fifty years in a cellar, and had just come up to view the attending changes.

'Archibald,' said Smyth, 'these are my friends the Duke of Arkansas and Sir Plumtree Crabapple.'

The extraordinary little man smiled toothlessly and fingered his tray.

'Gentlemen,' said Smyth, 'name your brands.'

'Give me a double brandy,' said Durwent, blowing on his chilled fingers. 'Better make it two doubles in a large glass.'

'Soda, sir?' queried the proprietor in a high-pitched, tranquil voice.

'No,' said Durwent. 'You can bring a little water in a separate glass.'

'What is your pleasure, your Grace?' said Smyth, addressing the American. 'If you will do Archibald and myself the honour of trying the Twilight Tinkle, it would be an event of importance to us both.'

'Anything at all,' said Selwyn, sick at heart as he saw the nervous interlocked fingers of Dick Durwent pressed together with such intensity that they were left white and bloodless.

'This is a little slice of London's life,' said Smyth after he had given the order, crossing his

left leg over the right, 'that you visitors would never find. You hear about the chaps who succeed and those who come a cropper, but these are the poor beggars who never had a chance to do either. There's genius in this room, gentlemen, but it's genius that started swimming up-stream with a millstone round its neck.'

With a profound shaking of the head, Smyth straightened his left leg, and after carefully taking in its shape with partially closed eyes, he replaced it on its fellow.

'How do they live?' queried Selwyn.

'Scavengers,' said Smyth laconically. 'Scavengers to success. Do you see that fellow there with the poached eyes and a four-days' beard?'

Selwyn looked to the spot indicated by Smyth, and saw a heavily built man with a pale, dissipated face, who was fingering an empty glass and leering cynically with some odd trend of thought. It was a face that gripped the attention, for written on it was talent—immense talent. It was a face that openly told its tale of massive, misdirected power of mentality, fuddled but not destroyed by alcohol.

'That's Laurence De Foe,' said Smyth; 'a queer case altogether. Barnardo boy—doesn't know who his parents were, but claims direct descent from Charlemagne. He's never really drunk, but no one ever saw him sober. If he wanted to, he could write better than any man in London. Last year, when the critics scored Welland's play *Salvage* for its rotten climax, the author himself came to De Foe. All night they sat in his stuffy room, and when Welland went away he had a play that made his name for ever. I could tell you of two of the heavy artillery among the London leader-writers who always bring their big stuff to De Foe before they fire it. Last July, when the war was making its preliminary bow, and Hemphill was thundering those editorials of his that warned the Old Lion he would have to wake up and clean the jungle—Hemphill was simply the errand urchin. There's the man who wrote "To Arms, England!" one day after the Austrian note to Serbia. Hemphill got the credit and the money—but Laurence De Foe did it.'

Smyth's stream of narrative, which carried considerably less impedimenta of caricature and persiflage than was usual with him, came to an end with the arrival of two Twilight Tinkles and a generous-sized tumbler, more than half-full of brandy. After an elaborate search of his coat and trouser pockets to locate a five-pound note, Smyth was forced to allow Selwyn to pay for the refreshment, promising to knock him up before six next morning and repay him.

'Well, gentlemen,' said the conscientious artist, 'here's success to crime!'

Not waiting to honour the misanthropic toast, Dick Durwent had reached greedily for his glass, and poured its contents down his throat. With a heavy sigh of gratification, he leaned back in

his chair, and the pallor of his cheeks showing beneath the weather-beaten surface of tan was flecked with patches of colour. For an instant only his eyes went yellow, as on the night at the Café Rouge; but the horrible glare died out, and was succeeded by the calm, blue tranquillity that had reigned before.

'By St George!' said Smyth admiringly, 'but we have no amateur with us, Selwyn.'

The solitary figure of De Foe, who had been watching them, left his table, and lurching over to them, stood swaying unevenly.

'*Bon soir*, gentlemen,' he said, speaking with the deep sonorousness which comes of long saturation of the vocal cords with undiluted spirits. 'I think one or two of these faces are new to Archibald's. Am I right?'

'Yes, sir,' said Smyth, rising. 'Permit me, Mr De Foe, to introduce'—

The writer stopped him with a slow, majestic movement of the hand. 'What care I who they are?' he said heavily. 'Names mean nothing—pretty labels on empty vessels. By what right do these gentlemen invade the sanctity of Archibald's?' He drew a chair near them and sat down sullenly, hanging his arm over the back. 'Do I see aright?' he queried thickly, opening his eyes with difficulty, and revealing their lustreless shade. 'There are three of you? Humph! The one I know—a clumsy dauber in a smudgy world.'

Smyth nodded delightedly to his companions to indicate that the compliment was intended for him.

'Of your friends,' went on the heavy resonant voice, 'one has the face of a dreamer. Come, sir, tell me of these dreams that are keeping you awake of nights. I am descended from Joseph by the line of Charlemagne, and I have it in my power to interpret them. Are you a writer?'

'I am,' said Selwyn calmly.

'You are not English. You haven't the leathery composure of our race.'

'I am an American.'

'I thought as much. You show the smug complacency of your nation. How dare you write, sir? What do you know of life?'

'We have learned something on that subject,' said Selwyn with a slight smile, 'even over there. You see, we have the mistakes of your older countries by which we can profit.'

'Bah!' said the other contemptuously. 'Cant—platitudes—words! Since when have either nations or individuals learned from the mistakes of others? Take you three. Which of you lies closest to life? Which of you has drunk experience to the dregs? The dauber?—You, author-dreamer, fired by the passion of a robin for a cherry?—No, neither of you. . . . That boy there—that youngster with the blue eyes of a girl; he is the one to teach—not you. He has the stamp of failure on him. Welcome, sir—the Prince of Failures welcomes you to Archibald's.'

He lurching forward and extended an unsteady hand to Dick Durwent, who rose slowly from his chair to take it. As Selwyn watched the two men standing with clasped hands over the table, he felt his heart-strings contract with pain.

Although separated by more than thirty years, there was a cruel similarity in the pair. In the half-bravado, half-timorous poise of the head; in the droop of sensuous lips; in the dark hair of each, matted over pallid foreheads. . . . It was as if De Foe had summoned some black art to show the future held in the lap of the gods for the youngest Durwent.

'My boy,' said De Foe drunkenly, but with a moving tenderness, 'life has refused me much, but it has left me the power to read a man's soul in his eyes. The world brands you as a beaten man—and by men's standards it is right. But Laurence De Foe can read beyond those sea-blue eyes of yours; he it is who knows that behind them lies the gallant soul of a gallant gentleman. End your days in a gutter or on the gibbet—what matters it where the actor sleeps when the drama is done?—but to-night you have done great honour to the Prince of Failures by letting him grasp your hand.'

He slowly released the young man's hand, and turned wearily away as Durwent sank into his chair, his eyes staring into filmy space. Moving clumsily across the room, De Foe reached the bar and ordered a drink. When it had been poured out for him he turned about, and, leaning back lazily, looked around the room, with his eyes almost hidden by the close contraction of thick, black eyelashes. Such was the unique power of his personality that the disjointed threads of conversation at the various tables wound to a single end as if by a signal.

'*Mes amis*,' said De Foe—and his voice was low and sonorous—'I see before me many, like myself, who have left behind them futures where other men left only pasts. I see before me many, like myself, who had the gift of creating exquisite, soul-stirring works of art and literature. . . . But because we were not content to be mere mouthy clowns, with pen or brush, jabbering about the play of life, we have paid the penalty for thinking we could be both subject and painter, author and actor. Because we chose to live, we have failed. . . . The world goes on applauding its successful charlatans, its puny-visioned authors pouring their thoughts of sawdust in the reeking trough of popularity; while we, who know the taste of every bitter herb in all experience—we are thrust aside as failures. . . . But the gift of prophecy is on me to-night. There is a youth here who has a soul capable of scaling heights where none of us could follow—and a soul that could sink to depths that few of us have known. He is one of us, and he has chosen to fight for England. I can see the glory of his death written in his eyes. Gentlemen—

you who are adrift with uncharted destinies—drink to the boy of the sea-blue eyes. May he die worthy of himself and of us.'

Throughout the dimly lit room every one rose to his feet, incoherently echoing the last words of the speaker. . . . Still with the filmy wistfulness about his eyes and a tired, weary smile, Dick Durwent sat in his chair beating a listless tattoo on the table with his hand.

From across the room came the sound of the old playwright's hacking cough.

CHAPTER XV.—DICK DURWENT.

I.

LATE that night Selwyn lay in his bed and listened to the softened tones of his two guests conversing in the living-room, Johnston Smyth having conceived such an attachment to his newly found friend that it was quite impossible to persuade him to leave. At his own request, blankets had been spread for Durwent on the floor, and after a hot bath he had rolled up for the night close to the fire. Johnston Smyth had also disdained the offer of a bed and ensconced himself on the couch, where he lay on his back and uttered vagrant philosophies on a vast number of subjects.

Wishing his strangely assorted guests a good night's repose, Selwyn had retired to his own room shortly after midnight, but, tired as he was, sleep refused to come. Like an etcher planning a series of scenes to be depicted, his mind summoned the various incidents of the night in a tedious cycle. The huddled figure at the foot of Cleopatra's steps; the fantastic airiness of Smyth with his shredded umbrella; the smoky atmosphere of Archibald's, with its strange gathering of derelicts; the two chance acquaintances spending the night in the adjoining room—what vivid, disjointed cameos they were! If there was such a thing as Fate, what meaning could there be in their having met? Or was their meeting as purposeless as that of which some poet had once written—two pieces of plank-wood touching in mid-ocean and drifting eternally?

It seemed that the low voices of the others had been going on for more than an hour when the sense of absolute stillness told Selwyn that he must have fallen asleep for an interval. He listened for their voices, but nothing could be heard except the sleet driven against the windows, and a far-away clock striking the hour of two.

Wondering if his visitors were comfortable, he rose from his bed, and creeping softly to the living-room door, opened it enough to look in.

Smyth's heavy breathing, not made any lighter by his having his head completely covered by bed-clothes, indicated that the futurist was in the realm of Morpheus. Durwent was curled up

cosily by the fire, the blankets over him rising and subsiding slightly, conforming to his deep, tranquil breaths.

In the light of the fire, and with the warm glow of the skin caused by its heat and the refreshing bath, the pallor of dissipation had left the boy's face. In the musing curve of his full-blooded lips and in the corners of his closed eyes there was just the suggestion of a smile—the smile of a child tired from play. There was such refinement in the delicate nostrils dilating almost imperceptibly with the intake of each breath, and such spiritual smoothness in his brow contrasting with the glowing tincture of his face, that to the man looking down on him he seemed like a youth of some idyl, who could never have known the invasion of one sordid thought.

A feeling of infinite compassion came over Selwyn. He rebelled against the cruelty of vice that could fasten its claws on anything so fine, when there was so much human decay to feed upon.

The eyelids parted a little, and Selwyn stepped back towards the door.

'Hullo, Selwyn, old boy!' murmured Durwent dreamily. 'Is it time to get up?'

'No,' whispered Selwyn. 'I didn't mean to wake you.'

Durwent smiled deprecatingly and reached sleepily for the other's hand. 'It's awfully decent of you to take me in like this,' he said.

There was a simplicity in his gesture, a child-like sincerity in his voice, that made Selwyn accept the hand-clasp, unable to utter the words which came to his lips.

'Selwyn,' said Dick, keeping his face turned towards the fire, 'are you likely to see Elise soon?'

'I hardly think so,' said the American, kneeling down and stirring the coals with the poker.

'If you do—please don't tell her I've come back. She thinks I'm in the Orient somewhere, and if she knew I was joining up she would worry. I suppose I shall always be "Boy-blue" to her, and never anything older.'

Selwyn replaced the poker and sat down on a cushion that was on the floor.

'It may be a rotten thing to say,' resumed the younger man, speaking slowly, 'but she was more of a mother to me than my mother was. As far back as I can remember she was the one person who believed in me. The rest never did. When I was a kid at prep. school and brought home bad reports, every one seemed to think me an outsider—that I wasn't conforming—and I began to believe it. Only Elise never changed. She was the one of the whole family who didn't want me to be somebody or something else. You can hardly believe what that meant to me in those days. It was a little world I lived in, but to my youngster's eyes it looked as if everything and every person were on one side, doubting me

—and Elise was on the other, believing in me. . . . I'm not whining, Selwyn, or saying that any one's to blame for my life except myself, but I do believe that if Elise and I had been kept together I might not have turned out such a rotter. Sometimes, too, I wonder if it wouldn't have been better for her. She never made many friends—and looking back, I think the poor little girl has had a lonely time of it.'

He relapsed into silence and shifted his head wearily on the pillow. Johnston Smyth murmured something muffled and unintelligible in his sleep. Selwyn placed some new lumps of coal on the fire, the flames licking them eagerly as the sharp crackle of escaping gases punctured the sleep-laden air.

'It does sound rather like whining to say it,' said Durwent without opening his eyes, 'but after I was rusticated at Cambridge I tried to travel straight. If I had gone then to the Colonies I might have made a man of myself, but I hung around too long, and got mixed up with one of the rottenest sets in London. I went awfully low, Selwyn, but booze had me by the neck, and my conscience wasn't working very hard either. And then another woman helped me. . . . She was one of those who aren't admitted with decent people. She came of poor family, and had made a fairly good name for herself on the stage, and was absolutely straight until she met that blackguard Moorewell about three years ago.'

'The man you nearly killed?'

'Yes. At any rate, she and I fell in love with each other. I know it's all damned sordid, but we were both outcasts, and, as that chap said to-night, it's the people who have failed who lie closest to life. Once more a woman believed in me—and I believed in a woman. We planned to get married. We were going away under another name, to make a new world for ourselves. For weeks I never touched a drop, and it seemed at last that I could see—just a little light ahead. You don't know what that means, Selwyn, when a man is absolutely down.'

The smile had died out in the speaker's face and given way to a cold, gray mist of pain.

'Moorewell heard about it,' went on Durwent, 'and though the blackguard had discarded her, he grew jealous, and began his devilry again. She did not tell me, but I know for a long time she was as true to me as I was to her. Then they went to Paris—I believe he promised to marry her there. A week later I got a letter from her, begging forgiveness. He had left her, she said, and she was going away where I should never find her again. My first impulse was to follow her—and then I started to drink. God! what nights those were! I waited my time. I watched Moorewell until one night I knew he was alone. I forced an entrance, and caught him in his library. . . . As I said before, I was drunk; and that's what saved his life. I thought at the

time he was dead; and having no money, I caught a late train, and hid all night and next day in the woods at Roselawn. Three times I saw Elise, but she was never alone; but that night I called her with a cry of the night-jar which she had taught me. She came out, and I told her as much as I could; and with her necklace I raised some money and got away.'

Again the murmured words came to a close. Selwyn searched his mind for some comment to make, but none would come. He could not offer sympathy or condolence—Durwent wasn't seeking that. It was impossible to condemn, or to suggest a new start in life, because the young fellow was not trying to justify his actions. Yet it seemed such a tragedy to look helplessly on without one effort to change the floating course of the driftwood.

'Durwent,' he said haltingly, 'it's not too late for you to start over again. If you will go to America, I have friends there who would give you every opening and'—

'You're an awfully decent chap,' said Durwent, once more touching Selwyn's hand with his; 'but I shall not come back from the war. I felt *that* the moment I stepped on shore yesterday. I felt it again when that fellow spoke to me in the tavern. It may come soon, or it may be a long time, but this is the end.'

'No, no,' said Selwyn earnestly; 'all that's the effect of your chill. It has left you depressed.'

'You don't understand,' said the lad, smiling with closed eyes, 'or you wouldn't say that. I said before that it means a lot, when a man's down, to be able to see a little light ahead. . . . I can see that now again. . . . I have disgraced my name and falsified the belief my sister had in me, but—I shall be able to die a gentleman, and with the feeling that, even if my life was no good, my dying may in some little way help England to go on.'

Selwyn leaned over and patted the lad on his shoulder. 'Dick,' he said, 'wait until the morning, and all these fancies will clear from your mind. We'll discuss everything then together.'

The musing smile lingered again about the boy's lips.

'You're tired out, old man,' went on the American. 'I shouldn't have waked you. Good-night.'

The other stopped him from rising by catching his arm with his hand. 'Do you mind,' said Dick, his eyes opening wide, 'just staying here until I go to sleep? . . . There are all sorts of wild things going through my head to-night . . . and I've lost my courage a bit.'

And so for nearly half-an-hour the American remained watching by the lad as sleep hovered about and gradually settled on him.

As Selwyn quietly stole from the room the City's clocks were striking three.

(Continued on page 320.)

POTS AND PANS.

By MARY HILL, Author of *Needlecraft in the Class-room, &c.*

IN our grandmother's kitchen on winter evenings the walls shone with the light reflected from the copper warming-pan and the brass candlesticks, with sometimes an added radiance from a copper kettle singing on the hob. Her saucepans and frying-pan were made of cast-iron, bought to last a lifetime, though there might be one of brass, kept sacred for the making of jam or the boiling of milk.

To-day the purpose of the warming-pan and the candlesticks is more generally ornamental than useful; but the kettles and the saucepans are still used as of yore, although other materials besides cast-iron are utilised for making them. As food is cooked in these pots and pans, it is most important that they should be kept scrupulously clean. The success of these cleansing operations depends a good deal upon one's knowledge of the metals used; for example, aluminium requires totally different treatment from iron, and brass is unlike either of them. It is, in effect, a case of one man's meat being another man's poison!

Most of us are interested in the subject from one point of view or another, and some idea of the characteristics and properties of the metals used should prove of considerable value when one comes to the practical work in the kitchen.

Iron, in one form or another, is so often used for domestic purposes that every housewife should know its outstanding features. All the instruments we generally use for cutting—knives, scissors, shears, and razors—are made of hard steel; while many saucepans, frying-pans, kettles, and garden tools are manufactured from cast-iron. Whatever the form of iron, however, it always has one serious defect: it tarnishes or rusts very readily, and this corrosion rapidly destroys the article. It must be remembered that a surface kept perfectly dry never rusts; for this red powdery substance is formed only when water is present. Further, a brightly polished article rusts far less readily than a dull one. Hence the iron saucepan must be thoroughly dry before it is put away, the scissors hung in a dry corner of the room, and the knives dried and polished immediately after being washed.

Why does the laundress remove 'iron mould' and ink-stains from linen by applying salts of lemon or oxalic acid? Simply because these acids combine with the iron in the stain and form a substance soluble in water, the stain vanishing when the article is put through the wash-tub. If fruits are placed in an iron saucepan, the acids in them, which are similar to oxalic acid, will act upon the metal, and a poisonous solution will be formed which mixes with the

cooking fruit. Iron pans must never, therefore, be used for jam-making or for boiling vinegar for pickling. Garden soil always contains a certain amount of acid, and all the garden tools—spades, forks, hoes, and rakes—should be thoroughly cleaned, scraped free of every particle of soil, before they are put away, or tiny pits will appear on the surface where the acid has acted upon the iron.

One method of preventing rust is to cover the metal, to keep out the air. A variety of ways can be found of doing this. If the article is to be stored, a coating of oil will be found effective.

Enamel-ware is iron covered with a glaze similar to that used on china, which protects the metal beneath from corrosion. Neither acids nor alkalis act upon the glaze, which is very suitable for cooking-utensils, so long as the enamel is not cracked. Careless handling or rapid changes of temperature when the pan is dry may cause it to crack. Care must be taken not to allow the saucepan 'to boil dry,' therefore—a practical application of one's knowledge of the expansion and the contraction of metals.

The so-called 'tin' kettles and other kitchen utensils are made from sheet-iron covered with a layer of tin, and zinc buckets and wash-tubs are manufactured from iron that has been treated with zinc in a similar fashion. When once the covering layer is broken the iron rusts very quickly under the tin; in the case of zinc the coating seems to protect, and hence articles such as buckets and watering-cans are made from 'galvanised iron,' as it is commonly called. Unfortunately acids act upon zinc, which should never be used for cooking purposes.

Before the cook uses her copper or brass pan for making jam she thoroughly cleans and polishes it inside, not for the pleasure of watching the ruddy juice glisten on the polished metal, but in order that her jam may be clean and wholesome when finished. Copper tarnish is soluble in weak acid; hence the housewife generally pours a little vinegar into her pan to clean it. Brass is an alloy of copper, and is treated in the same way; but although the acid removes the tarnish, fortunately it has no effect upon the metal itself. Fruits contain a quantity of acid; therefore a tarnished copper pan must never be used for preserving, although a polished one is eminently suitable for the purpose.

For lightness and cleanliness nothing can surpass the aluminium article for culinary purposes, but ignorance of the characteristics of the metal may lead the most careful housewife into great extravagance. Every one knows that grease can readily be removed by washing

with strong soda, and this is a perfectly harmless procedure with other utensils in the kitchen; but with the aluminium one it is fatal, for it removes not only the grease, but part of the metal as well. An aluminium pie-dish or saucepan is of little use for cooking purposes if fretted with tiny holes on the bottom.

We saw a teacher using a pan so damaged for another purpose the other day. The derelict pan, banished from the cookery-room, was standing in a bowl, with a good handful of soda in the pan. A number of small silver articles—girls' brooches, a silver pencil-case, silver-plated spoons and cream-jug—were placed on the top of the soda, and some boiling water poured over the whole. Hosts of tiny bubbles rose immediately from the surface of the alu-

minium, and in a few minutes the tarnish on the silver articles moved from them too. Clearly the new solution formed by the aluminium dissolved in the soda dissolved in its turn the silver tarnish or silver sulphide on the brooches and the spoons. The solution had no effect upon the silver, however. When the articles were taken from the water they were perfectly clean, and a brisk rub with a soft, dry duster produced a bright polish.

One virtue that aluminium possesses in common with bright copper or brass is that it is not affected by acids, and so may safely be used for cooking fruit or milk. It does not tarnish readily, and is very light. Its one drawback for kitchen use is its softness; it is easily bent and dented, and the repairing is a difficult matter.

A MIRACLE OF IRRIGATION.

I.

THE British in India and in Egypt, and the Americans in the desert lands of their own country, have performed marvels of irrigation that would have astonished the cleverest engineers of ancient times. In this field of modern enterprise there is no such word as failure, and the apparently impossible has been achieved over and over again by a happy combination of brilliant imagination, persistent courage and endurance, and dogged perseverance.

But in the whole story of irrigation enterprise there is nothing that, for sheer daring and triumphant grappling with Nature in her fiercest mood, can compare with the famous Uncompaghre Valley enterprise of the United States. Here a rushing torrential river was tamed and harnessed, a mountain-range was pierced, and a barren desert was made to blossom as the rose and produce food in ever-increasing quantities for man and beast.

The idea originated in the brain of a dreamer, the plan was conceived by two of the boldest engineers in the world, and the work was carried to successful completion by a band of brave and determined men, supported by the Government of their country.

Down in the south-west section of the State of Colorado, surrounded by mountains that are cut by winding rivers into mighty cañons, is the Uncompaghre Valley, a great stretch of what was, up to a few years ago, desert land. The soil was rich and the possibilities of the valley were immense, but the one thing needful to bring the fertile land into cultivation was missing: there was no water, except for the little Uncompaghre River, which in summer became nothing more than a trickling brook, and often in specially hot seasons dried up altogether.

This had been harnessed and used to irrigate

a small section of the valley close to it. The supply of water sufficed for only 20,000 acres, but hundreds of thousands more, equally rich, had to remain barren and dry because there was no more water available.

In the valley lived a Frenchman named Lauzon, one of the pioneers in bringing the water of the Uncompaghre River to irrigate the barren lands. He had seen how the increasing number of settlers, with their growing demands upon the river, had exhausted its volume, until many of them had had to give up their farms and allow the soil to go back into wilderness. Looking down upon the valley was a forbidding range of mountains, and six miles away, on the other side of this great rock-barrier, ran another river, the Gunnison, a rushing torrent with thousands of millions of gallons of water running to waste. Why not harness this river, pierce the mountain-range, and water the valley from the distant Gunnison cañon? The wild dream of an imaginative man! But Lauzon at any rate had the courage of his convictions. He did not let his dream die. He wired to the United States Reclamation Bureau in Washington: 'Can the Gunnison River be made to water the Uncompaghre Valley?' and when this telegram was received, no wonder the engineers and the officials looked at one another in astonishment.

But there is little red tape about the United States Reclamation Bureau. The more difficult the problem, the more teeming with apparent impossibilities, the more eager the officials are to carry it to a triumphant issue, if it will be for the national good. And so the engineers who received Lauzon's message, Mr A. L. Fellows and Mr W. W. Torrence, at once began to think how the great idea could be put into practice.

There was, however, an initial difficulty. The Gunnison River ran for a part of its course through a deep and fearsome cañon, cut at in-

accessible depths in the mountain-range, and it had never been surveyed or explored. Indeed, in many parts the river, 3000 feet and more down, had never even been seen; and where glimpses could be caught of the rushing torrent, the daylight penetrated the depths for only one or two hours out of the twenty-four.

Several men had in past years tried to explore the river, but though they had gone down into the cañon from above, they had never been seen again. The rushing waters had evidently carried them to destruction. Gunnison, the man who gave his name to the river, had followed the course till it entered the dark recesses of the mountain crags, but he had ventured no farther, and had called the inaccessible gorge through which the waters ran the Black Cañon.

A quarter of a century later the United States Geological Survey attempted its exploration, and men were lowered down the precipice by ropes, but at a thousand feet from the top they had signalled to be pulled up again, and stated that no man could descend the cañon and live. 'It is absolutely impenetrable,' declared Professor Hayden, in charge of the expedition; and his verdict appeared to be endorsed by the ill-fated attempts that had been made once or twice since.

II.

Despite all this, Mr Torrence decided that he would attempt to explore the cañon. If the Uncompaghe Valley was to be watered by the Gunnison River, a tunnel would have to be driven through the solid rock of the mountain-range and the water carried for six miles underground. As a preliminary, the cañon whence the tunnel must be driven would have to be thoroughly explored. All previous expeditions had been mere attempts to survey from the craggy sides of the cañon, the explorers being lowered by ropes; but Mr Torrence determined on a more daring, and, as it appeared, a more foolhardy, enterprise—namely, to go through the cañon with the river, and chance whether he ever came out alive. It must be remembered that this was absolutely unknown territory. The river might take strange and dangerous turns; there might be fearful cataracts at every few hundred yards; there might even be a sudden fall of fifty or a hundred feet—no one could say; and certainly no one could help the men who ventured into this Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Torrence induced three or four other men, intrepid like himself, to join him in the venture. They had two boats specially built—oak frames covered with canvas, so that any damage could be easily repaired; and as the journey through the cañon was expected to last a month, it was decided to take a store of easily carried foods, consisting entirely of canned meats and vegetables. No surplus was allowed, for there was to

be a good deal of other luggage, such as cameras, surveying instruments, note-books, and so on, all packed in tins to protect them from the water.

It was decided to embark on the river at a point where it flowed 1500 feet beneath the top of the chasm; and when everything was ready Torrence, with four colleagues, was lowered with the boats and the equipment. This in itself was a dangerous business, for the sharp edges of the jutting rocks might cut the ropes at any time. However, the task was completed satisfactorily, and a revolver-shot from the depths—a preconcerted signal—told those above that the party had reached the river in safety.

By a previous arrangement men were stationed at intervals along the top of the cañon, where the river was just visible for an hour or so each day when the sun shone directly down the chasm, and it was hoped that the explorers might be seen from time to time. But many days went by, and not a sign of the party was either seen or heard. All hope was, therefore, given up; and so certain were the watchers that destruction had overtaken the explorers that wire nets were stretched across the river at the mouth of the cañon in order that the bodies might be recovered.

Then came a great surprise, for one day some three weeks after the start a watcher peering into the depths through a pair of field-glasses saw what seemed to be three or four dots moving about among the rocks. He shouted and fired revolver-shots in the hope of attracting attention, but in vain. The dots were indeed the explorers, but the roaring of the torrent drowned all outside sounds. Then the watcher threw down a stone, and this, bounding from ledge to ledge, set other stones moving of ever-increasing size, until at last about a ton of rock was crashing down the precipice, and finally landed in the river, near the spot where the explorers were jumping from rock to rock. Fortunately it missed them, but it had the desired effect, and attracted attention. The men were able by waving cloths to signal to the watcher above.

Down below the explorers' experiences were as thrilling and perilous as might have been expected. The water was as cold as ice, and the roaring was so tremendous that they could talk only by shouting into one another's ears. Within a few minutes of starting upon their fateful journey they were drenched to the skin, as the rushing waters threw spray thirty feet into the air, covering everything within reach. Ordinary navigation was out of the question. Most of the time the men were scrambling from rock to rock, dragging their boats with them, and slipping into the water ever and again, for the boulders through thousands of years had been worn quite smooth by the waters of the river. In between were strips of quiet water, but these were few and far between.

At the end of the first day they had covered

less than a mile, and darkness coming on, they had to climb up and stay for the night on a ledge of rock. They were wet through, icy cold, and had nothing but cold food to eat—a truly dismal condition. The roaring of the torrent made conversation impossible; and, almost frozen to death, they had to wait without movement on their narrow rocky bed till morning.

As soon as a little light penetrated the cañon the men started again, but very soon their troubles increased. As they scrambled over the rocks, dragging their boats with them, the rope attached to one broke, and the boat was dashed away with all its stores, never to be seen again. The second night was spent in a cave. Thus day after day and night after night went by. The men were growing weaker, for the loss of their boat had necessitated the cutting down of rations, and it is not surprising that hope and courage began to flag. They could not go back, and with their now insufficient equipment they could not go forward much farther. Unless there was some way out, starvation must be their lot.

The gorge became narrower, with no ledges on either side, and there was nothing for it but to plunge into the stream and swim, holding on to the sides of the remaining boat as it was tossed from side to side in its course. To attempt to travel inside the boat would have meant certain destruction in such a torrent. At this point, when want and hardship and semi-darkness had made the men weak and pale and disappointed, right ahead they could see the river rushing into a dark and fearsome tunnel formed by the falling from above through the ages of millions of tons of rock and stone. They dared not venture into the unknown depths of this tunnel, and so, feeble though they were, they had to climb over the top of the obstruction, still dragging their boat with them. On the other side the gorge narrowed to twenty-eight feet, while frowning down were beetling walls about 3000 feet in height. The water rushed like a mill-race in flood, and in the distance they could hear the roar of a great cataract, which they named the Falls of Sorrow.

'With our present equipment,' wrote Torrence in his note-book, 'we can go no farther;' then, with imperishable hope, he added: 'The Black Cañon is not impenetrable. If I get out of this alive, I shall come back.'

Torrence was, all through, the life and soul of the expedition, and it was he who now found a way of escape. He noticed a zigzag kind of course on one side of the rocky chasm, probably the old bed of some prehistoric waterway from the upper part of the cañon to the bottom, and pointing it out to his companions, he inspired them to attempt the ascent perilous. At places the path, if it could be called such, was at an angle of eighty degrees, but, roped together, the men struggled up. They could not carry a load

up such a path, and so they first of all ate heartily, and then took sufficient for one more meal, abandoning the rest of their stores.

Torrence led the way, and as they slowly and painfully struggled up they always had the fear that the path might be blocked and prove a dead-end. At a height of over 2000 feet night came on, and they were still at least 500 feet from the top; but to remain in their then position was impossible, and so they still struggled on, trusting to chance and the instinct of Torrence.

The end of the journey was dramatic. Not knowing he was near the top, Torrence suddenly found himself with the starry horizon all round. The other men followed, and all were safe. They found later that they had covered exactly fourteen miles of the river's course, and had taken twenty-one days in doing it.

III.

So far from being dispirited, Torrence at once set about preparing another expedition, this time to go right through the cañon. There were to be only two in the party—Torrence and Fellows, already mentioned. Profiting by the previous experience, they decided that boats were useless, and so they invented a new kind of raft consisting of a rubber mattress, divided into a number of independent air-compartments like a Zeppelin. If one or two of these air-chambers were damaged, the others would keep the raft buoyant. Hand-ropes were fitted all round so that the men could wade or swim and hold on; and the stores, food, note-books, cameras, and so on were packed in watertight receptacles and fastened securely to the raft.

Once again Torrence, with his companion, was lowered down the precipice into the cañon; and this time the first part of their journey, though hazardous, was more successful. They had the former expedition to guide them, and knew something of the course. In a fortnight they had reached the Falls of Sorrow. Here, however, the unknown again faced them. They plunged over the falls, holding on to their raft, and at some places the danger was so great that they lashed themselves to it for fear that they might be swept away.

Progress now became very slow. At one point they took three hours to go sixty feet. At night they had to rest on narrow ledges of rock, wet through, and perpetually sprayed with the spume from the rushing river. Soon the cañon became deeper and narrower, and passing round a bend, they discovered that the river fell over a precipice. There was no turning back, and they would have to go over the falls. What their fate would be they could not say. Would they be dashed upon rocks, which would mean certain death, or would they fall into comparatively deep water, where they would have a chance of life?

It was decided that Fellows should go over

first, then the raft with all the stores firmly fixed to it, and finally Torrence would take the great plunge. Fellows leapt over the edge and disappeared; then Torrence, after waiting a few moments, released the raft, and very soon after followed. He must have lost consciousness, and remembered nothing until he found himself gripping a rock against which he had been washed. Fellows also remembered nothing after the plunge until he discovered himself lying on a rock, having apparently been washed there; and—wonder of wonders!—the raft, too, was safe, being wedged between some boulders.

The men were utterly exhausted, and could do nothing but lie on the rocks for hours and rest. Their food was nearly gone, and they had the last of it before starting again. Both explorers were now very faint and emaciated, and their chance of emerging from the cañon seemed small indeed. But after further painful progress a remarkable thing happened. They dragged themselves up on to a ledge, wet, cold, numbed, and hungry, and with no prospect of food, when suddenly a mountain-sheep bounded down upon the ledge—whence they never could tell. They caught it, killed it, and ate its flesh; and there is little doubt that this sheep, by replenishing their store of food, saved their lives.

Renewed in strength and hope, and warmed to some extent, they once again set forth on the quest perilous. Before long they came to another tunnel, greater than that at the Falls of Sorrow. The mass of rock above was far too precipitous to be climbed over, as in the other case. It was impossible to go back, and there was nothing for it but to risk their lives by committing themselves to the river and going with it into the tunnel.

At the entrance to the dark passage was a whirlpool, and into this Fellows leapt. Torrence then released the raft and jumped himself. He remembered very little till he found himself once more in daylight, clutched by Fellows, who was holding on to a rock. Fellows had been buffeted through the tunnel and then hurled against this rock, and just as he was pulling himself up he spied Torrence, and saved his comrade's life in the nick of time.

For a moment the men looked at one another, and then Fellows shouted, 'Who says now that the Black Cañon is impassable?' Not far away the walls were less precipitous, and the men found a place where they could crawl to the top. They had explored thirty miles of the cañon through which no living man had ever travelled before.

IV.

In their report to the Reclamation Bureau they strongly urged the feasibility of cutting a tunnel through the mountains and diverting the Gunnison River into the Uncompaghere Valley, and the department decided to proceed with

the work. But an enormous amount of preparation had to be carried out first. The cañon had to be properly mapped, levels had to be taken, a great slanting roadway had to be blasted out of the solid rock from the top of the cañon to the bottom, down which the tunnelling machinery, with the workmen and supplies, could be conveyed. To make this road hundreds of thousands of tons of rock had to be blown away by dynamite, and it has been described as the most remarkable highway the world has ever seen. When it was done a town grew up at its foot, right down in what was once the impenetrable cañon, for the housing of the workmen. There were houses, workshops, canteens, and power establishments; and tunnelling into the mountain-range began there at the same time as another party, who had built another mushroom town, began tunnelling from the Uncompaghere side.

A world's record was established by the excavation of 823 feet in a single month. Every kind of difficulty known to tunnelling was encountered. Subterranean springs were tapped; masses of rock caved in where the tunnel had been bored; accumulations of gas nearly led to explosions and suffocation; and underground quicksands were encountered, which had to be platformed with timber before they could be passed. On one day of twenty-four hours no less a quantity than three quarters of a million gallons of water was pumped out. Begun in 1903, the work went on for over six years, day and night shifts labouring without cessation, and 250 feet a month was excavated on an average. Altogether 5,000,000 wagon-loads of rock were removed from the mountains, and at length the two parties working in opposite directions met and clasped hands. The mountain-range was pierced, and a new artificial channel for the Gunnison River was made.

Much, of course, still remained to be done, but this was easy work compared with what had already been accomplished, and at last all was ready. In September 1909 President Taft went to the scene, pressed a button, and the Gunnison River came roaring through the tunnel into the Uncompaghere Valley to begin its work of transforming the desert into a garden. Among those present on that historic occasion was the little Frenchman Lauzon, whose imaginative mind had first set the wonderful work in motion.

THE VISION.

LARKS in the sky, and all the meadows starr'd
With silver and with gold;
A mist of bluebells, drifting in the woods,
The cuckoo's name retold.

And in this soul of mine a faith new-born
Mounts on an upward wing;
Dear God, immortal youth is not a dream—
No dream, eternal Spring!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, Yesterday.

ONE of the strange, significant effects of the cataclysm suffered by the nations has been the wider separation of places by time (which is the equivalent of space), and thus, in a sense, the expansion of the world—a reversal of the tendency of pre-war times, when we were wont to say that by the increase and improvement of communications the world was being closely contracted. By steam and electricity the most distant lands were brought within the compass of a swift and comfortable journey, in duration but a half or a quarter of that involved in the days when they who went down to the sea in ships trusted to the winds for the power to speed them on, and they who travelled over wide breadths of lands had to depend on animals to drag their coaches. The same conditions governed the transport of written messages. That might once have been a matter of weeks, but invention, progress, and peace reduced the period to days and hours and minutes. Man had the pride of achieving more than in the boast of Puck, who would 'put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes,' for his electric waves and the words they meant would flash around the hemispheres with nearly the speed of thought itself. That was progress, bringing the world into a general and close communion, from which an infinite advantage rose. From this state of pride and promise there has been harsh and destructive reaction, lapsing to the crudities of far-distant times. The strands of the marvellous net of communications were cut—or tangled—when the nations were at war. It has been found difficult or impossible to repair them again in the time that has elapsed since the shooting and the killing ceased, and in this slowness of recovery, the inability to recuperate from the havoc of such orgy, when there had been quick recuperation and then faster progress after smaller wars before, there is the warning of Nature, the same to nations as to profligate individuals, that at last the limits have been exceeded. That is the way in which many feel the significance of conditions that surround us now; it is told in every circumstance that we have gone too far, and it appears that amid this reaction, this loss of the gains of progress and the failure

to recover quickly, the sad dilemma of the victims, their consternation, their perplexity, their suffering, there is after all a heartening encouragement against an appalling fear that it was as the settled scheme of creation that the evolution of man to a fair and lofty destiny should be achieved only by the perpetual killing of his kind. If an improving, refining process invariably followed his periodic lapses to the methods of the lower animals, this fear must be substantiated and enhanced; when it is otherwise, we may feel that the human race, if it wills, may turn from homicide, justifiable or not, with confidence that there is no master-instinct impelling it in the name of Nature and of destiny to recurring tragedies, that these are not the ways of Heaven, that they are of the free volition of unstable beings insufficiently developed. If the fatalistic doctrine of militarists were true, a League of Nations would be mere stupidity; in the chaos, the reactions of the times, following upon the greatest orgy of homicide, there is the most splendid encouragement that this society could have, for its ideal is evidently not contrary to any eternal law that will lead man on to some higher state.

* * *

Ill and remorseful, the world now sees its once close-knit self as a number of scattered and isolated fragments, jolting uneasily and uncertainly, with no guidance or direction, through a space that is terrifying in its doubts and immanities. Some of them in the greater isolations are like explorers cut loose from their bases in civilisation. It is in this unhappy and unsatisfactory sense that we find the world suddenly expanded now. Six years ago peace and progress had reduced the time for the transmission of a letter from England to the United States to six days. We find now that a fortnight or more is continually needed, though the period was no longer in time of war. With the fastest ships the world has ever known at our disposal, our advantage is reduced to that of our forefathers who had but wind and sails for their assistance. So there is no other cause than the unexpected, staggering inability to recover with reasonable quickness from the chaos of administration and the inertia of reaction established by the recent conflict. Communications by cable and land

telegraph are similarly slowed. It is true that the aeroplane begins a new era dazzling in its promise, but not yet can it restore the old balance of facility in communications, and if war is persisted in it can never do so, for natural progress will then be hindered and prevented by suspicion and by fear. And it must be realised that communication is Progress leading to a higher evolution. Units in human beings, nations, are not self-contained in their potentiality for development, even as sexes are not. They must commingle; the more and to better effect they do so, the sounder and the swifter will be their progress, each deriving life and stimulus from the special vitalities that others gather from the resources of the earth and their own thoughts and effort. It is from the closing together of the peoples as a society, from their associated impetus, that advancement comes. Something of this interdependence, the necessity of it, the leaning of the nations upon each other, is realised to-day as never before in the economic confusion, with all the loss, the suffering, and the contradictions it involves, now prevailing as the result partly of interference with this principle of the intimacy and cohesion of the world as a society. Improve communications, and the social bonds are tightened and strengthened; peoples become more fructuous. So, when communications increase and are bettered, we are on the way to progress; when they decrease and are weakened, we go back.

* * *

Perhaps in Europe we never had a full sense of the worth of communications as they have always had in the world in the West, where their value was so hard impressed upon men at the beginning. We have not realised that speedier communication and more of it is the exact equivalent of increased energy and work, and that by bettering it we should have an enhanced power for production, advancement, and happiness as the ultimate end. If we had appreciated this truth, we—or our rulers for us—could not, even in war, have suppressed, or demolished, or hindered communications when by logic they should have been improved. Travelling for serious purposes would not have been handicapped; the telephone would not have been denied; the posted letter would not have been made to cost us more. Still less would such impediments and disabilities have been permitted to endure when the war was done. In the United States the principle of communication being progress has always been fully recognised. There the facilities for it are strengthened to the utmost in every department. Whatever else is dear, you find that the means of progress are usually comparatively cheap and marvellously good. America made and exploited the typewriter as no other country did, or has been able to do. I have often

stepped from the side-walk in a New York or a Chicago street into a hotel as a fancy or an impulse seized me, and, finding a public typewriter on a special table in the corner of a lounge, have dropped a dime into a slot and released it for my purposes, as any passer-by might do. The hotels themselves are a vital and predominant feature of the general scheme of communications, and see how America has exploited them. See also how pitifully London has lagged behind. Those who have not moved about in the United States cannot form any conception of the perfection of the American hotel system, and its palpable enormous advantages. It is true that these establishments have features that sometimes strike a little harshly upon the susceptible dispositions of some Eastern visitors; but we speak of communications and progress, and not of sweet tranquillities. Then I have bought in the Fifth Avenue of New York—no place for economies in the general way—by far the best and at the same time the cheapest travelling-trunks I have ever seen. In all these considerations there is an insistent moral. Even at much sacrifice in other ways, we of the old Eastern world must determine to restore our old communications to their former value quickly, and improve upon them. It is too easy to become accustomed, and by being accustomed to be satisfied, with a reactionary decline, and only those who since the war have wandered much from our British Isles fully realise the extent to which our communications have been reduced, and the disintegration of the European social and economic system which has been caused thereby. The state of things is extraordinary; it leads to amazing isolations. Lately I was in a European capital hardly more than a thousand miles from London as an aeroplane might in a few hours fly, yet regularly it took a week for letters to pass from that capital to London, sometimes more, even twelve days upon occasion. And sometimes a week or more was needed for a telegram to pass between them. It has been explained that for lack of ample telegraphic facilities—which were more than sufficient six years ago, when the demand upon them by the people was greater than it is now—telegrams between foreign countries and this place were at times sent by the post, although accepted as telegrams. I have some strong circumstantial proof of this. A telegram was sent to me when in this city from London, and immediately after delivering the message to the telegraph-office in the shadow of Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, and the seat of the mightiest Government in the world, the sender covered it, as the saying is, by a letter informing me of the despatch of the said telegram and its contents. A week later I received the letter, and some six hours afterwards there arrived the telegram. I was then at a seaside resort within

fifteen miles of the capital city, and the telegram bore as the place of despatch not London, of which indeed there was no mention, but the name of this capital city. Presumably it had been put upon the wires there for the first time, having arrived by the same mail as the letter. As between this country of which I speak and its near neighbour by land, which is France, they tell you frankly the position in regard to the telegraphs. You may pay at the ordinary rates for a telegraphic message—and sufficiently high they are—and the addressee may receive it within a week, but it is only on the borderland of probability that he will do so, while a letter will make the journey in four days, the train in one and a half, and an aeroplane in four or five hours. So that which should be the first is the last. Yet perceive the subtlety of Government tricks, extortions, and indifference to the overpowering essentials of the righting and the progress of the world: it is not impossible to make the message travel quickly—it is just a matter of more payment beyond that which for many years was established and accepted as fair. Pay double the proper fees and the telegraph authorities will mark the message as 'urgent,' and it will then meander through in one day.

* * *

There are many reasons why the world has difficulty in righting itself after its shattering experiences in recent years, but not the least of them is this overlooked subject of communications, the most vital means of progress and balance in the modern world. By reason of their absence individual persons and nations alike, lacking close and continual contact, are left to their own devices, weaken in their sense of responsibility, and fall away from the world scheme of things whose homogeneity, as we have discovered in the making of the peace with our late enemies, is an essential to world life, prosperity, and happiness to-day. A people isolated is in danger; it is apt to depart widely and wildly from the standards that rightly or wrongly have been accepted as those that best facilitate well-being. Each individual Briton will be making a small contribution to the cause of rehabilitation after war if in his political and other capacities he insists on the restoration of all communications—railways, telegraphs, telephones, posts, and every kind—to the efficiency at least, and to the cheapness also, at which they stood in 1914; and one should not be put off by the specious plea that it cannot be done by reason of the cost. If we are to restore contentment and happiness, this must be done, and something else should be dispensed with. In no matter so much as in this do statesmen exhibit the lamentable shortness of their vision, a strange incompetence, a sacrifice of all to their personal, selfish politics. Millions may be voted for new armies and new wars after the great war which was to end all

fighting for evermore was over, but travelling for urgent or any reason, letters in the post, telegraphs, telephones, and everything by which the world is made to understand itself and do its business must be charged half as much again—and be worse than ever organised in spite of the extra cost. We hear much each day of the terrible situation of economics and the exchanges, and of the havoc caused thereby to business and to life generally. Put the communications right, make some approach to perfection in them, and we have the sure remedy for these troubles. It is trade that is needed to make economics and the exchanges sound, and communications engender trade as fire produces heat.

* * *

Let it be insisted again that the existing circumstances and disabilities do not arise from absolute necessities created by war, but result from plain neglect, lack of imagination and comprehension, excessive devotion to mere politics, and in certain cases to deliberate reactionary tendencies on the part of Governments. Generally they escape popular condemnation because it appears that most of the difficulties have what we might term negative causes; they issue from things left undone after the war, things which should have been done immediately, and not from new and directed action. But here and there such action, with the object of restriction, has taken place, and so the cause in such cases is positive. In this class we may include the revised regulations for passports. By means of these passports Governments attain two objects, the first of which is to harass the traveller and needlessly to oppress him with a false sense of the difficulties of the world, and thus enhance their own importance, and possibly by some chance in part justify their own political caperings and egregious stupidities; and the second is to give employment to thousands of officials at the public expense and extract from the people sums of money that need never be expended in such a way. The day of passports is over. It is well known that even during the war, when the justification for them was evident, they were only in a small degree effectual. A person who wished to travel, and had no proper business to be doing so, could easily circumvent the passport system if he wished, and it was done repeatedly; while the legitimate traveller, who had business of a kind that was conceivably for the good of his country, was put through an ordeal of visits and forms that seemed almost endless, and at the Passport Office in Victoria Street, London, was notoriously subjected to insulting treatment by vulgar and uneducated minor officials, whatever might be the station and quality of the applicant, and however courteous might be his manner. But to pass over this ordeal (of which many thousands of persons will retain the bitterest remembrances for many

years) as being an unavoidable accompaniment of war conditions, the state of things now is in some respects more aggravating, as the last vestige of excuse for the passport system and its last possible service have disappeared. Those who have travelled—and I have travelled much of late—know that by no chance whatever can this system operate successfully now, yet it is applied rigorously, and most by those who in any case have least need for it; and it is done, no doubt, to strengthen bureaucracy by the employment of officials, to extract fees from the people—to pay the bureaucracy—and in certain cases to hinder the communications that should be as the breath of life to the gasping nations, and so promote reaction.

* * *

Let us be fair and admit that at the British end the state of things is vastly improved, though more might be done in the way of setting an example to the nations that they would be impelled to follow by the abandonment of the system altogether. France, in spite of much talk of abandonment, adheres tenaciously and ridiculously to the system. Lately I journeyed by sea from Southampton to Havre, landing at the latter port only for the purpose of changing immediately from one ship to another. It was a matter of five minutes' walk from one wharf to the other; that time and no longer did I need to be on this precious soil of France. But that I might step these few yards, nothing in my hands or pockets, I had to pass through the ordeal of passport examination by different officials (who, indeed, made no personal or proper examination of the passport or the particulars, and whom with the utmost ease I could have deceived) for, including waiting—think of it—two hours! And it was the same with a hundred others on that morning at Havre, when time was valuable, and when the French papers were crammed with articles about the necessity of the people doing good and useful work to restore trade balances and make the franc a coin of value and respectability again. The *visé* nuisance is the ultimate perfection of bureaucratic meddlesomeness and nonsense, to the detriment of all the essential interests of communities. At every move there must be a *visé*; people who would wander in this wonderful world often find themselves more hampered than the barbarians did. To move across the frontier from France to Italy—Allies, remember—though it be only a few yards on foot and in sight of the soldiery all the time, and though he have but his shirt to cover him and no papers or any goods whatsoever in his possession—yea, even though he were *in puris naturalibus*—the adventurer must have his passport, and it must be put through the *visé* process at the prefecture at Nice beforehand. There is a point on this frontier, at Ventimiglia on the Riviera, where walkers from Mentone have been

accustomed just to step across to admire the view, or as a matter of fancy. To do that now they must have their passport, and it must have the special *visé* at Nice, for the regulations point out particularly that it is wrong to imagine, as many visitors and excursionists do, that they can proceed to Italy without a passport, and insist that the document and *visés* are necessary even when one would go but a few hundred yards into Italy. How then, with all this, shall we reproach the Americans when they urge us to put aside our stupidities and work if we would be happy and prosperous again? The smaller nations without even the shadow of excuse that others, overborne by war, might consider themselves to possess take their time from their betters and exploit this new vein of bureaucracy. Spain needs no passport system, but she adopted it as did the belligerents, and adheres to it even more tenaciously now, since in this paradise for bureaucrats it gives more employment to thousands of officials and yields an immensity of unearned pesetas. Think of travelling from London to Spain, and you are informed that your passport must have the *visé* from the Spanish consul at an inconvenient place in the city near the Tower, where courtesy and consideration are not of the true Spanish kind. Pass on your way to Spain through Portugal, as many do, and then it is insisted that there shall be another *visé* by the Spanish consul at Lisbon—two sets of officials to this tremendous business; two sets of fees. And now, to expose the wanton bureaucratic fraud and nonsense of it all, the passport thus with so much difficulty obtained, thus so much stamped with *visés*, thus so much handled in advance by different sets of officials, and thus so much paid for, has served its bureaucratic end. You pass the frontier with this precious document into the new country, admission to which had seemed so jealously guarded, and, lo! they do not ask you for your passport! They do not want it; it is nothing. It has served its bureaucratic purpose. Here I write from personal experience.

* * *

If Europe is to come to its better self again, it must put away these childish tricks, and set to work in the way of honest sense. And for the traveller, though the Governments do not say that he shall no longer adventure forth, he must understand that they make every kind of difficulty for him, and that travelling, indeed, which many now anticipate with keen desire, is by no means what it used to be. In every direction it is vastly more expensive, far more difficult, rougher, and more uncomfortable. Governments make it so; they conspire with other agencies to that end. They would have the units to rest on spots at home, not to move therefrom, to rust and rot and be actionless thereon. Business men wail at the hindrances

set up against them, and Europe goes starving on. Countries that are near to us, and friends, become, through failure in communications, remote, almost like lost planets. Take Portugal, for example, our 'oldest Ally.' What news did you see of Portugal in the papers for days and days? Yet I do not think that there is a country in

Europe where the events progressing are at the same time graver or more remarkably, romantically interesting than those passing in Portugal at the present period, and they are of world importance. Recently I spent much time in Portugal, and was astonished. I shall write of what I saw.

TELLING THE BEES.

By VIOLET M. METHLEY.

I.

'I CAN'T shake hands, Captain Crohane; and you had better keep at a distance, really! I've a terribly pugnacious bodyguard; so don't try to come near me.'

'I won't.' Captain Crohane retired behind a lavender-bush, more speedily than became an officer and a gentleman, before the rapid advance of a slim, yellow-barred insect. 'I say! Call off the little swine, Miss Danvers; he's going to bite me!'

'He won't if you stand perfectly still, and don't show that you're frightened. Of course, if you wave about your arms like that, they *will* attack you.'

'I believe the brutes are jealous of me—hark, how they're cursing! Or perhaps it's just an ordinary Hymn of Hate, because they were enemy aliens before the outbreak of Peace—Blue Hungarians, didn't you say?'

'Ligurians, I suppose you mean.'

'It's all the same. Here, they're attacking in force! Keep off, will you? Hi! Shoo!'

'They're a particularly fierce kind with strangers, and you'll get badly stung if you go on like that. . . . Oh, Captain Crohane, do go into the cottage, and wait in the parlour, while I finish here! The poor little things will only lose their tempers if you tease them in that way.'

'Tease them, indeed!' the young man protested indignantly. 'It's me they're teasing. All right, I'll go inside and wait, if it will set your mind at ease, Miss Danvers.'

Leaning out through the open window of the parlour, between the pots of musk and lemon verbena, Patrick Crohane watched Jacqueline Danvers as she moved to and fro by the row of hives. A pale-green overall covered her from head to foot; a beekeeper's mask hid her face and hair; only her pretty hands were bare. Yet the bees, settling upon them, crawling over her wrists, made no attempt to sting, even when she brushed them off with deliberate, unhurried movements,

'No, they never hurt me.' Jacqueline glanced up, in answer to a comment from the young man. 'We know each other so well, and I'm sure they are fond of me; yes, really, although you might not believe it.'

'It isn't so very incredible. I've always

heard that bees are singularly intelligent creatures,' Crohane said gravely.

'Oh, they are; they're simply wonderful! I'm certain they know whether I'm happy, or bothered, or lonely, or cross; they've instincts, intuitions. I can quite understand how that old country superstition grew up about telling the bees everything that happened to their owners. You'll think me perfectly mad, but they're such strange, strange little creatures, and so tremendously interesting. I'm getting to know quite a lot about their ways and customs: I can tell when they're worried or excited. Just now, for instance, I'm certain they are planning to swarm; there's quite a different note in their humming. Can't *you* hear it?'

'Thanks. I'm not calm enough in the presence of a bee to notice these fine shades of expression. But if you don't come in soon, I shall be madly jealous of the little beasts. There's only a couple of hours before my train goes.'

'All right; I'm coming.' Jacqueline glanced along the row of neat, business-like bee-houses, and came into the cottage, pulling off her mask as she did so.

'That's better.' She pushed back a dark-brown lock from her hot, flushed cheek. 'No, it isn't safe to come near me yet. Ah, I thought so! Get out, you little villains!' She gathered a couple of bees from the folds of her overall as she spoke, and tossed them gently out through the window into the warm, midsummer air. 'Now I'm ready to be civil, Captain Crohane—' she began—and completed her sentence in quite an unpremeditated fashion, with Crohane's arms holding her close. 'Oh—Pat'—

'Jacqueline—Jacqueline! Oh, little girl, how ever have I managed without you for thirty-three years?' Crohane whispered, and the conversation degenerated, then and there, to a level of sickly sentiment equalled only by the best-selling transatlantic novels, and quite beneath the intelligence of British readers.

II.

It was nearly half-an-hour before a comparatively lucid interval supervened, as they sat together—very much together—in the low, broad window-seat.

'Pat, I've got to tell you something'—Jac-

queline's voice was rather unsteady as she twisted one of his coat-buttons—'I—I've been engaged before.'

'You disgraceful little wretch! But it's my own silly fault for not having discovered you earlier. And—you didn't love him, my child—not like this?'

'No. I *hated* him.'

'All the time?'

'Very nearly all the time, I think. Pat, I hated him so much that I was glad—yes, glad!—when he was killed in the war. I've tried not to believe it, tried to think that I couldn't have been such a brute; but I was—at the back of my heart, I *was*. It was a relief to think that I should never see him, never hear from him, again.'

'How did it happen, dearest?' Crohane's voice was almost womanly in its sympathy, as he drew her still nearer to him.

'I'm not sure—really, I'm not! It was nearly seven years ago, when I was only eighteen. I was terribly miserable, terribly lonely, when my father died suddenly; it didn't seem to matter what I did. So, when Vincent Corfield asked me to marry him, over and over again, I let myself be engaged to him. But I know now that I never loved him really, and, very soon, I hated him.'

'So you broke off the engagement—naturally?'

'Yes, I broke it off. I hated doing it. I tried not to be unkind; but he—he wouldn't accept it, Pat! He refused to release me; he insisted that I was still bound to him.'

'The cad!'

'I'm sure now that he wasn't altogether sane, Pat—that there was something abnormal, warped, in him. His jealousy, his violence, his fits of passion about nothing, whilst we were engaged. And afterwards—afterwards'—

The girl shivered and crept closer to Crohane, as he tightened the clasp of his arm about her.

'Don't think of it any more, darling,' he said softly.

'I can't help it—sometimes. It was awful, Pat. He wouldn't leave me alone—wouldn't accept what I said. He wrote constantly—followed me about. I had no men-relations who could help me, and it seemed so awful to think of going to the police. It ended only when war broke out, and Vincent had to rejoin his regiment. He went out with the Expeditionary Force, and he was killed within a month . . . and I was glad.'

'No wonder, sweetheart; no wonder. Why wasn't I here to look after you? And then you came here, to the cottage and the bees?'

'Yes—after three years as a V.A.D. in France—and even the work didn't make me altogether forget that horrible time. It seems like a nightmare now, as though I'd been in a hateful, spell-bound sleep, until—until the Prince came to wake me up.'

She raised her face to Crohane's, with a look upon it very earnest, very tender. He bent and kissed her gently.

'It's all over now,' he said.

III.

Half-an-hour later Patrick Crohane departed, stationwards, escorted to the gate by Jacqueline. He looked back from the end of the short lane, to see her standing, framed in a tangle of larkspur and snapdragon and columbines, old-world flowers, too sweet and simple to be labelled as delphinium and antirrhinum and aquilegia.

Jacqueline remained leaning over the white gate for a few minutes after Crohane had disappeared; then she returned slowly up the flagged path towards the cottage. She paused beside the row of hives, and gave a little half-shy laugh as she remembered some of her words to Crohane.

Leaning down until her cheek rested against the green-painted pent-roof of the nearest hive, she whispered under her breath, 'I want to tell you, bees, I'm very happy—very, very happy, because he loves me. You're glad, bees, aren't you? Because you love me, too.'

To Jacqueline's fancy it seemed that the low, murmurous buzzing within the hives grew and swelled, on a deeper note, into a low, musical roar, as though in response to her words. She laughed again at her own lively imagination, and ran on into the cottage, and up to the big garret, cool even to-day, under the thatch.

Here, on shelves and tables, were pots of honey, full and empty sections, boxes, jars, funnels, bottles—all the appliances of a business-like and successful beekeeper. Here Jacqueline spent many hours of her days, and here she set to work now, re-covering and labelling a tableful of jars.

At first the girl hummed low under her breath, like some musical bee herself; then gradually her voice rose, until she was singing aloud, clearly and sweetly.

Perhaps the bees heard it out there in the garden, as they buzzed and stirred, feverishly and uneasily, about the largest of the hives. Certainly another heard it, and was guided by the sound.

Suddenly Jacqueline ceased to sing, and turned expectantly towards the door. Some one was ascending the creaking stairs to the attic. Nobody lived in the house except herself. It must be an outsider, a caller—the vicar's daughter, perhaps, or the doctor's wife; they often came straight up to her through the always-open door. But—this was a man's footfall.

Could Pat have returned? Jacqueline took a step forward at the very thought, and her cheeks flushed. Then she paused, and the jar which she was holding fell, with a little clash of breaking glass. Her face grew white, her eyes darkened and widened, as she stood staring—

staring—at the figure of a man framed in the low doorway.

He was tall and gaunt and broad-shouldered, with a sallow skin and very dark hair. His eyes were narrowed; his lips wore a twisted smile, which broadened to a laugh as he saw Jacqueline's face.

'You did not expect to see *me*!' he said.

'No'—Jacqueline dragged out the words by an effort. 'I—we heard—I thought you were—killed.'

'You *hoped* I was killed—yes. But I wasn't—only a prisoner. And now I'm free again.'

'I—I'm glad'—Jacqueline struggled fiercely to control her voice, to regain her self-possession.

'No; you're sorry. And you have reason to be'—

In his half-closed eyes a strange light was burning, a light which Jacqueline remembered to have seen, by fitful gleams, in the old days, when fits of jealous passion shook and tore him. She knew now, what she had only vaguely guessed at then, that it was the light of madness. A cold shiver ran through her body, but she faced him bravely. 'I have no reason to be afraid of you, Vincent,' she said. 'I have never wronged you.'

'Never wronged me? Not to-day, when you allowed another man to make love to you—you, who are bound to me? Oh, I saw you with the fellow; I watched you when you sat at the window, when you stood with him at the gate—curse him!'

'I am not bound to you, Vincent. I am free.'

'That is a lie! I never released you from your promise. I never will release you. If it takes two to make an engagement, it takes two to break it. I've had plenty of time to think it over, and I've not changed my mind about *that*!'

His voice dropped to a snarl; his lips, up-curved, showed the strong, white teeth. Jacqueline leant against the table, her nails driving into the wood, as she clutched at its edge.

Corfield turned and deliberately closed the door, locked it, and dropped the key into his waistcoat-pocket. 'You see, you are not free, even in body,' he said. 'You are mine—mine—*mine*!'

His voice sank to a hoarse, strained whisper; his eyes, with that dull glare in them, never left Jacqueline's face, and the girl stared back at him, her whole body rigid and fixed. Her mind had felt stunned and rigid, too; only now did she realise that she was in extreme physical danger.

IV.

Jacqueline glanced over her shoulder towards the window. There was a sheer drop of thirty feet and more to the ground.

Corfield laughed. 'No escape that way!' he mocked her. 'No escape at all, my dear.'

'What do you mean? What do you want?' Jacqueline faced him defiantly.

'I want what belongs to me, what I refuse to give up! I want—you! Oh, not because I love you now; quite the contrary.'

Again he smiled, and came a step nearer. A queer, half-stifled sob burst from Jacqueline's throat, and the man laughed outright. 'No use to scream,' he said; and Jacqueline knew that it was true.

Her little char-girl had returned home to the village a couple of hours before; the nearest cottage was half a mile away; there was not even a dog in the house. She was quite alone, and Pat—Pat was in the train by now, leaning back in the carriage corner, thinking of her, picturing her—

'Ah-h!'

A little sobbing cry escaped Jacqueline as Corfield strode closer and clutched her wrist. 'You're *mine*, do you understand?' he said. 'I swore no other man should have you, or, if he *does*' . . . His eyes dilated; their dull glare was intensified. He ended with a low, mocking laugh, and repeated slowly, 'If he does' . . .

'Vincent, why should you wish to hurt me?' Jacqueline struggled to make her dry lips form the words.

'It's all I lived for—to hurt you. I've thought of nothing else, sleeping and waking'—again his eyes contracted and dilated—'I've been waiting for this moment. I knew it would come.'

He pressed closer, forcing the girl back into the angle between the fireplace and the window. He towered over her, lanky, powerful, one hand still gripping her wrist, the other pressed against the wall, level with her shoulder, hemming her in. He thrust his strained, distorted face closer to hers.

'Now, how will you escape me?' he snarled.

Jacqueline's hopeless, desperate eyes turned this way and that. She was utterly helpless. If she struggled—fought—it could only be for a moment.

And outside, the garden drowsed peacefully in the afternoon sunshine; the butterflies and the bees were happily busy amongst the flowers—the bees, her little friends.

She could hear their low, steady hum; it seemed so near that they must be at work in the mignonette-bed under the window; or her senses, perhaps, were unnaturally sharpened. Ah! one had flown in through the window—then two or three. She saw them darting to and fro, heard their half-angry drone through the throbbing of the pulses in her ears, through the thudding of her heart.

'Well?' Corfield's voice came, harsh and grating. 'Do you realise *now* that you are not free—that I have you in my power?'

Suddenly, frantically, Jacqueline began to struggle. She wrenched her wrist away, but

before she could reach the open window Corfield had caught her again, forced her back against the wall, his eyes ablaze, his face working.

'You shall not escape me!' he snarled. 'You—ah!'

The words ended in a fierce oath. He released Jacqueline's arm, and clutched at his throat. As he did so a bee rose in the air, with an angry buzzing sound.

'It's stung me—damn the brute!' he ejaculated, and made a frantic grab at the insect as it darted away. His violently outflung hand encountered another bee. Next instant it had left its sting in his wrist.

And then—it seemed to Jacqueline, cowering against the wall, as though, in a moment, the garret—the whole air—was full of darting insects, full of the whirring, angry drone of a vast army of bees.

Thicker and thicker they poured in through the window; they hung in clouds, clustered over the shelves, walls, and furniture—wheeling, darting—and ever they gathered more and more thickly round the figure of the man who struck out at them, thrashing on all sides with his arms, cursing them in a hoarse, inhuman voice.

The temper of that fierce legion of insects was stirred; venomously, vindictively, they attacked this stranger who assailed them. In hundreds and thousands, in numbers which grew each instant, they hung about him, gathered on his clothes, his hands, his head. . . . Already his face was almost unrecognisable—swollen, scarlet—

'Vincent, Vincent, stand still.' Wholly regard-

less of her own safety, Jacqueline sprang forward and gripped him by the arm. 'Don't strike out at them like that; don't excite them! Keep quiet—stand still—ah, don't you hear me?'

But he was far past hearing or heeding her. He broke away, hitting out in all directions, spitting out oaths, beating at the air and at those fierce legions which darkened the air, those swarming thousands whose mighty instincts he had dared to cross, to hamper.

All Jacqueline's protests and efforts were unavailing. She could not restrain or calm the maddened man—could not beat off the furious insects, which, even in their rage, seemed to recognise the girl, so that she escaped almost scatheless.

It was not until at last Corfield sank down, exhausted, upon the ground that she was able to help him, to tear down a muslin curtain and fling it over him, whilst she fetched all the remedies and alleviations which her skill and knowledge could suggest.

But there was little really to be done. The man was unconscious already, sinking deeper and deeper into that merciful coma which would end only beyond the gates of Death, and release his twisted, warped spirit from the tortures imposed by its own bodily nature.

The bees, unconscious winged Avengers, had finished their work with a terrible completeness. Only a few stray insects now darted here and there about the room; whilst the others clung together, filling the air with their steady, relentless drone, in a huge, shapeless mass, under the low rafters of the attic, where they had swarmed.

A BYWAY IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

By H. B. PATERSON.

THERE had been a serious drought in our coffee district—a drought so prolonged as to cause us serious financial misgivings, and to imperil the fair fame of British East Africa as possessor of 'the perfect climate of the world.' Fearing something of the sort, I had done some mild irrigation, and so saved some of the young coffee, which otherwise would have been entirely done for; and, irrigation being much in my mind, I decided to pay a flying visit to a man who had been doing quite good things with it. This took me to a part of the country which is little known, though right on the railway, the station being Makindu, about 120 miles from Nairobi, on the way to Mombasa. The reason why few people know it except by name is that the region is reputed to be exceedingly unhealthy, although it really is not—if you take reasonable precautions. However, it is only about 2200 feet above sea-level, and everything under 4500 feet is considered impossible locally.

I had been rather seedy recently with fever,

but knew that, once out of Nairobi, wherever I went, I should feel better; and so it proved. We crossed the Athi River about thirty miles above my farm, and ran through sun and wind across bare plains to Kiu, where, in the usual leisurely manner of the Uganda Railway, the mail-train stops for half-an-hour, while the passengers gobble tea and eggs and bread-and-butter in the Dak Bungalow. Then more plains and clouds of red dust, so thick and suffocating that we had to shut all the windows and stew in an atmosphere that reminded one of a greenhouse that had been used for a 'pub.' We reached Makindu at 7.30 p.m., and there I met the man I had come to see, an American named B—, the only white land-owner in the district or within fifty miles.

Makindu is a relic of past glories these days. In the caravan-times it was a great spot; when you pulled in there you were one-third of the way from the coast to the Lakes—the Taru desert and the long waterless stages behind you. In the days of the building of the railway it was

also a great place, and a huge station was built; but now it is just a patch of deserted civilisation in the middle of a vast wilderness. There are great empty locomotive-sheds, and dozens of stone-built houses, and silence over all; but it is said that Makindu is to become the distributing centre for the Magadi branch line, so it may revive. There are occasional white engineers there, but they usually start drinking about 9 A.M., and are apt not to last long.

I slept at the station, and early next morning walked out to B——'s place, about two and a half miles through the scrub, or rather bush. This is the real bush country, with fair-sized trees and heavy undergrowth. In it you find all the big game of Africa, except elephant; rhino are about as numerous as hares at home, and I had my eye on convenient trees all the time I was there. The country looks dead-flat, with this thick bush all over it, and here and there little conical hills sticking up, the whole always covered with the queer blue haze that marks tropical African bushland. South-east it runs away to the sea; north-west it is bounded by the hills that buttress the highlands. To the south rises Kilimanjaro; to the north lie plains that stretch away to Abyssinia—and you might journey ten times there and back and never see a white man. But it is Kilimanjaro that dominates the whole scene, an enormous snow-capped mountain-ridge that seems to float in the air high above all the world around it. By some queer process, partly mirage, partly haze, the lower 10,000 feet or so fade away into the sky, leaving the upper half clear and apparently unsupported. Makindu is ninety miles from the mountain, yet it is impossible to get away from it. In a little clearing in the thickest bush, where one would imagine that all you would see would be the sky immediately above, you find the glittering white dome looking down on you. Personally I didn't want to get away from it; I couldn't take my eyes off it all the time it was in sight.

B——'s place consists of a 180-acre clearing in the bush, bounded by the Makindu River on one side. By some mysterious means (which he described as the devil looking after his own) he has got Government permission to use the whole flow of the river for irrigation, &c., which permission has turned a place worth nothing into a good paying concern. This region has a very small rainfall, and without irrigation the rich soil is useless—some Indians tried onions, but gave it up as they relied only on rain. The river comes from Kilimanjaro, an inexhaustible reservoir, and the water is charged with sulphate of magnesia (Epsom salts), which is a valuable manure. Where it has overflowed the land and evaporated, a white crust is left. B—— grows onions mainly, and a very good thing he makes out of it, I believe.

We went shooting the second day I was there,

looking for oryx and lesser kudu, but naturally, these being our special object, we saw every other sort of game except them. However, we, or rather B——, had something of an adventure. The boys said there was a rhino in a patch of thick bush, and B——, who is 'dead nuts' on rhino, because they roll on his onions, insisted on going in after it. He had a double-barrel .577 Express, a cannon I could hardly lift, and wouldn't have fired for the Mint. I had my 9 mm. magazine Mauser. He suggested my coming in also, to which I replied that the poor wee beast would probably be frightened enough already, and that, as an F.Z.S. (Scot.), I wouldn't be a party to increasing its terrors. I said I would wait outside, near a tree, and pick him off the horns when I had time. B—— went in—bush very thick—couldn't see the rhino. He crawled about, and presently saw a small black patch—part of the rhino, but what part he couldn't tell. He moved a little to try to find out, and immediately heard a crash and a rush on his right. He turned and saw another rhino charging him about thirty yards away. He fired, and as he fired felt, rather than heard, another rush behind him, swung round without seeing if his first shot had killed, and found a third rhino right on top of him. He fired his second barrel and killed it within five yards! The other rhino which had charged him was also dead, and the original cause of all the trouble had, fortunately, cleared off. B—— declared that the little affair proved the value of going about with a cannon like his, but I saw in it only another proof of the foolishness of going into thick bush after dangerous game instead of beating it out. An Express rifle is like a shot-gun, with only as many shots as you have barrels; these emptied, you have to reload. If the third rhino had charged B—— before he had had time to reload, his only chance would have been a tree, howitzer or no howitzer.

On the third day I found myself at the station again, looking for a train back. There was no passenger train till next day midday, but a goods was due at 11 A.M., and I decided to go by it. We started. I was prepared again to face the red dust of the down journey, but I needn't have worried. We never went fast enough to raise any. Several times I found we were doing under two miles an hour for long stretches, and once I walked ahead of the train, then sat down and waited for it. Occasionally we knocked up a giddy ten miles an hour, but that was exceptional. But the rate of going did not worry me; in fact, it pleased me. I sat on the foot-board and watched Kilimanjaro. I watched it from 11 A.M. till sunset and didn't get bored. Meanwhile the long red train crawled across the veld, gradually drawing up to the highlands, and rising slowly all the time. Some low hills, with Kilimanjaro floating in the light clouds above them, were to the south of us, and northwards the veld sloped gradually to the far-off Athi River.

Beyond the Athi were a few low blue hills, showing vaguely in the haze, part of that unexplored tract lying between the Athi and the Tana. North and east the view was terminated by distance only.

The whole country was as it has been from the beginning—not a clearing, not a native hut, not even a native to be seen. It was primitive Africa, so primitive that the single-track railroad was too insignificant a sign of civilisation to be noticeable, far less obtrusive. It was Africa in her most attractive garb for that very reason, for she loses her charm precisely in proportion as she gains civilisation.

We stopped at Simba, Sultan Hamoud, and at little clearings where noisy imported Kavirondos load the engine with wood and water, and shout '*Quahiu!*' ('Farewell!') as you steam out.

It was getting on by now, and as we crept in amongst low hills we met a few railway workers going home along the track—Kavirondos most of them. They ran alongside the track, and I shouted insults, to their great joy, the insulted

one calling, '*Eh—h! Hapana, hapana*' ('Not so'), and all his pals, '*Iuchle, bwana*' ('Quite true, master')—I had told him that with a figure like his he should roll, not run.

Presently Kilimanjaro had to go to bed, and we said good-night, he blushing brightly as he did so. I suppose he was ashamed of going to bed at such an early hour at his age. Then it grew dark, and when we reached Kiu at 2 A.M. I was cold and bored and hungry. Kiu is fifty miles from M——, and we had taken nine hours for the run!

At Kiu I got eggs and bread-and-butter. After spending some chilly and mosquito-haunted hours in the station there, I went on by mail-train next day. The last part of the trip had none of the charm of the first; it was mainly across the Athi and Kapote treeless spaces, covered with long yellow grass, and beloved of game. There were the usual herds of wildebeest, ostriches, Tommies (small gazelles), zebras, &c., but all passed too quickly for more than a glimpse. And so back to dusty Nairobi again.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XV.—*continued.*

II.

IT was after nine o'clock when Selwyn woke from a deep, refreshing sleep. Hurrying into the other room, he found no sign of his guests.

'When did these gentlemen leave?' he asked of his servant, who had answered his ring.

'It must have been about six o'clock, sir. I heard the door open and shut then.'

'Why didn't you call me?'

'I wasn't wanting to disturb you, sir. It's the first good sleep you've had for a long time.'

It was true. The sinking of himself into the personality of another man had released the fetters of his intensive egotism. For a whole night he had forgotten, or at least neglected, his world-mission in simple solicitude for one who had fallen by the wayside.

After the stimulus of a cold shower and a hearty breakfast, he resumed his crusade against the entrenched forces of Ignorance, but in spite of the utmost effort in concentration, the memory of the lonely figure by the Thames intruded constantly on his mind. It was not only that Dick was the brother of Elise—although Selwyn's longing for her had become a dull pain that was never completely buried beneath his thoughts; nor was it merely the unconscious charm possessed by the boy, a charm that seized on the very heart-strings. To the American the real cruelty of the thing lay in the existence of a Society that could first debase so fine a creature, and then make no effort to retrieve or to atone for its crime.

Putting aside the day's work he had planned,

he flung his mind into the arena of England's social conditions. Exerting to the full his gift of mental discipline, he rejected the promptings of prejudice and of sentiment, and brought his sense of analysis to bear on his subject with the cold, callous detachment of a scientist studying some cosmic phenomenon.

For more than an hour his brain skirmished for an opening, until, spreading the blank sheets of paper before him, he wrote: '*THE ISLAND OF DARKNESS.*' Tilting his chair back, he surveyed the title critically.

'Yes,' he said aloud, squaring his shoulders resolutely, 'I have generalised long enough. Without malice, but without restraint, I will trace the contribution of Britain towards the world's *débâcle.*'

With gathering rapidity and intensity he covered page after page with finely worded paragraphs. He summoned the facts of history, and churning them with his conceptions of humanity's duty to humanity, poured out a flood of ideas, from which he chose the best. Infatuated by the richness of the stream, he created such a powerful sequence of facts that the British began to loom up as a reactionary tribe fighting a rearguard action throughout the ages against the advancing hosts of enlightenment. The Island of Britain, the 'Old Country,' as its people called it, began to shape in his eyes like a hundred-taloned monster sprawling over the whole earth. This was the nation which had forced opium on China, ruled India by tyranny, blustered and bullied America into rebellion, conquered South

Africa at the behest of business interests. . . . Those and endless others were the counts against Britain in the open court of history.

And if those had been her crimes in the international sphere, what better record could she show in the management of human affairs at home? She had clung to the feudal idea of class distinction, only surrendering a few outposts reluctantly to the imperious onslaught of time; she had maintained a system of public schools which produced first-class snobs and third-rate scholars; she had ignored the rights of women until in very desperation they had resorted to the crudities of violence in order to achieve some outlet for the pent-up uselessness and directionlessness of their sex; she had tolerated vile living conditions for the poor, and had forced men and women to work under conditions which were degrading and an insult to their Maker. . . . One by one these dragons reared their heads and fell to the gleaming Excalibur of the author.

Selwyn made one vital error—he mistook facts for truth. He forgot that a sequence of facts, each one absolutely accurate in itself, may, when pieced together, create a fabric of falsehood.

There were many contributing influences to Austin Selwyn's denunciation of Britain that morning. Although he had ordered sentiment and prejudice to leave his mind unclogged, these two passions cannot be dismissed by mere will-power—the drawing of a blind does not expel the warmth of the sun, although it may exclude the light.

He was keenly moved by the meeting with Dick Durwent, and, almost unknown to himself, his love for Elise was a smouldering fever whose fumes mounted to his head. Love is so overpowering that it overlaps the confines of hate, and his hunger for her was mixed with an almost cave-man desire to conquer her, force homage from her. And she was English!

In addition to these undercurrents affecting his thoughts, there was the dislike towards England which lies dormant in so many American breasts. Gloss it over as they will, no political *entente* can do away with the mutual dislike of Americans and Englishmen. It is a thing which cannot be eradicated in a day, but will die the sooner for exposure to the light, being an ugly growth of swampy prejudice and evil-smelling provincialism that needs the darkness and the damp for life.

Mingling these subconscious elements with those of logic and reason, Selwyn wrote for two days, almost without an hour's rest, and when it was finished *The Island of Darkness* was a powerful, vivid, passionate arraignment of England, the heart of the British Empire. It was clever, full of big thoughts, and glowed with the genius of a man who had made language his slave.

It lacked only one ingredient, a simple thing at best—*Truth*.

But that is the tragedy of idealism, which studies the world as a crystal-gazer reading the forces of destiny in a piece of glass.

III.

A week later, in the early afternoon, Selwyn was going up Whitehall, when he heard the sound of pipes, and turned with the crowd to gaze. With rhythmic pomposity a pipe-major was twirling a staff, while a band of pipes and drums blared out a Scottish battle-song on the frosty air. Following them in formation of fours were five or six hundred men in civilian clothes, attested recruits on their way to training-centres.

With the intellectual appetite of the psychologist, Selwyn looked searchingly at the faces of the strangely assorted crowd, and the contrasts offered would have satisfied the most rapacious student of human nature.

His eyes seized on one well-built, well-groomed man of thirty odd years whose slight stoop and cultured air of tolerance marked him a 'Varsity man' as plainly as cap and gown could have done. Just behind him a costermonger in a riot of buttons was indulging in philosophic quips of a cheerfully vulgar nature. A few yards back a massive labourer with clear untroubled eye and powerful muscles stood out like a superior being to the three who were alongside. Half-way a poet marched. What form his poesy took—whether he expressed beauty in words, or, catching the music of the western wind, wove it into a melody, or whether he just dreamed and never told of what he dreamed—it matters not; he was a poet. His step, his dreamy eyes, the poise of his forehead raised slightly towards the skies, were things which showed his personality as clearly as the mighty forearm or the plethora of buttons bespoke the labourer or the costermonger.

With a great sense of pity the American watched them pass, while the skirl of the bagpipes lessened in the distance. In spite of the dissimilarity of type, there was a community of shyness that embraced almost every one—a silent plea not to be mistaken for heroes. As they passed the Horse Guards and saw the two sentries astride their horses still as statues (their glorious trappings, breastplates, helmets, and swords, the embodiment of spectacular militarism) an apologetic, humorous smile was on the face of almost every recruit. The sight was a familiar enough one to the large majority, but in the presence of those grim, superb cavalrymen they felt the self-conscious embarrassment of small boys about to enter a room full of their elders.

In its own way it was Britain's mob saying to Britain's regulars that it was to be hoped no one would think they imagined themselves soldiers in the real sense of the word.

But to Selwyn the noise of their marching feet on the roadway had the ominous sound of

the roll of the tumbrils, bearing their victims to the guillotine.

The procession was nearly ended and he was about to turn away, when his eye was attracted by a peculiar pair of knees encased in trousers that were much too tight, working jerkily from side to side as their owner marched. Although his face was almost hidden by reason of his vagabond hat being completely on one side, it was not difficult to recognise the futurist, Johnston Smyth. He appeared to be in rare form, as an admiring group of fellow-recruits in his immediate vicinity were almost doubled up with laughter, and even the grizzled Highland sergeant marching sternly in the rear had such difficulty in suppressing a loud guffaw that his face was a mottled purple.

And marching beside the humorist, with a slouch-cap low over his eyes, was the lad who was known as 'Boy-blue.'

IV.

As this tale of the parts men play unfolds itself a passing thought comes.

From the standpoint of fairness, economics, and efficiency, conscription should have been Britain's first move. But nations, like individuals, have great moments that reveal the inner character and leave beacons blazing on the hills of history.

In a war in which every nation was the loser, Britain can at least reclaim from the wreckage the memory of that glorious hour when the Angelus of patriotism rang over the Empire, and men of every creed, pursuit, and condition dropped their tasks and sank themselves in the great consecration of service.

What is the paltry glory of a bloody victory or the passing sting of a defeat?

War is base, senseless, and degrading—that was one truth that Selwyn did recognise; but what he failed to see was that in the midst of all the foulness there lay some glorious gems. When battles are forgotten and war is remembered as a hideous anachronism of the past, our children and their children will bow in reverence to that stone set high in Britain's diadem—THEY SERVED.

(Continued on page 343.)

HOLLAND—A LAND OF SMOKERS.

HOLLAND has been defined as an immense crust of earth floating on the water. Certainly, when one considers the nature of the country, such a definition is quite an intelligible one. Bog and moor constitute a large part of the land, while such rivers as the Scheldt, the Maas, the Lek, and the Waal all guide their lazy waters through the fertile domains. A network of canals intersects the country everywhere, and the sea has made grievous inroads upon the coast—witness the Zuider Zee.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Holland should have a humid climate. Indeed, the climate is of such a damp nature as to necessitate (in the opinion, at all events, of the male inhabitants) the use of the pipe and the cigar. Thus the Dutch have gained the reputation of being, as a race, the heaviest smokers in northern Europe, if not of the whole Continent. Tobacco and cigars are very cheap in Holland, and men and boys alike take full advantage of their cheapness. It is very seldom that a Dutchman is seen without his pipe or his cigar. At home or at business, in the workshop or in the street, Mynheer is to be seen wafting clouds of cigar or tobacco smoke. It is not an uncommon occurrence for a Dutchman to fall asleep with his pipe set firmly between his teeth, only to awake and relight it as if nothing unusual had happened. Smoking, it would seem, comes as a second nature to him.

One can imagine the novelty of working as one of a staff of forty workmen, each going

his hardest at a cigar-stump or an amber pipe. Yet such is quite a common sight in Holland.

On entering a Dutch home one is immediately supplied with a cigar. On leaving, one's cigar-case is filled. This is considered an act of necessary politeness.

In a Dutch town one cannot fail to be impressed by the number of tobacco-shops which abound everywhere. They are to be found almost at every turn, and in them all kinds of cigars are procurable. One writer has described the Dutch tobacco-shops as the finest in Europe.

Not a few attacks have been levelled at smokers from the pens of able men, and among the many objections to smoking which these men have presented is that tobacco dulls the intelligence. If this is the case, it has certainly failed to take effect upon the people of Holland, for it would be a difficult task to name a people possessed of an intelligence more clear and comprehensive.

There is a very interesting story current in Holland of an old gentleman, Mynheer van Klaes by name, who is said to have smoked one hundred grammes of tobacco per day. He was possessed of a large fortune, and had travelled extensively in all parts of the world. During his travels he had made a point of obtaining specimens of every kind of pipe which he came across. Thus he had a very valuable collection. On his return he built a beautiful palace near Rotterdam, in which he

deposited his pipes. This he opened as a public museum. He took great pleasure in displaying his vast collection to crowds of interested visitors, to each of whom he presented a catalogue bound in velvet, and a supply of tobacco and cigars.

Van Klaes died at the age of ninety-eight. A few days before his death he made out his last will and testament, which, because of its interest, I quote below.

'I desire that all smokers in the country shall be invited to my funeral, by all possible means—newspapers, private letters, circulars, and advertisements. Every smoker who accepts the invitation shall receive a gift of ten pounds of tobacco and two pipes, upon which shall be engraved my name, my arms, and the date of my death. The poor of the district who follow my body to the grave shall receive each man, each year, on the anniversary of my death, a large parcel of tobacco. To all those who attend the funeral, I make the condition, if they wish to

benefit by my will, that they shall smoke uninterruptedly throughout the duration of the ceremony. My body shall be enclosed in a case lined inside with the wood of my old Havana cigar-boxes. At the bottom of the case shall be deposited a box of French tobacco called "caporal," and a parcel of our old Dutch tobacco. At my side shall be laid my favourite pipe and a box of matches, because no one knows what may happen. When the coffin is deposited in the vault, every person shall pass by and cast upon it the ashes of his pipe.'

Mynheer van Klaes's last will and testament was carried out to the minutest point. People came to the funeral from the remotest parts of Holland. The funeral was a beautiful one. Wreathed in a huge veil of tobacco and cigar smoke, the procession of mourners wended its way to the last resting-place of its virtuous benefactor, whose name has become a household word in that good little country of Holland.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE NOISELESS TYPEWRITER.

FEW sounds are more nerve-racking than the clatter of typewriters, especially to those, including the typists, who have to listen to them all day. It is not surprising, therefore, that many efforts have been made to eliminate this drawback. Little success was attained until the problem was tackled by a Canadian, Mr W. P. Kidder, with the result that a machine has been evolved known as the 'Noiseless Typewriter.' This appliance is almost silent, only a faint clicking noise being audible. What makes the ordinary typewriter so noisy is the constant succession of hammer-blows given by the type upon the platen roller. When a key is pressed down the type and the sliding frame carrying it shoot out with constantly increasing speed until pulled up with a snap on the paper. In the noiseless typewriter this rate of motion is reversed, the sliding frame travelling fast to begin with, and more and more slowly during the remainder of the stroke, until it has almost stopped by the time the surface of the paper is reached. Just at this point a tiny weight, which, brought into action automatically, has been gathering momentum during the stroke, comes into play, and presses the type forward. It is impossible to explain the mechanism without the aid of a diagram; suffice it to say that the effect of its working is to produce a strong pressure and to ensure perfect registration on either one or more copies. One great advantage of the new machine is the practicability of using a steel platen roller, which cannot be dented, and will, therefore, never need renewal. The faces of the

type-bars, being protected from violent collision, will always produce a perfect impression; and, as the type-bar is locked at the printing-point, vertical or lateral displacement is impossible, and permanent type-bar alignment is assured. As the type is pulled up by its own mechanism at a certain point, adjustment is provided to allow for different thicknesses of paper or for making a number of carbon copies. In addition to the improvement in the type-operating mechanism, very careful attention has been given to all other points where rattling can take place, with the result of almost complete noiselessness, as already stated; while the machine embodies first-class workmanship with a high degree of finish.

COMMERCIAL FLYING IN BAD WEATHER.

In a lecture to the Royal Aeronautical Society on 'Flying over Clouds in Relation to Commercial Aeronautics,' Professor Melville Jones, Professor of Aeronautical Engineering at Cambridge University, made some interesting references to the difficulties of air navigation under certain conditions, and the instruments and organisation needed for overcoming them. According to the lecturer, flying over a practically continuous layer of cloud 'could become little inferior for commercial purposes to fine-weather flying,' given the help of a large organisation and special apparatus. He suggested (1) 'the continuous determination of the wind above the clouds, and of the height of the top of the latter;' (2) 'the laying down of wireless control-stations at and between termini on the main routes;' (3) 'the provision of the necessary instruments for cloud flying and "dead reckoning," and the

training of pilots in their use.' When flying in clouds it is extremely difficult for the pilot to know when he is turning, or, under certain conditions, whether he is even right way up. To aid him in such circumstances an instrument is used known as the 'static head-turn indicator,' which registers the wind-pressure at each wing-tip. If, for instance, the machine is turning to the left, the right wing will be moving faster through the air than the left, and the instrument indicates this state of things by the difference in air-pressure at the wing-tips. Another instrument mentioned by the professor is based on the tendency of the spinning-top to remain upright under any conditions, and to indicate if the machine is tilted; hence the pilot can restore his machine to a level position by following with his control-lever the movements of a prolonged axis of the top. Lastly, the professor mentioned the 'gyroscope turn-indicator,' which 'shows the attitude of the machine whatever the conditions, and has the advantage of simplicity and of being almost instantaneous in its action.'

A TIME-RECORDER FOR MOTORS.

We live in an age of mechanical checks upon human actions, and the scope of these devices is constantly extending. When entering a modern factory each employee inserts his numbered key in a time-recorder and gives it a turn, thus recording the exact minute at which he arrives. Similarly the night-watchman registers the times of his passing certain points where instruments are provided for this purpose. One of the latest inventions in this direction, known as the 'Servis Recorder,' has been devised for the purpose of showing at the end of each day the time spent, in running and standing respectively, by commercial road vehicles, such as trams, motor-buses, and motor-lorries. The principle upon which the instrument works is very simple. A clock forms, of course, an essential feature, as in all time-recording devices. Its function is to revolve a paper disc, which is marked similarly to the face of a twenty-four-hour clock, but with each hour divided into intervals of ten minutes. The only other moving part is a pendulum, of which the swing is confined within small limits by a rubber buffer. However smooth a road, or even a tramway track, the side-swaying of any vehicle is enough to set the pendulum swinging, the movement being rapid owing to the resiliency of the rubber buffer. Near the fulcrum of the pendulum is a brass stylus with a sapphire point which bears lightly upon the revolving paper disc. The disc is blue in colour, and is coated with a film of wax. When the vehicle is running the movement of the pendulum causes the stylus to cut away the wax and expose the blue surface of the paper in a broad line; but should the vehicle be standing still, the stylus merely makes a thin line as the disc is turned by the clock. A new paper disc is put on every

day, the old ones being kept as a record. The mechanism is contained in an aluminium case with a hinged lid, which has a rubber joint to keep out dust and moisture, and with a padlock to prevent unauthorised interference. As the recorder measures only $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches, a place is easily found for it on any vehicle; any spot will do where it can be secured by two bolts provided for this purpose. It will be noted that there is no pen to be filled with special ink, the only attention required being the changing of the paper discs and the winding of the clock. Although this instrument will show up a lazy driver most effectively, it was primarily designed to indicate where delays or stoppages occur for which other parties are responsible, and which it may be possible to eliminate or lessen by improved organisation.

AN IRONING-MACHINE FOR THE HOME.

Ironing still remains an irksome domestic duty in spite of the relief from the ancient flat-iron afforded by irons heated by means of gas or electricity. A machine which will do the work quickly and satisfactorily, therefore, should be welcome in every household where the washing is done at home. Side by side with the washing-machine described last month as having been shown at the Ideal Home Exhibition was the 'Thor' electric ironer, which will iron anything, from a lady's handkerchief to the largest sheet, in a fraction of the time it would take to go over it with a flat-iron. The essential parts of the appliance are a canvas-covered steel roller and a heated shoe which presses up against it. In front of the roller is fixed a flat board, upon which the articles are pushed in between the top of the roller and the shoe until they are gripped by the roller and carried round, to come out below, beautifully ironed. The roller is rotated by a little electric motor, and the shoe is heated by gas or gasoline. It may be noted that, the heat and the pressure being always the same, the results are much more uniform than with hand ironing. The makers claim that the machine can be operated for an hour at a total cost for electricity and gas of three-halfpence. This figure the writer had no means of checking, but he can vouch for the ironing being done quickly and well. Three sizes of machine are made, the rollers being 38, 44, and 50 inches in length respectively. The largest, therefore, will take a 100-inch sheet if doubled. A most advantageous feature of the apparatus is the mounting of the shoe in such a manner that it can be withdrawn from the roller to the extent of 4 inches to facilitate cleaning and polishing.

AN ARMoured UNPUNCTURABLE TIRE.

There is little doubt that the device described in this note would render motor-car tires unpuncturable, but for how long and whether at the cost of other serious drawbacks, such

as overheating or excessive wear, can be demonstrated only by experiments on the road, which do not appear to have been carried out up to the time of writing. The invention, which has been patented by Thomas C. McEwen, of Caldwell, New Jersey, consists of steel armour between the outer tire and the air-tube. This armour closely resembles the articulated plates to be found on the tails of lobsters and other crustaceans, a series of overlapping semi-cylindrical plates forming a steel ring between the tread of the tire and the inner tube. This ring is quite flexible, yielding to the travelling indentation of the tire as it makes contact with the ground. Each semi-cylindrical plate is about as long as it is wide, and one end (the larger) fits outside its neighbour on one side of it, while the other end (the smaller) fits inside its neighbour on the other side. The larger end contains a slot at each side; the smaller, a corresponding hook; and the plates are linked up by inserting the hooks of one plate into the slots in the next. In this way a complete tube of the requisite length is formed. A ring of holes is made round each side of the outer tire to admit air for the purpose of cooling the armour, dust and grit being excluded by fine metal gauze. Further ventilation is provided for by air-tubes through the felloe and the rim. If successful, this form of armouring for tires should cost very little, as the individual plates could be stamped by the million in automatic machines.

COMPILING CENSUS RETURNS BY ELECTRICITY.

That an enormous amount of work is involved in the taking of a census and the after manipulation of the figures will be easily realised by all, and it is only natural that mechanical appliances should have been devised to expedite the tabulation and classification of the results. So early as 1890 machines were brought into use for the United States census of that year, whereby a saving was effected of nine-tenths of the time taken to carry out the work by hand and two-thirds of the cost. 'Profiteers having secured control of these valuable machines,' says the *Scientific American*, 'the Director of the Census employed experts to invent electrical machinery for the work,' with the result that half-a-million dollars were saved at the next census. Since then various improvements have been made, and the machines employed for the census of 1920 are wonderfully efficient. The particulars, as received on the census forms, are transferred to cards, the sex, age, race, and other items being correctly indicated by punching holes in certain spaces. This work must, of course, be controlled by hand, but the actual punching is done by machines, an army of clerks being able to deal with four million cards a day. The punched cards are fed automatically to the tabulating-machines, each of which is capable of

recording and enumerating 24,000 cards an hour. A blunt needle passes through the punched holes and makes electrical contact in a cup of mercury, thus closing the circuit and operating the recording mechanism. These machines add up and print the totals for the various towns, counties, and states, and each card is passed through six times to tabulate the different particulars. In addition to the tabulating-machines, which stop when an insufficiently punched card is encountered, there are others which sort the cards into any number of groups up to twelve, according to the facts indicated by the punched holes. Each of these machines is capable of sorting cards at the rate of 320 a minute, and rejects those showing impossible combinations.

ALARM-BELLS RUNG BY WIRELESS.

Wireless telegraphy has proved a veritable godsend to vessels in distress, which are able to notify ships within range of their urgent need of assistance. Until the advent of apparatus recently devised by the Marconi Company, however, it was necessary that an operator in each ship—if all such signals were to be detected—should listen continuously by means of the usual headpiece. The new transmitting device is capable of ringing alarm-bells in ships within range, whereby attention is at once attracted, whether an operator is listening or not. At a demonstration of the apparatus at the Marconi Works, Chelmsford, bells were rung, flashlights were lit, and a charge of gunpowder was exploded by a transmitter at Shelford near Cambridge, thirty miles distant. When vessels are fitted with the apparatus, the pressing of a key will cause alarm-bells to ring in all ships so equipped within an eighty-mile range of the transmitter, a special emergency signal being sent out to which only the special receivers will respond.

BOSUN-BIRD ISLAND.

A correspondent sends us from Ascension the following description of a visit to Bosun-Bird Island, a tiny, remote portion of the British Empire, seldom trodden by the foot of man: 'On a cloudless morning we left the pierhead by steam-pinnace for Bosun-Bird Island, which lies some five hundred yards to the north-east of the main island of Ascension. Shortly after our getting under way lines were cast astern with lures attached, for we hoped to catch enough fish for luncheon on the outward journey. The coast-line is quite interesting, and, though devoid of vegetation, is much varied in colour, due to the different kinds of volcanic strata and crystals thrown up when the island was in eruption. Numerous sea-caves are to be seen, and blow-holes through which the sea is forced up by air-pressure to a great height, with a sound like the blowing of gigantic whales. In one case sand alone is blown up into the air, and a miniature mountain of sand is piled behind the entrance of

the blow-hole. Rounding North-East Bay, we ran into a shoal of cavally. All lines were immediately taut, and several large fish were hauled on board, and despatched with a belaying-pin. We were now followed by a school of porpoise, and a huge shark showed his dorsal fin at intervals as he followed in our wake. Many more fish were caught before we ran into smooth water between the two islands and cast anchor. The sky overhead was now almost obliterated by bird-life. Myriads rose from Bosun-Bird Island, and the air was deafening with their cries. Bosun-birds floated high overhead, their two long tail-feathers giving them the appearance of minute aeroplanes as they hovered in the air. Three of us now left in a dinghy to explore the island. The landing was somewhat perilous, as the rocks are overhanging, and we were forced to climb up an old rope of doubtful calibre tied to the cliffs some years ago by kindred spirits. The climb to the top of the island (five hundred feet high), though not difficult, had to be carefully done, as we met with many loose boulders, and were constantly pecked at by sea-birds nesting in holes in the sides of the cliffs. Reaching the top of the island, which is practically flat, we were rewarded with a wonderful sight. The surface was inches deep in guano; innumerable birds were nesting on eggs or feeding their young; and the ground was strewn with the remains of flying-fish, which seem to be the chief diet of the feathery multitude. Frigate-birds with blood-red pouches beneath their bills, gannets, boobies, noddies white and black, predominated. The bosun-birds were found nesting under small rocks in holes. Their eggs are enormous for such a small bird to lay, and are chocolate-coloured. We collected some eggs for specimens, and eventually descended in safety, with the minor casualties of a few broken eggs. Boarding the pinnace again, we found the seamen had caught numerous large cod and conger-eels. The fragrant smell of fried fish quickened our appetites, and we sat down to an excellent lunch, washed down with glorious beer. The return journey was somewhat rough, and a goodly number of us suffered in consequence. However, once again on *terra firma* and all was well, a unanimous vote being passed that we had had an excellent day, spent away from the monotonous routine of the island-warship *Ascension*.

FIREPROOF PAINT.

The war has involved the destruction of so large a part of the world's wealth that it is specially incumbent upon the present generation to do all in its power to prevent further destruction. Apart from the devastating effects of war, perhaps the most powerful destroying agent of material wealth is fire, and anything, therefore, which assists in giving immunity against this dread scourge is to be heartily welcomed. There

has recently been placed on the market a form of paint, two coats of which applied to woodwork render it, for all practical purposes, non-inflammable. It can be had ready for use in a variety of colours, and admits of the application of varnish or enamel as a final coat without lessening in any way its fire-resisting qualities. The favourable impression made by our own experiments is confirmed by the offer of at least one insurance company to make a substantial reduction in its fire insurance premiums where wooden buildings are protected by this paint, by an official test carried out by the Technical Department of the Air Board, and by the recommendation of the consulting engineers to the promoters of the Ideal Home Exhibition that all exhibitors should be asked to use this material wherever possible, as it afforded a substantial measure of protection against fire.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

SPRING-TIME.

AMBER and gold for the early year,
Jonquils aglow in their gayest gear,
Primroses shyly showing—
Yellowbreasts stooping to hear the sound
Of the Spring awake in the pulsing ground,
And trumpet daffodils blowing.

Dainty violets nodding their heads
At friendly neighbours in garden-beds,
And tulips bowing to greet them—
Mimosa too, with her honied tips,
Showering kisses from laughing lips,
And lilies crowding to meet them.

Flowers in plenty for you and me,
Buds a-throb on the apple-tree,
And purple hyacinths showing;
Bluebells weighted with glistening dew,
Is it their chiming I'm list'ning to?
Or trumpet daffodils blowing?

Spring of the year, what a wealth you give!
Oh, surely this is the time to live
While all that is good is growing—
And the time to rest in the quiet ground
Is when the bluebells are chiming round,
And trumpet daffodils blowing.

NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MILLE BOMBES!

THE STORY OF PÈRE PROSPER.

By WALTER SHAW SPARROW.

CHAPTER I.—IN THE BRUSSELS ACADEMY.

WHEN the evening classes broke up, students thronged excitedly to their quadrangle and formed a double line into La Rue du Midi. Their talk was loud, and frequently the word *Anglais*, with an offensive epithet before it, sounded out from their shrill noise.

They were aflame because of a fight in class. The only Englishman in their midst, Wilfrid Crowley, a lad of nineteen, had come to blows with red-haired André Fossé, a fop of six-and-twenty, who kept his long beard odious with patchouli, and who took pride in himself, also, as a sleek ironist. Fossé and Crowley sat side by side in the Figure Antique, and their quarrel arose out of Paardeberg, concerning which the world's newspapers were saying a great deal, with help from many shrieking headlines. Continental sympathy had chosen the Boer side, and in Belgium public opinion was particularly hot and strong, as the South African Dutch were regarded as kinsmen by the Flemings. Crowley understood this feeling, but Fossé went much too far, putting insult after insult into his remarks on British policy.

A fight in class was a breach of discipline hitherto unknown, and this one began so rapidly that students looked on in amazement till Fossé, knocked out by a straight left, lay huddled below a plaster figure of the Medici Venus. Then a rattle of anger spread from class to class. Professors came and held an inquiry; they blamed both combatants in order to arrive at peace by a short cut; but good-tempered justice had no effect. Anger continued in whispers while work-time lasted. Afterwards in the quad an ugly ragging mood was astir.

Crowley stopped for a brief talk with his professor, who spoke always in undertones, as though life and art were deathbeds.

'Artistic retaliation would have been better, believe me,' the professor said confidentially. 'You should have beaten Fossé in the next examination.'

'I'll have a shot at that also, monsieur, if you don't mind.'

The professor went away smiling. Crowley put on his overcoat, and was going out to face

the music, when the life-class door opened, and a huge man entered the 'antique.' He wore only a short shirt, but carried in his arms the rest of his clothes. It was Prosper, a giant among artists' models.

Coming up to Crowley, the huge new-comer said, 'M'sieu, you need a partner in a row against a crowd. Very well. My wife was English. She—she is dead. I'm on your side, then, of course. See? *Mille bombes!*'

Prosper had lost one eye in a brawl, but the other was both keen and kind, though drink had sullied the whole face with deep crow's-feet and red blotches. The brown hair, a little grayed, was curly and well brushed; and the model never neglected his powerful body. After drink came dumb-bells and leg exercises.

'Thanks, Prosper. The fellows stand up for their own man,' said Crowley; 'but they won't do much. Not they.'

Prosper answered as an expert. 'M'sieu, a hooting crowd jostles, then it bashes in hats, and pretty soon it's a riot. *Don't I know?* A crowd has no sense. It's like a fever. *Mille bombes!* I've been a beast in a crowd, hitting men not half my size, and feeling like some one else. I stand by you!'

Then Prosper swore at his trousers because he had thrust his right foot into the left leg. Though excited, he dressed without another hitch, and looked a formidable figure in his long blue smock, a tall Flemish cap, and clattering sabots.

'I'll elbow the fellows all right,' he said, and strode off, twisting his long moustache and swaggering.

Crowley was amused till he passed into the quadrangle to be received with a hullabaloo of jeers, and cries of '*Vivent les Boërs!*'

Prosper walked ponderously into the double, agitated line, spreading out his arms. Not a word was spoken by the two allies, but Prosper's actions told the crowd that he had chosen his partner. A man six feet four in height and immensely muscular has an influence that people in a crowd don't wish to feel. The boys moved away, and soon they were nearly silent.

Prosper looked over his shoulder, saying, '*Mille bombes!* I'm like a mounted gendarme clearing a race-course.'

When they reached the Rue du Midi, Crowley shook the model's hand. 'We're going to be friends after this,' he said. 'Where do you live?'

'Rue du Paradis, No. 10, under the slates, m'sieu. Not a palace to be found in it—not one! *Mille bombes!*'

CHAPTER II.—PROSPER FINDS HIS DESTINY.

IN the room below Prosper's a little widow lived with her daughter, a very pretty child eight years old. Madame Caron was consumptive, but, with that light-hearted courage which often accompanies phthisis, she talked happily about the future, while earning her bread as a glove-maker. Now and then Prosper met her on the stairs, and was moved so much by the look of death in her face and figure that he always offered to carry her parcels or to do her shopping. She thanked him, but went on her way with smiling independence. Though she never snubbed the big man, she never stopped to talk, for Prosper's reputation in the house was that of a brawler who earned a few francs daily by showing his naked body to artists and students.

Prosper himself was proud of his work, as no other model could sit as he did for the giants in history and in fables. As for his thirst, he gratified it like Falstaff, untroubled by a prick of conscience. For these reasons he explained the widow's polite reserve by supposing that his manner was much too blundering. He remembered that when his wife lay dead he had put his big hand gently on her forehead—and felt monstrous. 'I'm too coarse,' he thought. But he eased his feelings by tying small bunches of flowers to Madame Caron's door-handle, or leaving two or three oranges on the door-mat; and once he placed there a large cabbage. After these exploits he took off his sabots and tiptoed upstairs, a great shyness at work in his immense body. When he reached the landing outside his own room, he screwed his face into hideous grimaces while stretching himself; and then, relieved, he muttered sometimes to himself, 'I could put her in my pocket, and she's going to die. *Mille bombes!* Why doesn't she let me fetch and carry for her?'

Prosper gave no thought to the pretty little girl, Mathilde, who for her age was very small and frail, and who, when her mother was at work, stayed with Madame Ricker, a neighbour downstairs. He was afraid of children. 'I don't know my strength,' he said, 'and if I nursed 'em I might crush 'em. I've dared to kiss two or three—yes, two or three, *mille bombes!*—and they howled with fear. I hurt 'em.'

At the beginning of 1900 Madame Caron was

caught in a storm, and her cough afterwards grew rapidly worse. Shortly after Paardeberg, at the beginning of March, the brief seasons of her perishable life drew near their end.

Prosper put milk and cream outside the door, and sometimes a franc wrapped in paper. The widow, wondering who sent these gifts, made inquiries, and a neighbour asked Prosper if he knew. 'Do I know?' he said. 'Have you no brain? The good old Abbé Antoine does these things. Who else? But—don't tell him that you know. No more gifts if you do. *Mille bombes!* He's as tricky as a thief when he's out to do good.'

One night early in April Prosper went to bed after drinking too much faro. How long he lay asleep in his clothes he had no idea; but all at once he was wide awake, listening to a cry in the room below. It was a child that cried, and the tone was full of fear. Some minutes passed, and, as the cry continued, Prosper rolled off the bed, lit a candle, and went downstairs. There was so much terror in the child's voice that he opened the door at once, and holding the candle at arm's length before him, peered into a dark room. At first he could see only the candle's rays, but soon a long, bare room became visible. In one corner was a bed, on which Mathilde was crouching. Between her screams she repeated the same words over and over again, and with her hand struck at something: 'Mother, mother! Speak!'

Prosper went rapidly to the bedside. Madame Caron was dead, and Mathilde, terrified by the cold body, was striking her mother's face.

Prosper was overcome. A tremendous pity gripped his heart. He felt so much that he could not think. With a trembling hand he put the candle on a small table, and bent over the child. He tried to speak, but his mouth was parched and something rasped in his throat. Even in this condition he remembered his great strength, and gathered Mathilde into his arms with a gentleness as touching as it was awkward. After a while the heart-rending cries stopped, and Mathilde, weeping less and less, clung to her new friend.

'Tell mother to speak,' she said all at once.

Prosper knew not what to say, and tried to ease his trouble by murmuring his habitual faith in a thousand bombshells. At last he said, 'They tell me, *fillette*, there's a better world than this—somewhere. In the better world no one talks, so it's pretty quiet there. Well, your mother's gone to the better world.'

'But mother's in bed,' Mathilde whispered. 'I see her.' She looked up into Prosper's face, and her tear-filled eyes were helpless and pleading.

The big man turned his head away. What answer was he to give? '*Mille bombes!*' he muttered. 'Why didn't I learn something when I tried to be at school?'

At this moment a footstep was heard on the stairs, and soon a short, stout woman entered

the room. She wore a jacket over her nightgown, and her eyes were moist with sleep. It was Madame Ricker. 'What are you doing here, Prosper?' she asked. Prosper looked at the bed, and Madame Ricker went to the bedside. 'I'm too late,' she said. 'Ah, I promised to be with her at the last, but I slept too long.' With the sheet she covered the dead face.

Prosper told his story, speaking in hushed undertones, and Madame Ricker listened with astonishment. Hitherto she had regarded him as a boor without heart.

'*Sapristi*, man! you've been quite good and reasonable,' she said; 'but now you'll give the little girl to me, of course.'

Prosper's blind eye twitched, a deep-red flush as of shame passed over his face, and in a voice unlike his own he declared that he and Mathilde were going to live together. 'I found her, and I keep her!' he stammered, becoming redder.

Madame Ricker stared at him, completely dumbfounded. If a tiger had asked for a cup of milk she might have looked as awe-struck.

'To be sure, I've four children of my own,' she said at last; 'but still, after all, you're a giant all thumbs. What can you do for Mathilde?'

Prosper made no answer. He left the room and went upstairs with the child in his arms clinging to his neck.

CHAPTER III.—ART AND LIFE.

ON a Monday morning, about a month later, Prosper sat for the painting school at the Academy, and was greatly honoured because the director himself selected the pose. Prosper was tired of Samson and bored by Hercules; he sighed for new and uncommon experience; and by good luck the director chose for him the character of a prehistoric warrior dressed partly in skins and carrying a mighty club. As soon as Prosper knew the meaning of the word prehistoric, his vanity swelled. 'M'sieu,' he said, 'in a part with plenty of blood in it, I think I feel quite well.'

Prosper being posed, the studio doors were thrown open, and one by one students entered. Each carried with difficulty a big canvas for a life-size study. The director gave them a familiar lecture on Prosper's muscles, and then told them, as usual, to be very serious. As he went towards his own studio, which adjoined the painting school, he stopped to speak to Crowley. 'Remember,' he said, 'that English students have plenty of sentiment—sometimes too much. What they need is command over their materials. Courage, then!'

No sooner had the director entered his studio than many students, taking advantage of the ease with which painters can talk and work simultaneously, began to chaff one another and to fire jokes at 'Vieux Mille Bombes.'

'The beauty-blotches on Prosper's cheeks are

going,' said one student. 'Has he a right to rob us of the celebrated notes of colour?'

'Has he been in jail for a few weeks?' another suggested. 'Jail means regular hours and no drink.'

'Leave Prosper alone!' cried Bertrand, a dark and joyous Frenchman. 'Why shouldn't he look as fresh as a rose? He gives me an idea for a Salon shocker. If I paint him as a medieval saint simmering in a cauldron of oil, what can stop me from making a sensation and a name?'

Then Colin, first man of the school, dapper and small and pale, put in his word. 'We live in a magic air of science,' he declared, waving his charcoal. 'So I give my great mind to causes and effects. Bertrand speaks of a possible effect of Prosper's reformation, while I, a true child of science, put my finger on the causes. Yesterday, while walking piously with my thoughts beyond Uccle, I came upon the origin of Prosper's idyllic transformation. Why does he look heavenly? Guess!'

Prosper flushed scarlet, and lost his pose. Every one noticed his agitation. 'Is he going to be married again?' a voice asked.

'Much worse,' Colin answered dolefully. 'Prosper has forgotten his old customs, and forsaken his convivial and congenial thirst, in order to become a father at second hand! A small girl, prettier than a Greuze, has been adopted, and she rules over him. Yesterday I spied upon them from behind some bushes, overhearing their talk. Yesterday I watched the tyrannous small girl. She pelted that big man with grass and flowers! And what did the big man do? Forgot his native character and collapsed into submissive gentleness! To-day, then, I'm unable to work. My scientific mind is upset by miracles.'

The effect of this burlesque story was great and instantaneous. Students surrounded the model's platform, bowing to him with mock reverence, and asking him to explain how he washed and dressed the child and put her to bed. Crowley stood aside and signalled his sympathy. But Prosper was hurt; below his kindness there was a feeling of shame; he wished the change in his life to be unknown; and now he was the butt of high spirits in a crowd of boys. Soon it was evident that Prosper would counter-attack. He put down the club, and his face became so dark with passion that Crowley intervened. Instantly the mood of the class moved from good-tempered ridicule to ill-humour.

'What have you to do with it, Englishman?' a shrill voice cried out.

'Yes,' said another voice, 'Crowley and Prosper are as thick as thieves. We must take 'em down a peg or two.'

'Must we be as Boers?' Colin asked.

While Colin spoke the model jumped from his platform and charged into his tormentors,

overthrowing several. Luckily the director heard the noise and entered in the nick of time.

'What's the meaning of this hubbub?' he asked. 'Silence!' In a few seconds every one was quiet. 'I need an explanation,' the director continued.

Prosper explained. In his anger all the truth came out, confused but sincere. When he spoke of Madame Caron lying dead in the dark, and the terrified little child striking the dead face while asking her mother to speak, every one was greatly touched. 'M'sieu,' the model ended, 'am I really to blame? Must I be mocked by everybody? Isn't the child helpless? *Mille bombes!* Why should I give her up?'

Shamefaced, the students returned to their easels.

'Well, Prosper, she will do you a great deal of good,' the director answered, nodding and smiling. 'The mocking is over; it won't be renewed. You have many friends now.'

CHAPTER IV.—IN THE RUE DU PARADIS.

IT was Crowley's custom to take a sprint before breakfast, when the boulevards were almost empty. At six o'clock next morning he began his run, and suddenly the idea of visiting Prosper came to him. In less than half-an-hour he reached the Rue du Paradis. Already Madame Ricker was at work, brushing dust over her doorstep.

'Is Prosper in, madame?' he asked.

'Yes. M'sieu Prosper lives on the top floor,' she answered, putting an emphasis of respect on the word 'M'sieu.'

'Madame, I see, likes the big man? So do I.'

'Now that he has found himself, he is worth liking,' the woman said. 'Before then I hated him, and kept my children around my skirts.'

Crowley smiled. 'He did many kind things before he found the small girl. Now that we know about these things we say that Prosper has found himself.'

'True. But if we praise him too much, m'sieu, he may ask me to lower his rent, and I've many mouths to fill. A mother of the poor must be prudent.'

Crowley went upstairs. On arriving at the second floor, he heard above him a very diligent snoring which seemed to rumble from the staircase itself. The sleeper's throat was more discordant than a German band at Ostend. There was a small landing on the top floor, and there Prosper lay asleep, fully dressed, with his head on a rolled-up sack. After a moment's hesitation Crowley touched him several times.

Prosper awoke slowly, yawning and stretching. 'Yes, yes, Mathilde. So it's time to work?' He sat up, showing in gruff yawns and sighs and by his movements that he was extremely stiff. '*Fillette*,' he went on, 'I'm fifty; I'm getting old. . . . *Mille bombes!* It's M'sieu Crowley!'

'Yes, Prosper; and, by the way, if you could

hear yourself snore you'd know something about *mille bombes*.'

There was a silence in which Prosper looked very shamefaced, and even guilty. 'Went to sleep drunk, I did,' he explained.

'Shall I ask Mathilde?'

In an instant Prosper was on his feet. 'Are you going to set her against me?' he asked with some anger.

'Rubbish, Prosper! We're friends. I want to know if you and the child can come with me into the country. There's a competition sketch to be done—"Springtime in an Orchard." Are you free?'

'To-morrow I shall be free, m'sieu.'

Next day the competition sketch was made, and Crowley heard many things. Mathilde had a cough, and her pretty flushed cheeks were wasted. The doctor feared that she would soon be consumptive if she lived in the lifeless air of a narrow street. Could Prosper take her to the country?

'You see, m'sieu, it's easy to move if one has money, but my few savings went in drink. Still, the Abbé Antoine is going to help me. He knows several priests in my part of the world—the Ardennes.'

'What do you wish to do?' Crowley asked.

'Rent some patches of land and grow vegetables and keep fowls and a pig—somewhere in the valley of the river Semois. Many trees are felled in that district, and I shall get good odd jobs.'

Prosper smiled, but there was no amusement in his face. His eyes followed Mathilde, who was picking field-flowers, with sunlight gleaming on her pale and curly gold hair. 'Isn't she born for the country?' he asked. 'All youngsters are, it seems to me. Keeping 'em in streets! *Mille bombes!* As well keep grasshoppers in a thimble!'

They watched the child at play. Presently Crowley said, 'Does she talk much? She plays incessantly, but how many words has she spoken? Perhaps a dozen. Shyness?'

'Too natural to be shy, m'sieu. It's with her eyes that she talks and questions—more than too much for me. When I tell her that bread-and-milk is better for her than bread-and-treacle, her big blue eyes ask why. Well, m'sieu, what's a man to say?'

Prosper blew out his cheeks, rubbed his forehead, and rumbled his hair. 'Doctor says she puts her little bit of strength into play, and will chatter fast enough with her tongue when her health's better. But I don't know. M'sieu, I've seen a small boy who took to music as natural-like as he did to food, not knowin' why, except that he wanted it. Well, Mathilde asks questions with her eyes not knowin' why, and listens while I and others trip ourselves up in words. Listens and remembers, mind. It makes me afraid and shamed, m'sieu; for what

do I know about anything? If I could put her in my cap and wear her on my head I might get a bit of sense, though I'm not sharp. I try to read—in a way—but'—

Prosper pulled a wry face over his attempt at reading. Crowley smiled at the simple, eager, kindly giant.

'You'll go to the Ardennes all right, Prosper. Leave it to me. I'll raise a subscription, with the director heading the list. You'll see! It's a famous place for sketching, the Ardennes—good all the year through. Will you try to keep a spare room in your cottage? If you do, you'll see me now and then for a week.'

'Isn't this a plot, m'sieu?' asked Prosper, his face glowing with pleasure.

'It's a plan—one easy to handle.'

And Crowley was right. In a few weeks two thousand francs had been subscribed; and Abbé Antoine, with help from a friend, rented four acres of good land in the Semois valley. A small cottage roofed with pantiles, a fowl-house, and a pigsty became Prosper's; and a neighbouring cottar's wife would keep an eye on Mathilde, and be useful in other ways. Two miles off in a village was a little school.

At the beginning of July, in time for the harvest season, Prosper and Mathilde took train from Brussels. Twenty or thirty students gave them a hearty send-off, Crowley calling for three cheers, and the Belgian students doing their best.

(Continued on page 366.)

A SUMMER CAMP ON A HEBRIDEAN ISLAND.

By SETON GORDON, F.Z.S.

LYING to the westward of the island of Mull there stands a group of small grassy islands. Now quite deserted and uninhabited, they harbour, summer and winter, a great variety of bird-life. From October to April numbers of barnacle-geese frequent their slopes, feeding on the grass, which here is green almost the whole year round; and with the departure of the geese for their breeding-haunts on the steep cliff-faces of Spitzbergen, many fresh birds reach the islands, coming in from the vast spaces of the ocean in order to rear their young, unmolested and undisturbed.

It was early in July that a companion and I sailed out from the mainland of Mull and pitched our tent on the largest of the islands, perhaps a mile and a half in length and half a mile across at its broadest point. After a long spell of rough, unsettled weather, not the faintest of breezes ruffled the surface of the Atlantic, and every island was distinct. Having landed on the island, we set about choosing a good camping-ground, and at length decided on a grassy strip at the extreme northern end of the island. The choice of a camping-site was somewhat limited, as a number of bullocks grazed on the island, and a spot had to be chosen which these destructive animals could not approach. Our equipment consisted of two small alpine tents, one to sleep in, the other to store our provisions and to use for our meals during bad weather. Our mainstay in the food line was oatmeal, which was supplemented by such accessories as eggs, bacon, and a supply of kippers. On opening the package containing the last mentioned we experienced somewhat of a blow, for there were only half the number which we had expected to find, and which we had paid for.

Fortunately for us, a spell of magnificent weather set in, commencing with the day of

our arrival, and our time was fully occupied in studying and photographing the many sea-birds with which the island was peopled.

From our tent an unsurpassed view extended in every direction. In the evenings, after we had turned in, we saw the red afterglow in the northern sky, showing up the great hills of the island of Rum, black as night against the luminous clouds. Bearing slightly more to the east, there rose from the twilight the serrated peaks of the Coolin Hills on the isle of Skye. Throughout the night, or, rather, hours of twilight—for in latitude fifty-six degrees north there is no darkness during the season of summer—the dull red glow never left the northern horizon, but gradually travelled from north-west to north-east. It was at this point that the sun first showed itself, casting its reflection on the quiet waters ere, gathering strength, it rose high in the heavens to shed its warm rays on land and sea. Many hills were visible from our island, but none was so conspicuous or magnificent in its varying moods as Ben More, in the island of Mull. Rising straight from the Atlantic waters, Ben More attracted to itself many clouds, so that even when the sun shone warmly and all other hills were clear, a filmy white cloud, conforming in shape to the conical peak of the mountain, shrouded the summit of the Ben. Then away to the west there lay on the horizon the fertile island of Tiree, so plain-like that its houses stood revealed against the horizon. North of Tiree stretched rugged and heather-clad Coll, and away behind it again were the peaks of the distant Outer Hebrides—of Barra and South Uist, faintly outlined against the sky.

From the centre of our island there rose a small hill perhaps 400 feet above sea-level. From this hill, after sunset, one by one the distant

lighthouses could be seen throwing their beams far across the ocean. On the south-west horizon the flashes from Dubh Hirteach and, a little to the west, Skerryvore stabbed the gathering twilight. Then, turning east, one saw the steady glow of the lighthouse on Ardnamurchan, the most westerly promontory of the Scottish mainland; while to the northward were the flashes of Heiskeir Light.

Few—very few—steamers passed by, though from time to time a herring-drifter, working from Mallaig perhaps, or from Oban, passed our island at sunset, making for the fishing-grounds. On clear days we could make out through the glass small sailing-boats working at the lobster-fishing round the island of Mull, and when the wind was contrary these boats, on one of their tacks, approached almost to within hailing-distance.

Amongst the great bird population of the island the puffins in number were easily supreme. These quaint birds were to be numbered literally in their thousands, and were active at all hours of the day and the night. A number of puffins were nesting close to our tent, which at first they viewed with intense suspicion. One or two individuals, which had their young concealed among the rocks perhaps thirty yards from our camp, used to arrive from their fishing-grounds in the early hours of the morning, their bills packed with numbers of small fry.

Time after time these birds would fly round, making as though to enter their holes, but at the last moment would be seized with panic, and would hurriedly resume their flight, circling well out to sea and going through the same performance about half-a-minute later. Ultimately one of the puffins seemed to think that there was a limit to this sort of thing, and summoning up all its courage, alighted at the entrance to the nesting-hole among the boulders, and, after a second's quaint survey of the scene, scrambled in undignified and ludicrous haste to the safety of the rocks. At certain times hundreds of these birds would disport themselves in the sea just off our camping-ground, and when they were disturbed the noise of many feet and wings splashing through the water was quite surprisingly loud. There was one rock where puffins used to congregate at all hours of the day and apparently hold consultations of considerable importance. When they were thus engaged one could approach, by careful stalking, to within a very few feet of the birds. I remember on one occasion a puffin actually going to sleep with head tucked away among its feathers while I was kneeling with my camera in position not more than three feet distant.

The most favoured nesting-sites of the puffins were holes which they excavated in the soft peaty earth, though sometimes they appropriated rabbit-burrows, evicting the rightful owners. On one occasion a rabbit which we had dis-

turbed sought safety in a burrow where a mother-puffin was brooding her solitary chick. By peering into the mouth of the burrow we could see the puffin pecking angrily at the rabbit with her powerful parrot-like bill, until the animal, thoroughly scared, had to bolt to fresh and safer quarters. Few enemies had the puffin, but one there was that made a habit of waiting over the sea near the island for these birds as they winged their way rapidly homewards with a supply of sand-eels for their young. Swift of wing was this enemy, the Arctic skua, so that the puffin singled out for pursuit was rapidly overtaken, and to save his hard-earned catch was obliged to hurl himself to the sea, where he disappeared beneath the waves. The skua, nonplussed, and unable to follow, had perforce to search for another victim, when the same tactics were repeated. I do not think that the skuas can have found the game of puffin-chasing very profitable!

In the vicinity of our camp two pairs of oyster-catchers had their broods, and never became used to our presence, whistling shrilly and repeatedly in great alarm when either of us emerged from our tent. A striking contrast to their noisy fussiness was the behaviour of a ringed plover who brooded her four eggs quite contentedly on the shingle near, and ultimately hatched off her brood on the day on which we left the island. As showing the vitality of an unborn chick, I may mention the case of a pair of rock-pipits who had their nest only ten yards or so from our camp. For some days we had noticed the birds fluttering round and calling anxiously, but were at a loss to know where their nest could be situated, till one day the behaviour of one of the birds afforded a clue, and the nest was quickly discovered. It contained five eggs, absolutely cold to the touch, and we felt convinced that they could never hatch out, more especially as the parent bird appeared unable to summon up sufficient courage to brood on them when we were in or near to the tent. What, then, was our astonishment to find, two days later, a clutch of healthy chicks in the nest!

Our camping-site was an ideal one—save for one little thing. Less than a hundred yards away was a narrow channel among the rocks where previous storms had washed up a mass of seaweed of the *Laminaria* order. This weed was now in process of decay, so that when the wind blew from the semi-liquid mass across to our tent the aroma, though quite harmless and even healthy, could not, by the greatest stretch of imagination, be called a pleasant one. Fortunately for us, the wind never held in the unwelcome direction for long, though while it lasted conditions were decidedly uncomfortable.

Almost joined on to our island—at low spring-tides one could wade the channel—was a

long rock, with a grassy summit on which sheep grazed. Here of an evening seals resorted, and for hours on end their barking cry was carried across the channel. Their call was extraordinarily like the bark of a dog, so much so that on one occasion we were almost tempted to believe that a dog had indeed in some manner become stranded on the rock, and was barking for help in a mournful key.

At various points of the island were colonies of gulls. In one place a colony of lesser black-backs nested in harmony with herring gulls; while at the extreme end of the island, on a grassy plateau, there nested in solitary state a few pairs of that magnificent flier, the greater black-back. These birds loved soaring, in the teeth of a stiff breeze, above the highest point of the island, where, at a height of 390 feet above sea-level, I found a down-clad youngster of the species. The stirks apparently did a good deal of damage to all the gulls' nests by trampling upon them, for in deserted nests we found many half-crushed eggs, and we noticed that the gulls appeared uneasy when the cattle moved their way. No ravens inhabited the island, but where the cliff dipped sheer into the sea a pair of buzzards had their nest, containing two well-feathered young, the parent birds when disturbed sailing out to sea, with, perhaps, an irate greater black-back in hot pursuit. On ledges of the cliffs, white with much guano, hundreds of guillemots tended their brightly and diversely coloured eggs or solitary chicks; while from the more sheltered crannies razorbills peered forth inquiringly with intelligent expression. A pair of gray crows spent their time in purloining the eggs of the kittiwakes, which nested in the rocks in large numbers. These eggs they carried to a well, where they sucked them carefully,

washed down with draughts of spring water. At this well I counted over ninety eggs of various sea-birds, mostly kittiwakes, and all had probably been carried there by one pair of hoodies.

After more than a week of ideal weather, a falling glass, with wind from the south-west, gave warning of a change, and now followed a succession of unpleasant days, with misty rain, and a heavy swell on the sea. The day on which we had intended leaving the island came round, and a gale from the north-west set up a rough and confused sea, so that the small fishing-boat which was due to relieve us was unable to leave her harbour. This was on a Saturday, and it was not until the afternoon of the Tuesday following that, in response to a fire of dried seaweed lighted as a distress-signal, we saw the extremely welcome small white sail making for the island. By this time our stock of provisions was alarmingly low, and we had decided, failing relief, to sample the following day some of the young birds on the island, although reluctant to do this excepting as a last resource.

The relief boat had approached slowly to a position about half a mile from our island, when a thick white fog descended over the sea, and, although straining our eyes to their utmost, we gradually lost sight of the boat, picking her up again when she was only fifty yards or so from the landing-place. It was fortunate that this thick fog held off as long as it did, for the passage abounded in rocks, and I doubt whether under these conditions the fishermen would have risked the crossing, though as it was we soon got beyond the fog-bank, and regained the harbour on the mainland after a calm and uneventful passage.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE FEMININE TOUCH.

I.

IN a small South Kensington flat a young woman was seated before a mirror, adding to her beauty with those artifices which are supposed to lure the male to helpless capitulation. Two candles gave a shadowy, mysterious charm to the reflection—a quality somewhat lacking in the original—and it was impossible for its owner to look on the picture of pensive eyelashes, radiant eyes, and warm cheeks without a murmur of admiration. She smiled once to estimate the exact amount of teeth that should be shown; she leaned forward and looked yearningly, soulfully, into the brown eyes in the glass. . . . With a sigh of satisfaction she lit a cigarette from one of the candles, and leaning back,

watched the smoke passing across the face of the reflection.

'Hello, Elise!' said the beauty casually, as the door opened and Elise Durwent entered, dressed in the uniform of an ambulance-driver. 'You'll find the room standing on its head, but chuck those things anywhere.'

'Going out again?' asked the new-comer, stepping over several feminine garments that had been thrown on the floor.

'Just a dance up the street—in Jimmy Goodall's studio. Listen, old thing; do put on some water. I'm croaking for a cup of tea.'

Without any comment, Elise went into the adjoining room, used as a kitchen, while the voluptuary dabbed clouds of powder over her neck and shoulders. With a tired listlessness,

Elise returned and sank into a chair, from the back of which an underskirt was hanging disconsolately.

'You didn't do the breakfast-dishes, Marian.'

'Didn't I? Oh, well, they're not very dirty. Had a rotten day at the garage?'

'It was rather long.'

'You're a chump for doing it. Working for your country's all very well, but wait until after the war and see if the girl who's spoiled her hands has a chance with the men. Why don't you wangle leave like I do? You can pull old Huggin's leg any day in the week—and he likes it. All you have to do is to lean on his shoulder and say you won't give up—you simply *won't*. Aren't men a scream?'

'I suppose so,' said Elise after a pause.

'Who is your cavalier to-night?'

'Horry.'

'Horace Maynard?'

'Absolutely. You know him, don't you, Elise?'

'Yes. He was visiting at our place in the country when war broke out. When is he going back to France?'

'Monday.'

'He's been dancing pretty constant attendance, hasn't he?'

'*Ra-ther*. He says if I don't write him every day after he buzzes back, he'll stick his head over the parapet and spoil a Hun bullet.'

'Those things come easily to Horace.'

'Oh, do they? I notice he doesn't go to you to say them.'

'No,' said Elise with a smile, 'that is so. Think of the thrills I miss.'

'Now don't get sarcastic. If Horry wants to make a fuss over me, that's his business.'

'What about your husband at the front?'

'My husband and I understand each other perfectly,' said the girl, glancing critically at the picture of two parted, carmined lips in the mirror. 'He wouldn't want me to be lonely. He knows I have my boy friends, and he's not such a fool as to be jealous. You want to wake up, Elise—things have changed. Any woman who sticks at home and meets her darling hubby at night with half-a-dozen squalling kids and a pair of carpet slippers—no thanks! The war has shown that women are going to have just as much liberty as the men. We've taken it; and I tell you the men like us all the better for it.'

'You think that because every man you meet kisses you.'

'Elise!'

'Good heavens! Don't they?'

'Well, I never! Anyhow, what if they do? Is there any harm in it?'

Elise smiled and shook her head. 'None, my dear Marian,' she said. 'There is no possible harm in it. There's no harm in anything now. The old idea that a woman's purity and

modesty—— But what's the use of saying that to you? Of course you're right. Who wants to stay at home with a lot of little brats, if you can have a dozen men a week standing you dinners, and mauling you like a bargee, and'——

'Elise!'

'There's the water getting near the boil.' Elise rose with a strange little laugh and looked at a yellow silk stocking which dangled over the side of a wicker table. As if trying to solve a conundrum, she glanced from it to the shapely form of the young woman at her toilette. 'When the war's over,' she said ruminatingly, 'and our men find what kind of girls they married when they were on leave'——

'There you go again. For Heaven's sake, Elise, if you can't attract men yourself, don't nag a girl who does. You're positively sexless. The way you talk'——

'There's the water. When Horace comes I don't want to see him.'

'I guess he can live without it,' said the patriotic, leave-wangling war-worker with an angry glance at Elise as she disappeared into the kitchen. Catching a glimpse of the frown in the mirror, she checked it, and once more leaned towards the reflection as if she would kiss the alluring lips that beckoned coaxingly in the glass.

II.

Marian had gone, radiant, and exulting in her radiance; and Elise sat by the meagre fire trying to take interest in a novel. Although she had found it easy to be confident and self-assertive when the other girl was there, the solitariness of the flat and the silence of the street undermined her courage. The dragging minutes, the meaningless pages. . . . She wished that even Marian were there in all her complacent vulgarity.

Although she had drawn many people to her, the passing of the years had left Elise practically friendless. It was easy for her to attract with her gift of intense personality; but the very quality that attracted was the one that eventually repelled. The impossibility of forgetting herself, of losing herself in the intimacies of friendship, made her own personality a thing which was stifling her life. Since she was a child she had craved for understanding and sympathy, but nature and her upbringing had made it impossible for her to accept them when they were offered. Lacking the power of self-expression, and consequently self-forgetfulness, her own individuality oppressed her. It was like an iron mask which she could not remove, and which no one could penetrate.

Going to London soon after the outbreak of war, she had been taken on the strength of a motor-ambulance garage; and to be near her work she had leased a small flat in Park Walk, sharing it by turn with various companion drivers. Although her desire to be of service

was the prime reason of her action, it was with unconcealed joy that she had thrown off the restraints of home. Freedom of action, a respite from the petty gossip of her parents' set, had loomed up as the portals to a new life. The thought of sharing the discomforts and the privileges of patriotic work with young women who had broken the shackles of convention was a prospect that thrilled her.

To her amazement, she discovered that the feminine nature alters little with environment. It was true, her new companions had broken with all the previous conceptions of decorum, but they had used their newly found liberty to enslave themselves still further with the idea of man-conquest. Officers—callow, heroic, squint-eyed, supercilious, superb, of any and every allied country—officers were the quarry and they the hunters. To love or not to love? Their talks, their thoughts, their lives concerned little else. They fought for the attentions of men like starving sparrows for crumbs.

In such an environment, where she had hoped to lose the burden of persistent self, Elise found emancipation farther away than ever. The *abandon* of the others first created a reversion to prudery in her breast, and then developed a cynical indifference. The others treated her with friendly insouciance. Had she been ill, or had she met with an accident, there was probably not one who wouldn't have proved herself a 'ministering angel.' As it was, they largely ignored her, indulging the instinct of inhumanity which so often is woman's attitude towards woman.

So she sat alone, the Elise who had always been so resolute and independent, feeling very small and pathetic, yearning for far-off things—utterly lonesome, and a little inclined to cry.

The words of the book grew dim, and her thoughts drifted towards Austin Selwyn. He had been contemptible! A pacifist! His idealism was a pose to try to ennoble utter cowardice. At a time when men's blood ran high he had prated of brotherhood—and peace—and suggested that the infamous Hun had a soul! How she hated him! . . . And when she had finished with that thought her heart's yearning returned more cruelly than before.

That evening by the trout-stream when she had seen Dick hiding in the bush, Selwyn had caught her when she had almost swooned. He had gripped her arms with his hands, and, quivering with emotion, had lent his strength to her. At the memory the crimson of her cheeks deepened. They had been so close to each other. His burning eyes, his lips trembling with passion—what strange impulse in her heart had made her thrill with a heavenly exhilaration? For that instant while his hands had gripped her a glorious vista had appeared before her eyes—a world of dreams where the tyranny of self could not enter. For that one instant her

whole soul had leaped in response to his strong tenderness.

She tried to dismiss the recollection as an admission of cowardice engendered of the night's mood. But she could not do away with the memories which lingered obstinately. Not since the days when Dick had offered his blind loyalty had any one tried to understand her as Austin Selwyn had done. She was grateful for that. She might even have valued his friendship if he had not been so despicable that awful night. To insult her with his talk of pacifism, and then, heedless of her intensity, to propose to her! She could not forgive him for that. She was glad her words had stung him!

Minutes passed. The fire would not answer to any attention, but sulkily lived out its little hour. The evening seemed interminable.

It was shortly after ten o'clock when there was a knock at the door, and Elise hurried to open it, thinking there might be a message from the garage.

'It's only me, Elise,' said a familiar voice.

'Oh!—Horace,' she laughed. 'What's the trouble? Did Marian leave anything behind?'

'No. I was just absolutely fed up; and when she told me you were here alone, I thought I'd jolly well come down and talk to you.'

'Good! Come in. You mustn't stay long, though. Please don't notice this horrible mess.'

In sheer pleasure at the breaking of the solitude, her vivacity made her eyes sparkle with life. Her sentences were crisp and rapid, and as she led the young officer to a seat by the fire it would have been difficult for Elise herself to think that a few minutes before she had been helplessly and lonesomely on the brink of tears.

'How is the dance going on up the street?' she asked, as Maynard inserted a cigarette between his lips without lighting it.

'It's a poisonous affair.'

'Poor boy!'

'I'm fed up, Elise. I'm—I'm *gorged*. When I heard you were down here, I said, "By George! I'll go and see her. I can talk to Elise. She's got some sense."'

'What a thing to say about a woman!'

'Don't chaff me, Elise. I can't stand it. I'm frightfully upset—really.'

'What has Marian been doing to you?'

'Nothing, except making a blithering ass of me. You know, I was fearfully keen on her, and I've passed up all sorts of fluff so as to do the decent; but when that brute Heckles-Jennings advised me to-night to be sure and sit out a dance with Marian because she was such hot stuff, he said . . . Of course, he's an outsider and all that, and I told him to go to hell—but you don't blame me for feeling cut up, do you, Elise?'

'Didn't you know she was that kind?'

'What kind?'

'Oh—the—the universal kisser—the complete osculator—the'——

'I say'——

'But surely you don't think you are the only one she has made a fool of? To begin with, there's her husband in France—a brother-officer, Horace.'

Maynard wriggled uneasily, sliding down the chair in the movement until his knees were very near his chin.

'He's a rotter, Elise.'

'Do you know him?'

'N—no. But Marian says he absolutely neglects her. He's one of those cold-blooded fish—doesn't understand her a bit. After all'—the extra vehemence shifted him another few inches, so that he presented an extraordinary figure, like the hump of a dromedary—'women must have sympathy. They need it. They'——

'Oh, Horace!' Elise burst into a laugh. 'Are there really some of you left? How refreshing! Why don't you put it on your card: "2nd Lt. Horace Maynard, Grenadier Guards, soul-mate by appointment."'

'I wish you wouldn't laugh like that.'

He was a picture of such utter dejection that, checking her mirth, Elise laid her hand on his arm. 'Sorry, Horace. You know, if it hadn't been for this war we might never have known how nice our men are. I only wonder how it is that the women have the heart to make such fools of you.'

The unhappy warrior pulled himself up to a fairly upright posture and tapped his cigarette against the palm of his hand. 'I'm glad,' he said with a slight blush, 'that you don't quite put me down as a rotter. I don't know what's come over us all. Before the war, when you met a chap's wife—well, hang it all!—she was his wife, and that was all there was about it. But nowadays'——

'I know, Horace, it's a miserable business altogether—partly war hysteria, and partly the fact that women can't stand independence, I suppose. Marian's a splendid type of the female war-shirker. You know she's married; yet, because she lets you maul her'——

'I say, Elise!'

'——and she murmurs pathetically that her husband in France neglects her—at least, that's what she tells you. When she was dressing to-night Marian said that she and her husband absolutely trusted each other.'

'By Jove! You don't mean that?'

'She also said that all men, including you, were a scream. Probably she considers you a perfect shriek.'

Trembling with indignation, Maynard suddenly collapsed like a punctured balloon and relapsed dejectedly into his recumbent attitude. 'What an ass I have been!' he lamented sorrowfully. 'What a sublime ass! And Marian—the little devil!'

'Rubbish!'

'Eh? I suppose you think I am an idiot for—— Well, perhaps you're right.'

For a couple of minutes nothing was said, and the melancholy lover, with his chin resting on his chest, ruminated over his unhappy affair.

'Hang it all!' he said at last, hesitatingly, 'when a chap gets leave from the front he's—he's sort of woman-hungry. You don't know what it feels like, after getting away from all that mud and corruption, to hear a girl's voice—one of our own. It goes to the head like bubbly. It's a—a dream come true. There's just the two things in your life—eight or nine months in the trenches; then a fortnight with the company of women again. It's awfully soppy to talk like this'——

'No, it isn't, Horace. It's the biggest compliment ever paid our women. I only wish we could try to be what you boys picture us. That's what makes me feel like drowning Marian every few days. Horace, I'm proud of you.'

She patted his hand which was grasping the arm of the chair, and he blushed a hearty red.

'Elise!' He sat bolt-upright. 'By gad! I never knew it until this minute. You are the woman I ought to marry. You are far too good and clever and all that; but, by Jove! I could do something in the world if I had you to work for. Don't stop me, Elise. I am serious. I should have known all along'——

'Horace, Horace!' Hardly knowing whether to laugh or to cry, Elise put her hand over his mouth and checked the amorous torrent. 'You're a perfect dear,' she said, 'and I'm ever so grateful'——

'But'——

'But you mustn't be silly. This is only the reaction from Marian.'

'It's nothing of the sort,' he blurted, putting aside her hand. 'I—I really do—I love you. You're different from any other girl I ever met.'

'My dear, you mustn't say such things. You know you don't love me as you will the right girl when you meet her.'

He got out of the chair by getting over its arm. 'I beg your pardon, Elise,' he said, not without a certain shy dignity. 'I meant every word I said—but I suppose there's some one else.'

'Only a dream-man, Horace.'

'What about that American?'

'What—American?' Her agitation was something she could hardly have explained.

'That author-fellow at Roselawn. He was frightfully keen on you. I remember half-a-dozen times when he would be talking to us, and if you would come in he'd go as mum as an oyster, and just follow you with his eyes. Is he the chap, Elise?'

'Good gracious!'—she forced a laugh—'why, I don't even know where he is.'

'Don't you? He's in London; I can tell you that much. Last month in France I ran across that Doosenberry-Jewdrop fellow—you know—the futurist artist.'

'Do you mean Johnston Smyth?'

'That's the chap.'

'I didn't know he was in France.'

'Rather. I thought your brother would have told you.'

'My brother?' There was not a vestige of colour in her cheeks. 'What do you mean?'

Maynard scratched the back of his head. 'Smyth told me,' he said, wondering at the cause of her agitation, 'that Dick and he enlisted together some months ago. By Jove! I remember now. He told me that this American fellow put them up at his rooms in St James's Square one night. Smyth didn't know who Dick was until they got to France. He was travelling under the name of Sherlock, or Shylock, or Sherwood'—

'I—I thought Dick was in China.' She wrung her hands nervously. 'You didn't see him?'

'No. That's all I know about him, except that he was transferred to some other battalion than Dingleberry Smyth's.'

She went over to a table and took a piece of notepaper from a drawer. 'Mr Selwyn used to belong to the R.A.C.,' she said quickly. 'Would you do me a favour, Horace dear?'

He murmured his desire to be of service in any capacity. Hesitating a moment, she wrote hurriedly:

'4th March 1916,
'21A PARK WALK.

'DEAR MR SELWYN,—Will you please come and see me as soon as you can? I am not on night-duty this week.—Yours sincerely,

'ELISE DURWENT.'

She sealed the envelope and handed it to Maynard. 'Please find out from the R.A.C. where he is, and ask them to send this note to him. I am ever so grateful, Horace.'

'I suppose,' he said, looking at the envelope, 'that this means the—the finish of my chances?'

She ended the question by wishing him good luck in France, but there was a strange tremulousness in the softly spoken words.

He put out his hand shyly. 'Good-night, old girl,' he said, smiling with a sort of rueful boyishness.

She took his proffered hand, and then, obeying an impulse, stooped and pressed her burning cheek against it. 'Good-night, Horace,' she said softly. 'I hope you'll come back safe to be a fine husband for some nice girl.'

When he had gone, and his footsteps died away, she returned to the table. Burying her face in her hands, she fought back the tears which surged to the surface. Her love for Dick, her own loneliness, a mad joy in the thought of seeing Selwyn again, a motherly pity for Maynard, a fury towards Marian, an incomprehensible yearning—she felt that her heart was bursting, but could not have said herself whether it was with grief or with joy.

(Continued on page 361.)

MIXING FOODS.

By P. R. GORDON.

IT is considered by many people that a mixed diet is necessary for the proper functioning of the digestive organs, and that digestion is thus more rapidly accomplished, and the food more completely assimilated, than when only one kind of food is taken. While it is true that we require, for the maintenance of health and the proper nourishment of the body, the salts and the acids found in fruits and vegetables, the fats in cream and butter, and the carbohydrates in starchy foods, we do not need them in a heterogeneous mass.

One of the chief causes of digestive disturbances is the mixing of foods which do not harmonise. There are several reasons for this. The process of digestion is a complicated one, and foods vary greatly in the time required for their digestion—a fact some people do not realise. A ripe apple, for instance, is digested in a healthy stomach in one hour, while a cabbage takes from four to five hours. Should both these articles be taken into the stomach at the same time, both must remain there until they are digested, as they will become so intermingled in the process of digestion that

they cannot possibly be separated. The apple, digested and ready for absorption, if not absorbed, ferments, and flatulence and other disagreeable symptoms of ordinary indigestion result.

Some foods are digested in the stomach, others in the small intestine; it is quite conceivable that they should not be eaten together. Starchy food requires an alkaline saliva to prepare it for digestion; if acid fruit is eaten at the same time there is certain to be delay in this process.

Raw food and cooked food should not be eaten together. In the former the organic salts are unchanged; in the latter these salts undergo a distinct change in the process of cooking. One pound of raw food contains as much nourishment as two pounds of cooked food, but the average person's stomach is, as a rule, quite unaccustomed to food in a raw state, and this fact is not generally observed when such food is eaten in addition to the cooked food which makes up the daily dietary. Digestive disturbance results in most cases, although in a healthy stomach the disagreeable feelings are more or less evanescent.

Milk is a food which is used very indiscriminately. It is mixed with all kinds of foods, and is looked upon by many people as a drink instead of a food. It is often stated that milk is a perfect food. So it is—for the young of the animal that provides it.

Milk is almost entirely deficient in iron, and is therefore not sufficient nourishment for a fully developed human body.

An important reason why milk is such a valuable food for growing children is on account of the high percentage of lime salts it contains. There is no food in the entire mineral, vegetable, or animal kingdom so rich in lime salts as milk. All kinds of meat are almost useless when it is a question of lime salts. Goat's milk is not so rich in lime salts as cow's milk, and egg-yolk does not contain more than about one-fourth of the quantity contained in cow's milk, warm from the cow.

Persons of an atrophic or an anæmic temperament, or a mental-osseous temperament—tall, slender, bony, muscular persons with a high degree of intelligence—need lime salts and iron salts in abundance. Iron salts are contained in raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, dark cherries, spinach, black-currants, egg-yolk, and certain vegetables.

The diet of the average person, consisting of white bread, bacon, tea or coffee, sugar, meat, potatoes, &c., contains but a very small quantity of lime salts. In fact, the average intake of lime is only about one-third the amount actually required by the body. Lime, like iron, taken in a mineral form is not readily assimilated by the stomach. Many people find that milk disagrees with them, and therefore seldom take it. The reason for this lies, no doubt, in the casein product that milk contains. If a little lemon-juice be added to milk—especially warm milk—before it is taken, it will be found then that it does not cause digestive disturbance.

Milk and fruit, meat and milk, milk and raw vegetables do not combine well. Milk is best taken alone or in milk-puddings, with oatmeal porridge, and in that form known in America as 'graveyard stew'—milk-toast. 'Milk-shake,' composed of milk, soda-water, and a small quantity of ice-cream, is a very popular 'soft' drink in that country. Another excellent food-drink is made from two glasses of milk, with from two to three raw egg-yolks and a teaspoonful of sweet-clover honey added, the whole being well shaken for about two minutes.

In order to test the effect of a strictly milk diet on the adult human body, the writer carried out an interesting experiment a few years ago. An eight days' fast was first completed. During this time nothing but pure cold water was taken—three to four quarts daily. Ten pounds in weight was lost during the period of the fast. On the morning of the ninth day the fast was broken on a table-spoonful of tomato-juice, which

entirely upset the stomach; twelve hours later a table-spoonful of unfermented grape-juice was tried, with no bad effect. Next day was a grape-juice day, a wine-glassful being sipped through a straw at hourly intervals. On the following day the milk diet was commenced. Half-a-pint was taken, in the same manner, every hour for eight hours; this was increased next day until, on the fourth day of the diet, a maximum of six quarts was reached. This quantity was consumed daily up to the twelfth day, when a nauseating milk-sickness supervened, and the diet was stopped. The gain in weight during the period was twenty-five pounds, but five pounds of this was lost when a solid-food diet was resumed—on the thirteenth day. The experiment was satisfactory in every way. The increase of physical and mental vigour surpassed all expectation; in short, a complete rejuvenation took place.

It is necessary to state that an experiment of this nature should not be undertaken unless certain conditions are fulfilled. The mind must be entirely free of worry, and of fear regarding the outcome of the fast; otherwise more harm than good will result. Further, one must be prepared to ignore the solicitous attentions and inquiries of anxious relatives and friends who see the experimenter daily growing less and becoming beautifully thin! Suitable environment is essential, and under no circumstances should the experiment be tried in winter or early spring; the best time is during the summer months, when one can secure the beneficial action of the sun's rays on the naked body. Baths—internal and external—must be taken daily, but on no account should much physical exercise be attempted.

There is a tendency to overeat on a mixed diet. After one has eaten to repletion of an ordinary meal of soup, bread, meat, and vegetables, to be served with a tasty swiss tart or trifle is a great temptation—one which most people do not try to resist. A cup of coffee usually follows, and then the diner feels disposed to sleep off the effects of this hearty meal. Yet some people, who eat heavy mixed meals day after day, wonder why they are troubled with the disagreeable physical feelings that follow closely those who live to eat.

The American people are probably the worst offenders in this respect. With their jumbled-up meals of fruit and cereals with cream, waffles, and maple syrup; hamburger steaks and German pot roasts; clam chowder and oyster stews; 'angel' and other highly iced cakes; ice-cream and coffee; iced water at every meal; and, last but not least, the numerous varieties of pies, is it surprising to find that America has been called a 'nation of dyspeptics'? The country is overrun with food scientists; chiropractic and osteopathic doctors; raw-food faddists and sour-milk cranks; natural healers whose methods,

to say the least, are peculiar; and mausoleum companies flourishing exceedingly!

On the other hand, there are countries where the national diet is of the plainest kind. A notable example of this is Scotland, where a splendid type of manhood is reared on a simple diet, the basis of which is oatmeal porridge and milk.

'The plainer the living the higher the physical

standard' is just as true a saying as 'Plain living leads to high thinking;' and no matter what the advocate of a mixed-food diet may say to the contrary, there is no disputing the fact that the nearer one gets to the mono-diet the better the health will be. At any rate, there is no necessity to mix together those foods that radically disagree, as milk and meat, or acid fruits and starches.

THE LAST OF HER LINE.

By OSWALD WILDRIDGE, Author of *The Luck-Penny*.

I.

ON the word of the wise man we have it that the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. But there are exceptions, and no more convincing example can be cited than the famous China tea-clipper known in the time of her sovereignty as *Cutty Sark*, and now concealing her identity from the multitude under a foreign name and a foreign flag. Her speed she proved in the days of her youth; her strength is surely established by the fact that last year, the year of her jubilee, found her still engaged upon her lawful occasions, the sole survivor of the clipper fleet. The Suez Canal, by the way, was formally opened in the same month and year, November 1869, wherein *Cutty Sark* abandoned the builder's yard for the waters of the Clyde at Dumbarton, and so became in very truth a ship. She remains, moreover, one of the eccentrics of the ocean, still living up to her peculiar reputation for getting into scrapes—and getting out of them—deliciously blending the direst luck with most excellent fortune. Thus, in the light of her strange adventures, it is quite in accordance with the fitness of things that she should have survived the abounding perils of German malevolence, and then crowned her career by such an arrival in the Mersey as the one to be presently chronicled.

Concerning *Cutty Sark's* position in marine history, it may be, of course, that some of the experts would dispute the judgment which awards her pride of first place among the clipper fleet, but the consistency of her sailing should alone be sufficient answer to the challenge. There is also that wonderful record of 362 and 363 miles on successive days, and her average of 75 days from Sydney to the Downs on eight successive voyages; and without in any sense decrying the greatness of *Thermopylae*, *Serica*, *Taepting*, and the rest, there is the paramount fact of her survival. Beyond this, again, it may be said of her that, given her own wind, she is probably the fastest sailing-ship ever built; and it is also part of her story that she has outlived not only all her winged sisters, but many of the monarchs of steam as well. Nor does this

exhaust the account. Up to a very few years before *Cutty Sark* was launched steam was still regarded by all except the men of vision as the handmaiden of the wind-jammer rather than its rival—'auxiliary steam' was the limit of their expectations; but within the lifetime of the famous clipper the handmaiden has become the mistress, the single-gear engine has been deposed by the compound, the compound by the triple expansion, triple by quadruple, the turbine has come into its own, now coal is capitulating to oil and electricity, and the aerial cruiser is winging its prophetic way through space. To say that she witnessed the decline and fall of the *Great Eastern* is only a trifle, for Brunell's monster was, after all, but a freak, and doomed to a premature end. But there is something profoundly impressive in the circumstance that during the round of these fifty years a vast armada mechanically propelled has had its day and ceased to be. While *Cutty Sark* has still kept the sea, many liners of high degree, each in turn acclaimed as the last word in marine architecture, have worn themselves out, all the famous Guion Line boats have passed, the *Alaska* and the *Arizona*, those other twins of high degree the *Umbria* and the *Etruria*, the first *Oceanic*, *Britannic*, and *Majestic*, ironclads, cruisers, gunboats, not one of them mastered by wind or sea, by fire or shell, but all exhausted by the swift life, and handed over to the ship-breakers to be torn rib from rib and plate from plate.

II.

Compared with the leviathans of to-day, *Cutty Sark* is one of the pigmy craft. Her measurements leave one quite unmoved; tonnage 963 gross, length 212 feet, beam 36, depth 21; and even a statement of her gigantic spread of sail and her prodigious spars is charged with little of the quality of magnitude for a race which has learned to reckon energy in terms of horsepower and volts. Her speed records, too, are unfortunately inconclusive—there are so many gaps, so many great beginnings broken by disaster—but withal there is sufficient to convince, and her supremacy is never in doubt. On her maiden voyage home with tea she did the passage from

Shanghai to the Thames in 110 days, this being reduced later to 104; and also we have Sydney to the Downs in 67 days, London to Sydney 68, 74, 75; London to Melbourne 78, and, surpassing all, that voyage in which she logged well over seventeen knots! On these terms she would outsail any of the average modern tramp-steamers, and even a few of the mail-boats would find it hard to shake her off.

But, after all, in tracing her history throughout its romantic range it is her disposition to ill-fortune that impresses, rather than her gift of speed. The thing is almost uncanny. Accident runs with such unflinching resolution that it savours of design. At the very beginning, while she was yet being moulded on the stocks, a malignant Fate would seem to have singled her out as a target for its slings and arrows, and in the light of what followed folks of superstitious bent may discover a certain sinister significance in the failure of the builders commissioned with her construction to finish their contract. No sooner had she been handed over to the charge of the seas than the attack became direct. Outward bound on her maiden voyage, she had some of her top-hamper carried away, and it was probably through no other reason than this that in her first race home with tea she secured only third place.

Through the round of the next season she appears to have passed unscathed and also uneventfully; but then, in 1872, came her ever-famous race with *Thermopylae* from Shanghai to the Thames, and the accident which robbed her of victory, yet served to demonstrate her quality more positively than a conventional arrival so many hours ahead of her rival. Her defeat was her greatest triumph. It applied a test of its own. The supreme fact in that epic contest, wherein the ship was stripped by storm of her rudder and left at the mercy of tempestuous seas, is not her failure to win the race, but the heroic seamanship that saved her from destruction, and then actually sailed her into the Downs on the heels of her successful antagonist. Long before the assembling of the clipper fleet in the tea ports—months before, in fact—it was recognised that this time the issue lay between two ships only, that *Cutty Sark's* challenge was meant for *Thermopylae* alone, and right from that tense moment when the sails were shaken out in the China Sea until they were looped in their gaskets off the mouth of the Thames, even when the challenger was beating along like a lame duck, none other could be said to share the enterprise. And what a race it was! No swift rush through terrific hours and days, but weeks and months of never-renting strain, of ceaseless vigil, of intrigue with the winds of heaven, and withal an ever-present consciousness of dependence upon forces beyond the power of man to control. Months of it, storm nearly all the way, and then, with the second month almost gone, that traditional ill-luck once more flung itself across the

track of the gallant little craft. She was magnificently shouldering her way through a heavy storm when a big sea carried away her rudder, stern-post and all, and there, with *Thermopylae* well behind, she wallowed helpless and in imminent peril. But it was more than a ship that the sea had attacked. The battle was also with men, a tough crew armed with thew and sinew and dauntless courage. And so, in spite of the tempest and the rudder that had gone, *Cutty Sark* was brought round with her boom pointing into the eye of the wind, and for six days she lay there hove-to while they fashioned a jury-rudder, and by the exercise of surpassing skill worked it under the stern and fixed it securely in its place. After which the captain resumed not only the voyage, but the race as well, driving the barque with as much determination as though *Thermopylae* were only a matter of lengths ahead of him instead of half-a-dozen days. For a month the jury-rudder held, but at last the strain began to tell, and for a second time the ship was hove-to, the rudder unshipped and hoisted inboard, and again that tremendous task of placing it in position on the high seas was carried out. And still Captain Moodie refused to admit defeat. Clearly believing that a race is never lost until it is won, he once more crowded on every inch of canvas his ship could carry, and so finely did she sail and so well was she handled that she made her landfall less than a week behind her more favoured rival. And for these things is it claimed that *Cutty Sark's* failure was a greater triumph than success.

III.

In this strain, then, the tale goes on, history provokingly persistent in its repetitions, a budget of splendid speed achievements ever bracketed with a complementary budget of misfortunes. Of the one, it is sufficient to point to her wonderful runs on the Australian route; concerning the other, to mention that terrible night when she was beset by storm off the Goodwins and literally plucked from the jaws of destruction. The next episode of note in her career came in 1895, when she passed from the ranks of the British Mercantile Marine, and, changing her flag, also changed her name, this double event being contingent on her sale to the firm of Messrs Ferreira of Lisbon. But the transfer brought her no relief from the pursuit of that malicious spirit which ever showed itself willing to wound but reluctant to slay. Sailing as the *Ferreira*, she drove ashore near Pensacola in a hurricane; some time later, when bound from Pensacola to Rio with lumber, she stranded again and sustained heavy damage; off the east coast of Africa she had all her masts blown out of her.

For such a ship the tocsin of the Great War must surely have sounded as the knell of doom, foretelling her certain banishment now to the Port of Missing Ships. So far as I am aware,

however, while the navies of the world were being remorselessly sunk, captured, and blown up, she passed through it all without so much as a scratch to her well-worn paint, never touched the horn of a mine, or got across the track of a torpedo. At any rate, if anything did happen to her she said nothing about it, and hitherto no song has been sung concerning the impish trick that was played while the war was still raging. It was during the later phase of the conflict that, being despatched to the west coast of Africa, she was compelled to lie for some time off its dangerous surf-barred sands with anchors down and a long length of cable veered out. As every sailor knows, it is an ugly spot for a ship under the most favourable of circumstances: no suggestion of a roadstead, doubtful holding-ground, and exposure to the full sweep of the Atlantic combers. A deadly haven indeed, the graveyard of many a stout craft. At the outset, however, it looked as though luck was this time ranged on the side of *Cutty Sark*, for she finished her loading without any misadventure. But no sooner was the cargo under hatches than the Storm King trailed across the horizon a signal that no captain of experience could afford to ignore. Giving no time for second thoughts, no time to prepare for flight, it insisted that *Cutty Sark* must stand not upon the order of her going, but go at once. And so, instead of risking his ship, the captain sacrificed his anchors, and spreading his canvas, fled from that sinister coast into the spacious roominess of the sea's highway.

The next act opened off the mouth of Liverpool river a few weeks later, an act of tragedy for the barque, of golden drama for the tug that offered her steam, and of comedy for the looker-on. Cruising in that one-time happy hunting-ground of the tug between the North-West Lightship and Point Lynas, the captain of the *William Joliffe*, one of that squadron of Mersey tugs whose exploits have won them fame in every port in the world, sighted the incoming windjammer, and, of course, tendered the service of his engines. A bout of the usual chaffering over the terms took place, but in the end a bargain was struck, the hawser passed and made fast, and the tug bore away for Liverpool, her skipper, by an odd mischance, being utterly in the dark as to those missing anchors, and regarding his task as an ordinary act of towage of the most humdrum type. Within the limit of his knowledge, all that circumstance demanded was that he should haul the ship up the river, put her to an anchor in the great lagoon known as the Sloyne, leave her there for a few hours until the tide made, and then conduct her to her appointed dock. And up to the point of arrival in the Sloyne this was exactly what befell. Afterwards came revelation, then dismay, and lastly jubilation.

Passing through the bottle-neck gap abreast of the landing-stage, the tug called upon the barque to get her anchor ready; whereupon she

announced that she had none on board, was as helpless as though she had again lost her rudder. There was no mistake about it. The answer was free from any ambiguity: 'Got no anchor.'

Now, according to the law of the sea, the tug's first duty is to her tow, and although the High Court of Justice has laid it down that under given circumstances the law of self-preservation shall prevail, this was obviously not a case for its application. The tug must hang on. Adrift on the river, the clipper would be converted at once into a terrible engine of destruction. There was no telling how many ships she might sink, how many lives wipe out, before she ended her own career either on the bed of the Mersey or on one of the great banks. To the man on the bridge of the *William Joliffe* it was clear that he must either conduct her back to the sea or else shepherd her there in the river until the return of the flood and the opening of the dock gates. This, at any rate, was the first dismal impression. Second thoughts were distinctly brighter. The barque was beyond control, and so she must remain until equipped with another anchor or prisoned in dock. The deduction was beyond dispute. This was not towage, but salvage. The nuisance had become a prize. Whereupon the skipper 'blew five whistles' for another tug, and the *Canada* making response, the pair of them played the part of the lost anchors until the tide relieved them of their charge. And that was how *Cutty Sark* came once more to the Mersey in the time of the Great War. A lucky escape at one end of the voyage transformed into a bill for salvage at the other.

IV

Once, and only once, have I had the joy of meeting the famous clipper, and that upon a day of imperishable memory, a day enriched by a vision of the *Lusitania* sweeping through the jaws of Liverpool Bay, and crowned at eventide by a glimpse of the beautiful ship which Britons will ever deal with as *Cutty Sark* in spite of the yellow-painted *Ferreira* on her hull. Aboard one of the Liverpool tugs, the *Trafalgar*, if memory serves aright, we had trafficked all through the day, partly on the pent-up waters behind the river-wall, partly in the open, canting ship, doing a bit of transfer-work, acting as errand-boy to a first-class liner, 'putting a ship to the stage,' with a few other tasks thrown in; and finally we had been despatched on a mission out by the Bar Light. It was a day of veiled sunshine and everywhere a dower of gold. We sailed beneath a burnished arch on the plain of a molten sea, and all the land was tucked away from sight behind a drapery of tawny gauze. Except for the beat of our own engines, it was a soundless world, too, the sea hushed and the winds asleep. Not a whisper until the *Lusitania* lifted up her voice. 'Brr-a-ay, Brr-a-ay, Brr-a-ay,' it crashed, an imperative command

to all other craft abroad upon the Bay. 'Make way,' it cried; 'make way. A clear road. Way for Her Majesty.' Again it rose, the full-throated blare of an ocean liner under way, that sonorous call which must surely live for ever in the memory of those once privileged to hear it. And then we caught the booming of her engines, the swirl of the waters sliced by her knife-like stem, and at last from the core of the gossamer web she launched herself, a flashing, roaring, smoke-erupting monster; and as, in all her pride of strength and power, of speed and grace, she passed us by, I heard the skipper worshipfully murmur, 'Isn't she a wonder?'

Pitching in the maelstrom of her wake, we went ahead towards the haven she had left, and in the darkening hours came to our berth in one of the docks. And there, lording it over the nondescript company that crowded the basin, was that weary-looking barque whose sovereignty declared itself through all the stains of much travel and the searing marks of many years.

Her presence had none of that glorious thrill of surprise which so happily befell the officer at New Orleans whose delightful story Mr Basil Lubbock sets forth in his *China Clippers*. With us there was no bell to scrape before we could establish her identity—we approached with full knowledge of the meeting, but in no wise was expectation disappointed. In all that realm of the Mersey docks there was nothing quite so weebegone, nothing so pathetically symbolic of fallen greatness, and assuredly nothing quite so majestic. And as I revelled in the spectacle, her spars, still lofty despite the length they had lost, her yacht-like entrance, all the grace of her moulding, the fluted lines of the 'cutty-sark' worn by the figurehead witch imposed beneath her boom, the benediction passed upon the great Cunarder offered itself for another fitting application. Indeed, to-day, fifty years and more since her birth, recalling the glory of her high adventure and her conquest of the years, I am not so sure that she is not the greater wonder of the two.

THE TRADE OF ENGLAND.

By DOUGLAS CARSEWELL.

THEY are running down the tideway, and they're laden'd to the line;

They have cargoes for the Congo and Japan;
Big liners for the Indies, black colliers for the Tyne—

And they're English, all are English to a man.
They are standing down the tideway with the river at the flow,

And the purser's in his cabin writin' logs,
But the capt'n told the bo'sun (and the capt'n oughter know)—

Sez the trade of England's going to the dogs.

There's a large and lordly liner sailing out for Singapore,

There's a lubber full o' ironware from Leeds,
There's a ship for ev'ry haven set around the world's shore—

And they carry in their holds a world's needs;
Oh, they carry each a fortune in their cargoes down below,

While the purser's in his cabin writin' logs,
But the capt'n told the bo'sun (and the capt'n oughter know)—

Sez the trade of England's going to the dogs.

From the narrow muddy reaches of the Medway and the Thames,

Through the shallows of the Channel to the deep,
They have led the way of empire with their burly iron stems,

And the lead that they have conquered they will keep.

From the docks and quays of Deptford to Dunedin and Quito,

From the tropics to the white Newfoundland fogs—

But the capt'n told the bo'sun (and the capt'n oughter know)—

Sez the trade of England's going to the dogs.

You can hear their sirens booming as they labour up the sound,

You can see their smoke-rack rising on the bay;
Their hulls are low and rusted, they have been the world round,

And they've traded ev'ry haven on the way.
They have sailed the Sea of Banda, where the sago-palm trees grow,

They have plunged around Fuego with its fogs;
But the capt'n told the bo'sun (and the capt'n oughter know)—

Sez the trade of England's going to the dogs.

There are troopships in the tideway—you can hear their engines beat,

As they bear away the best of England's sons.
While from seaward comes the thunder of a mighty battle fleet,

As the swinging turrets shudder to the guns.
'Tis the might of England brooding for that hour when the foe

Shall fare him from his minefields and his fogs—

But the capt'n told the bo'sun (and the capt'n oughter know)—

Sez the trade of England's going to the dogs.

God of empires, you have call'd us, and we've answer'd to a man,

And we've stood for Right and Freedom from the first;

We have done what never nation of the world did—or can.

Shall we lose it to the alien we have nurs'd?
God of empires, you who call'd us, in your wisdom you may know—

But the purser's nearly written up his log,
And the capt'n and the bo'sun in the lazarette

alow,

Are a-thrashing out the question over grog.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE COMMON ROUND OF SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON LIFE IN 1591.

By HENRY E. BANNARD.

I.

IT is by no means impossible to reconstruct a picture of Shakespeare's daily life in London about 1591. We know that he was then engaged at James Burbage's Theatre in Moorfields, and he needed to lodge in a part of London which was at no great distance from Moorfields. We know, too, that at a later period of his life Shakespeare lodged at the house of one Mountjoy, a Huguenot refugee. This house was at the corner of Silver Street, off Cheapside. It is quite possible that he may have been there in the early days of his London life also, and at any rate that neighbourhood was then highly convenient for him.

In Tudor times Londoners, in common with other English folk, were early risers. Breakfast most often consisted of beef or bacon with ale, which was drunk at practically all meals, there being no tea or coffee to vary the menu. There were, of course, wines of various kinds, notably sack, which figures prominently in the Bacchanalian scenes in which Shakespeare so frequently places Falstaff. Wooden plates and trenchers were used for the food, which was eaten with knives and fingers, the use of forks not being introduced from Italy till c. 1614. As dinner was taken about eleven o'clock, and the performance at the theatre was usually at three o'clock, the early morning between breakfast and dinner would be that portion of the day which Shakespeare found available for his own special purposes. This, in all probability, was the time at which he was accustomed to write, as the hours immediately after breakfast were the only ones in which, as a rule, he could be free from interruption; and, moreover, for half the year the poorness of the artificial lights of the time rendered it a matter of much physical difficulty to write in the evening.

But it must not be assumed that he had the whole time between breakfast and dinner for composition. Far from it; for there were many things that called him away. Often in this busy year of 1591 he must have found it necessary to go in the morning, either alone or with Burbage and others of his colleagues, to see how the construction of the Rose Theatre was progressing, and to consult Henslowe on some point

or other connected therewith. From his city lodgings there were two almost equally convenient routes by which he could go to Southwark and Bankside. He could either walk all the way, crossing the river by London Bridge, then not only a busy thoroughfare, but also a great centre for shopping, shops and houses being built on the bridge; or he could go past St Paul's and down Ludgate Hill to the ferry, and cross the Thames in the ferry-boat. Not infrequently, no doubt, he devoted some of the morning hours to waiting on his patron and friend, the Earl of Southampton. The peer's town-house was close to the present corner of Chancery Lane and Holborn, and Shakespeare's route thither from his lodgings was down Holborn Hill, the well-remembered road by which he had made his first entry into London. Or on occasion he may have gone to see the earl at his chambers at Gray's Inn, for Southampton entered as a student there, immediately after he had graduated at Cambridge, in order to study law sufficiently to fit him for the duties of a great landowner and a magistrate. Gray's Inn was at this time the most fashionable of the Inns of Court, and the great Bacon was then laying firm the foundations of his legal reputation there.

Many brilliant and interesting people were to be met at Southampton's rooms. It is all but certain that Shakespeare early met Florio there, for he was the earl's tutor in Italian. John Florio was the son of Michel Angelo Florio, who, becoming a Protestant, migrated from Italy to England, and was for many years a popular preacher in the city of London. It was currently believed, however, that this popularity was due not so much to the acceptability of his doctrine as to the fact that his preaching in Italian afforded many fashionable people an excellent opportunity to make themselves acquainted with the correct pronunciation of that language. His son John quickly made a good position for himself as an instructor in both French and Italian, numbering among his pupils members of the wealthiest and most influential families of the time. At this moment he was busy preparing his great Italian-English dictionary; it was not till a few years later that he made that translation of Montaigne which has done most to keep his

memory green. It appears probable that Shakespeare took lessons both in Italian and in French from Florio. The scene in *Henry V.* in which Katharine of France teaches French to King Henry is written with an evident and humorous knowledge of the pitfalls that beset a learner, whether of the French or the English tongue. As for Italian, Sir Edward Sullivan, in an article in the *Nineteenth Century and After* for January 1918, gives good grounds for the belief that Shakespeare had not long been writing plays before he was able to read Italian. Certainly the dramatist might have learned Italian or French from some other teacher than Florio; but considering the close intimacy between Southampton and Shakespeare, and between Southampton and Florio, it is exceedingly unlikely that Shakespeare sought any other teacher, when the most popular of all was a member of a circle which he himself frequented and adorned. On some mornings of the week Shakespeare would be likely to wend his way down either Ludgate Hill or Holborn Hill to Florio's rooms in Shoe Lane. It is curious that the lane which to-day is associated with newspapers and printing was even then a resort of writers. It was a district intersected by streams—the Old Bourne, whence Holborn is supposed to derive its name; and the Fleet stream, the memory of which is preserved in Fleet Street, into which Shoe Lane now runs at its southern end.

So much for Shakespeare's mornings in the London of 1591. Writing his plays and poems at his lodgings, visiting the Earl of Southampton at his town-house or in his chambers at Gray's Inn, taking lessons in Italian or French from Florio at his house in Shoe Lane, or sharpening his naturally keen business wits by talk with Henslowe, either at the growing fabric of the Rose Theatre or at his dyeing or pawnbroking establishments at Southwark, probably accounted for most of Shakespeare's weekday mornings at this period.

II.

By eleven o'clock he was back at his lodgings for the substantial midday dinner of meat and ale with a pie or a pudding, as was general among the business classes. Soon after dinner he would have to make his way to the theatre in Shoreditch. To get there he had to leave the city boundary at Moorgate or Bishopsgate, and pass through Finsbury. The city man of to-day, desiring to go to Shoreditch, can do so by tube, or by bus or taxi-cab along busy and crowded streets all the way. Not so the London citizen of Elizabethan times. As soon as he emerged from the city, he found himself in waste ground of an unseavours nature, very muddy, and full of rubbish of every description. The sole marks of civilisation were the raised footpaths constructed to enable passengers to negotiate the pitfalls of huge refuse-heaps, deep black ditches,

and foul open sewers. Along such a path, accompanied often by his colleagues Heming and Condell, who lived within a stone's-throw of his lodging, Shakespeare had to walk to the theatre. We have a reference by him to Finsbury in *Henry IV.*, Part I., Act i., Scene 1, where Hotspur tells his wife that she gives

Such sarcenet surety for thy oaths,
As if thou never walk'st further than Finsbury.

Similarly there is a reference to Moorfields in *Henry VIII.*, Act v., Scene 3:

Is this Moorfields to muster in? or have we
Some strange Indian come to court?

Also in *Henry IV.*, Part I., Act i., Scene 2, Prince Henry asks Falstaff:

What sayest thou to a hare, or to the melancholy of Moor Ditch?

It was at Moorfields that the theatre was situated, and the Curtain Theatre was in Shoreditch, where Curtain Road perpetuates its name. Very queer characters, on various queer ends bent, congregated in this derelict neighbourhood. It was not by choice but by necessity that Burbage had erected his theatres on so unsavoury and badly accessible a site. It seems to have been the only site available at the time, when the city authorities (more, perhaps, from fear of crowds than from dislike to acting and actors) refused to allow a theatre to be established within their bounds. Hence it was that Henslowe's project of the Rose Theatre on Bankside offered the prospect of improvement for the company. Executions were carried out at Moorfields close to the theatre. We know of at least one such execution taking place on 5th October 1588, when William Hartley, a secular priest, suffered. (*Vide T. G. Law's Calendar of English Martyrs, 1535-1681.*) If there was one such hanging at Moorfields near the theatre, there were probably more, though the bulk of London executions took place at time-dishonoured Tyburn. The sight of such barbarities may well have vexed Shakespeare's tolerant soul, and deepened that intense love of mercy which so often finds expression in his plays.

The wonder is that a theatre established in such a neighbourhood was able to attract audiences at all. Such audiences as there were probably consisted in large part of roughs and idlers, and gay and rowdy London apprentices, who made a playground of Moorfields, and, some years later, rioted because of the proposal (which, despite their violent opposition, was happily carried out) to drain Moorfields, and to bring some slight measure of sanitation and decent control into the abominable place. But, happily for Burbage and his fellows, this rabble was not the whole audience. There were also the exquisites, the rich and often noble young men about town, such as the Earl of Southampton, who were consistent patrons of the theatre, and were its mainstay financially. Young and

adventurous, they feared no perils of Moorfields or elsewhere, and going there together in company with retainers and serving-men, they were only too ready for any rough-and-tumble fight which might befall them on the way.

The players—Shakespeare, of course, among them—probably reached the theatre as a rule about noon. Between noon and three o'clock, the usual time for the performance, there were the hundred and one tasks incident to theatrical preparation to accomplish.

The tedious and exacting business of rehearsals was presumably carried out in those hours between noon and the opening of the theatre to the public. There would be various business arrangements to be transacted and, perhaps, purchases to be effected; and, at any rate in the earlier days of his professional career, Shakespeare would have to order and superintend the lads whose task it was to hold the horses of those who rode to the play, there probably being solid reason for the tradition of a group of horseholders being known as 'Shakespeare's Boys.' The costumes of the actors had to be laid in readiness in the tiring-hall at the back of the stage, the equivalent of the modern dressing-room; the pine-sprigs had to be laid on the floor beside the better seats for the gallants to lay their cloaks upon; and the supply of juniper-berries had to be placed in readiness to burn for purposes of fumigation whenever the atmosphere became too offensive through the presence of the many insanitary and unpleasant persons who swarmed there.

Between two and three o'clock the theatre was opened. The money had to be taken at the doors from wealthy and poor alike, there being nothing in the way of tickets or ticket-offices then. The auditorium was for the most part roofless. The lowest class of playgoers paid a penny for the privilege of standing in the yard, represented nowadays by the pit. The best seats of all were those in proscenium-boxes on each side of the stage. For seats there the charge was often as much as twelve shillings. There was nothing in the way of scenery, the character of the scene being frequently indicated by a notice stating whether it was a castle, an inn, or a ship. It is a moot point whether the acting was not better without scenery than it has been with the elaborate scenery of modern theatrical enterprise. Certainly the imagination of the spectators must have been more stirred, seeing that there was so much greater scope for its exercise. Already, however, considerable expense was gone to in the way of costumes; it must, indeed, have been the principal item of expenditure in the Elizabethan theatre.

The performance seldom lasted for more than two hours. Soon after five o'clock the theatre would be emptied, and for another hour the actors would be occupied in superintending the tidying up, and then they wended their way

homeward, the perils of the noisome way being increased in winter evenings by the darkness.

III.

Tavern-life was a great feature of London in Elizabeth's reign, and it seems unlikely that many evenings were passed by Shakespeare and his fellows when in town without visiting one or other of the inns of the city. The name of the Mermaid Tavern is, of course, familiar to every one. The 'Mermaid' was in Bread Street, off Cheapside, and it had side-entrances—one from Bread Street itself, and one from Friday Street. Tradition has it that Sir Walter Raleigh founded the Mermaid Club at the Mermaid Tavern, and Ben Jonson became the leading spirit of the company of wits and men of letters who were wont to assemble there. Shakespeare is always assumed to have been a member of it, but we have no proof that he was; on the other hand, we have no proof that he was not. The most we can say is that the probabilities are that he was often one of the number that met there nightly. In 1591, however, the Mermaid Club had not yet blazed into glory, though the tavern was in existence, and was doubtless frequently visited by Shakespeare and others.

The Devil Tavern, in Fleet Street, was another famous resort of the 'tribe of Benjamin,' but although we know it was flourishing early in the reign of James the First, it is not clear that it was yet opened in 1591.

The 'Mitre,' in Holborn, was undoubtedly in existence then, and there seems good reason for supposing that it was one of Shakespeare's houses of call. It may be seen to-day in a little court just off Ely Place, hard by the beautiful church of St Etheldreda. It was originally a hostelry in connection with Ely House, the town mansion of the Bishops of Ely. It will be remembered that Shakespeare, in *Richard III.*, reveals his familiarity with the fine strawberries that were grown in the bishop's garden at Ely House, Holborn.

The 'Boar's Head,' Eastcheap, was another much-frequented tavern, and Shakespeare himself has immortalised it as one of the haunts of Falstaff. An hour or two in the evening would thus be spent in finding in one or other of these taverns relaxation and stimulus in the play of conversation and repartee with some of the brightest brains of the time, though there was none among them that saw so deep or could frame his expression of what he saw so well as the young player from Stratford-on-Avon.

Occasionally the company were engaged to play at the houses of some of the great people of the age, and from time to time they found a lucrative engagement in playing at the Inns of Court. We know, for example, that comparatively early in Shakespeare's career the first performance of his *Comedy of Errors* was given in the hall of Gray's Inn. We may conjecture

that the Earl of Southampton, who, as above noted, was a member of Gray's Inn, had something to do with this engagement.

IV.

On Sundays Shakespeare undoubtedly attended church once a day at least. He may very well have done so usually from inclination; but whether he wished to do so or not, he would go to church, and avoid the fine which was exacted from all who absented themselves from service without due cause shown. He would attend the church of the parish in which he was living.

One wonders how Shakespeare spent his Sunday afternoons. He may often have refreshed his spirit with rural scenes by a walk out to Islington, Edmonton, Hoxton, or Tottenham Court, for all these now thoroughly metropolitan areas were then in the heart of the country. At this comparatively early period of his London life it is probable that, in common with other young men, he spent a certain amount of time on Sundays in shooting-practice as a member of the city trained band. He very likely, therefore, on Sunday afternoons walked across the Finsbury Fields to Islington, where the archery-practice was carried out. With the development of guns, archery was on the decline; but there was still a great deal of it, and the Act compelling men of military age to practise archery on Sundays and holidays was still in force. It would almost certainly be on the Finsbury Fields ground that Shakespeare did his archery-practice. The proximity of this ground to the heart of the city made it the busiest and most frequented of any. There were large numbers of targets representing various distances of range. Many of them bore specific nicknames, which had presumably been given them for one reason or another, such as the prowess of some particular individual archer, or some amusing incident or witty remark. Thus among these targets were some bearing such strange names as Lee's Lion, Beswick's Stake (possibly reminiscent of some match shot for a wager), Lurching, Nelson, Sir Rowland, Dunstan's Dapling, Lambert's Goodwill, Martin's Mayflower, Lee's Leopard, Mildmay's Rose, Thief in the Hedge, Silkworm. All these names, and others also, are given in the quaint tract, *Ayme for Finsbury Archers*, which was printed in 1594, so that these were among the names of the targets at which Shakespeare was accustomed to shoot in the early part of the last decade of the sixteenth century. The yew bows in use were of great strength, and the arrows very long. The standard of shooting was high, for men of twenty-four were prohibited from aiming at any mark at a shorter distance than 220 yards, or eleven score, the score being the standard of reckoning on the archery-grounds.

The maximum range was nineteen score or 380 yards. There being public thoroughfares across Finsbury Fields, the archer had to shout 'Fast!' as a warning to pedestrians before he shot an arrow, and if he could prove that he had given this warning he was not held responsible at law for any mishap that his arrow might occasion to an incautious traveller or spectator. One can fancy Shakespeare shouting 'Fast!' in this way, like a modern suburban golfer calling 'Fore!' before he makes his stroke.

When he had finished his practice, he could, if he were so minded, find a change of occupation and pastime in one of the bowling-alleys, of which there were many in the neighbourhood. We have plenty of evidence in Shakespeare's plays to prove that he had an intimate knowledge both of archery and of bowls.

V.

An important factor in the growth of Shakespeare's popularity and in the widening of his experience was his acquaintanceship with certain high and cultivated ladies of quality. It was not till a few years later that the frequency of his appearances in plays performed before the queen made him intimate with numbers of Court ladies, but already in 1591 it seems likely that there were high-born ladies who appreciated his genius, and who showed him some measure of friendship. One such lady was the Countess of Southampton, mother of his friend the earl; and it is probable that he had also some acquaintance with the Countess of Pembroke, who was a munificent and discriminating patroness of the arts. It is possible, too, that he may have met with kindness from one or other of the six noble ladies to whom Florio dedicated his translation of Montaigne's *Essays*—namely, Lucy, Countess of Bedford; her mother, Lady Anne Harrington; Elizabeth, Countess of Rutland; Lady Penelope Rich; Lady Elizabeth Grey; and Lady Mary Nevill. Every such new acquaintanceship afforded a fresh link with Renaissance culture, of which the poet took full advantage. By this time it is to be presumed that Shakespeare was beginning to be a buyer of books. We know that he did form a small library of books, as it is on record that some years after his death his granddaughter, Lady Barnard, was possessed of them. From the gifts of the Earl of Southampton—for we know that he was a generous benefactor to Shakespeare and other authors—he must have had much assistance in the buying of books that he needed or fancied. The book-trade had developed greatly during the reign of Elizabeth.

We may assume that when Shakespeare came to London from Stratford he was thoroughly familiar with the Bible, and with such classical writers as Ovid and Virgil and Horace—more particularly with Ovid. After he left school

he does not appear to have kept up his Latin to any extent, although now and again he airs little bits of Latin, as well as of French and Italian, in his plays. His time, as we have seen, was very fully occupied, and, like many another busy man, he found it simpler and more suited to his purpose to read foreign authors in a translation than in the original. Internal evidence in his plays indicates that he made considerable use of Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which was published between 1565 and 1567.

There was already a considerable number of bookshops in the city of London that Shakespeare had opportunities to inspect. He was, of course, familiar from the earliest days of his arrival in London with the printing-shop of his fellow Stratfordian, Richard Field, and it was Field who published Shakespeare's first printed book, his poem of *Venus and Adonis*. In St Paul's Churchyard there was an array of bookshops. One bearing the sign of the 'White Greyhound' was kept by John Harrison, who in due course published Shakespeare's second poem, *The Rape of Lucrece*, which had also been printed by Richard Field. There was likewise the 'Lamb,' founded by Abraham Veale in 1546, and the 'Resurrection,' in 1547, by John Daye, who added the witty explanation to his sign, 'Arise, for it is Daye.' The 'Crown' in St Paul's Churchyard 'at Cheapgate' was opened in 1584, and was for very many years used as a bookselling and publishing office by Simon Waterson, and by his son after him. Here also was the 'Tiger's Head,' which was doubtless much frequented by Shakespeare, as there were published and sold the works of Chapman and Massinger, Beaumont and Dekker. Hard by in Paternoster Row was another 'Tiger,' the famous house of Christopher Barker, from which successive editions of the Breeches Bible were issued.

We may well suppose that often, after a long saunter among the bookshops of St Paul's Churchyard, Shakespeare would drop in for bodily refreshment and mental relaxation and amusement to the hostelry of the 'Castle' in Paternoster Row, which, until his death in 1588, was kept by the famous comic actor, Richard Tarleton, whose position in the Elizabethan world may best be understood by modern readers if we describe him, as we can with truth, as the 'Charlie Chaplin' of his age.

The above is an approximate reconstruction of the general character of Shakespeare's daily life in London in those years when he had found his footing and secured the prospect of a decent livelihood, but when he had yet to attain fame in more than a comparatively small circle. Already in 1591 he was busily writing that noble tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, which was the first of his works to reveal him as head and shoulders above all his contemporaries. Had only the plays written before *Romeo and Juliet* been preserved for posterity, we should have known something of the great promise there was in Shakespeare, but we should have had no adequate conception of his real greatness; and he would hardly have stood out markedly in the ranks of such contemporary writers as Marlowe or Peele or Kyd or Greene. If, on the other hand, *Romeo and Juliet* had been preserved, and all the later plays lost, whilst we should still have had an inadequate idea of Shakespeare's range and power, yet we should have been able to recognise in *Romeo and Juliet* one of the greatest of all achievements in literature, and should have known the author thereof for one of the supreme geniuses of the world. Of such cardinal importance is this tragedy in the life and work of Shakespeare, and in the making of his fame.

THE SNAKE.

By G. TREVOR ROLLER.

WHEN the wind blows up the rain in Mexico it can be very cold, even though you be on the edge of the hot country. Down the Balsas River, where the cactus-belt meets the scrub oak, are various rest-houses at intervals of ten miles or so along the high-road. Just two-roomed adobe huts roofed with shingles, they have no care-takers; they stand forlornly, but always ready for the traveller caught by the rain or the night.

On a certain afternoon outside one of these huts stood two dejected ponies, their hunched quarters slewed into the driving deluge; inside, in the front-room, were their owners, two men of the small *ranchero* type. One lay on a straw mat on the floor, a blanket thrown over him,

sleeping; the other sat on a wooden bench, the table before him, staring at the sleeper. They had met that morning by chance on the road, had ridden together for company's sake, and had decided to shelter—the rain would stop in an hour or so. They were apparently strangers. At all events, the sleeping man had never seen the watcher before. But as the watcher sat lowering at the silent form there was recognition in his face—he had recognised the man at the moment of meeting that morning. There was no mistake; he would have known him among a thousand.

He rested his elbows on the table, his chin on his two clenched fists, and his mind went back to the night before; to the narrow cobbled street

with the runnel of water down the middle that shone like a band of silver in the moonlight, the eaves dripping still from the last shower, and a darkened window with a balcony on the second storey of the house opposite. He had stood in a doorway waiting and sheltered from the drops, waiting for the church bells by the *plaza* to toll ten o'clock. Then the window would open and *she* would appear; a word or two, perhaps, a low laugh, and the window would close again, for they were early in the courting and she would be trying his patience. It would be only a moment's vision, but it would send him to his bed very happy; for, after all, was she not the most beautiful of all the women he had ever seen?—and in his small world he considered he had seen many.

The night before last she had thrown him a rose. It fell splash in the runnel, the silver band which was only a sewer really. She had laughed and disappeared, but he had picked it up and thrust it inside his cotton shirt next his bare skin. The thorns pricked him, and it damped his shirt, but not his love—she had worn it. That is the way love madness takes men. But he had been much before his time last night—a quarter of an hour or more. Down the street came a man—large sombrero and *zarrape* wrapped to his eyes—who stopped before the sacred window; so he drew back into the shadow of the doorway. The new-comer coughed twice, then very softly hummed a verse of 'La Paloma,' the Cuban love-song that Mexico has taken unto herself. The window opened, and the light behind silhouetted his divinity. A bare arm swung forward, and a rose circled into the air and fell at the feet of the new-comer, who snatched it up and pressed it to his lips. The window shut with a bang, and this rival walked back up the street. He followed him to a small *tienda*, and there he stood in the shadow and gazed while the stranger drank his *teca* and talked to the owner. The lamp shone on the man, and every feature was impressed indelibly on his rival's mind.

So he went out to the street again, thinking many thoughts. This girl, then, was a coquette; she had led him on, and he had found her out. He took from his breast the now faded rose she had given him. He tore it to pieces. The petals fell on the cobbles at his feet, and he crushed the core of it under his heel. And here he was now sitting and staring at the 'other man,' who slept as peacefully as a child, whilst he watched with rage in his thoughts, wishing he could slide a knife in between the ribs just where he felt sure last night's rose lay hidden. The rose, the ribs, and the man's heart all skewered together! That would be good, but the game was not worth the candle. Ah, *Dios*! why had he fallen in love?

A slight rustle near the door of the other room turned his head towards it. The door stood ajar, as it had done when last he looked. His eyes

wandered back to the sleeper, but another rustle made him glance back at the door, then down to the floor by the door.

Every muscle stiffened, and his first instinct was to throw his sombrero, which he still wore, at the thing that he saw. The next second he felt he must watch, and instinctively and without a sound he drew back his legs and tucked them under the bench, while the back of his neck and his spine tingled, for what he gazed at he feared.

Men who work in the cattle-country of Mexico know the *nulaki* snake, slow, fat, and poisonous; and here was a beautiful specimen, two feet long and very thick in proportion. The reptile had sensed warmth in the other room, and methodically it was seeking it. Slowly the snake wormed its way along the wall of the room towards the sleeper.

The man at the table knew that at a sudden sound—a scraping of feet on the mud floor—if he threw his heavy hat at it—the snake would give up its quest. But his brain worked quicker than the snake's movement, and he sat and watched. The fat brute reached the sleeper lying on his side with his back to it. Then it nosed under the blanket and disappeared, all but the tip of its tail, which just showed in the nape of the man's neck. The *nulaki* does not coil; it was lying along the sleeper's spine.

The man at the table watched the strange bed-fellows, knowing that soon, surely, one would overlie the other, with a bite as the result, and then—— Well, quick medical aid might save the case; a tourniquet above the bite and plenty of alcohol might save the bitten man. The watcher glanced over his shoulder at the saddle lying on the floor behind him. In the saddle-bag was a bottle of *teca*, potent spirit, that might save life, but the sleeper did not know it was there. The watcher could throw his saddle on his pony and gallop for help—and take care he went in the wrong direction for it. He would be rid of a rival, and——

Suddenly the sleeper woke, threw the blanket from him, stood up, stretched, and yawned.

The man at the table gripped it with both hands and went white. He watched the other go over to the mud stove away from his blanket; then he watched the blanket, and saw the slothful, poisonous thing creep out. He scraped with his feet, making a noise, and the brute slithered along the wall to the door of the other room, disappearing as the man who had slept spoke.

'Ah dear saints, what a dream—this stove will never light; it is all smashed up—but what a dream!' Here he turned on the man at the table. 'I dreamt,' he went on, 'that I was being hanged, and the rope was very, very thick. The knot at the back just at the nape of the neck tickled me, and with that I woke up. *Dios*! I do not often dream. Perhaps it was the cold.' He reached down and picked up the blanket and

folded it round him. 'This accursed blanket smells! Bah! it is my imagination and the dream. How I would like a good *copeta* of *teccla* now; but I have none. I seldom travel without it; it is so warming.' And he sat on the useless mud stove and shivered.

The man at the table shivered too.

'What made you dream so terribly?' he asked.

The other pulled tighter at the blanket as he wrapped it round himself.

'Well,' he said, 'last night I played a silly joke on a man I do not know. My wife's sister lives in the street that is called Latran, near the *plaza*. She is a pretty child, and always I have liked to joke with her. But I had heard—while out of town—that she has a *novia*, a sweet-heart. I do not know his name, but he is a worthy man, and her mother approves, and they are only at the beginning of their courtship. Also, I heard that he came to her window punctually at ten o'clock, and she would pass

him a note or what not. And I, like a fool, played a joke on her. I went to the window before the time, and hummed a tune. She came and threw me a rose, being, of course, unable to see me distinctly out in the street, and I went off laughing at the thought of the other fellow coming later, and her believing he had already been. A silly joke to play on her, and very unfortunate for the man. I saw all that this morning. It must have preyed on my mind, for I dreamt that this man had seen me, thought me a rival, followed me, caught me and bound me, and was about to hang me, when the knot of the rope tickled the back of my neck and I woke.'

The man at the table leaned back and pulled the saddle to him, groped in the saddle-bag, and produced the bottle of *teccla*.

'Come,' he said, 'I had forgotten I have this. Let us drink to our better acquaintance, to our friendship. But first I will shut the door of the other room; there is a draught.'

THE ISLAND OF SAKHALIN.

SEPARATED from the mainland of Asia by the narrow Mamia Sound, the island of Sakhalin (Saghalien), or, as it is called by the Japanese, Karafuto, lies in the Sea of Okhotsk between 54° 24' and 45° 59' north latitude, and has an area of some 24,500 square miles. It is for the most part mountainous, and the ranges run parallel to one another from north to south. Some of the tops rise above the tree-line, amongst these being Pormubari, 4250 feet. The coast is, generally speaking, rocky, with occasional tracts of sand, which are strewn with driftwood, seaweed, and wreckage. The island is traversed by a large number of rivers, several of which are both wide and long; there are also some lakes, and in the neighbourhood of the fishing-village of Chipesani, on the south coast, there are three of very considerable extent.

The forests are extensive, and consist mainly of larch (*Larix sibirica*) and spruce (*Abies Sakhalinensis*); but on the lower-lying tracts the elm and the birch are the most numerous represented. The fauna of Sakhalin is very abundant, and exhibits a great degree of similarity with the animal world of the Amur province. This is no doubt partly due to the fact that the Mamia Sound is frozen over in winter, and a convenient bridge is thus formed across which the mammals pass with ease. Among these may be named the reindeer, the tiger, the musk deer, the bear, the wolf, the lynx, the sable, the fox, and the otter.

At certain periods of the year the rivers are filled with salmon, which are captured in vast quantities, and the herring-fishing on the coast is extremely productive.

Sakhalin is inhabited by three more or less

original tribes—namely, the Gilyaks in the north, the Orochons in the centre, and the Ainu* in the south.

Soon after the Russians took possession of Amur Land, northern Sakhalin came under their influence; the southern part belonged to Japan, but in 1875 it was transferred to Russia in exchange for the Kurile Islands. Afterwards Sakhalin was used principally as a place of deportation for criminal offenders, and thousands of Russians from all parts of that huge empire were conveyed thither to lead a wretched existence.

After the Russo-Japanese war, southern Sakhalin was retransferred in 1905 to Japan, which is now doing everything possible to colonise it. The coasts are already pretty closely inhabited by Japanese fisherfolk, who reap rich harvests from the sea and the rivers; but the interior of the island is still a desert.

The capital of Japanese Sakhalin is Toyohara (formerly Vladimirofka); but several other towns are rising up along the coasts, among the most important being Otomari, Marka, and Siska.

Up till now fishing has been the islanders' main source of livelihood, but sooner or later the pine-forests will, of course, be exploited. In connection with agriculture, too, there are many possibilities, but as yet little has been done in that direction. Although the Government offers them land on very favourable terms and various other advantages, the Japanese do not take kindly to farming on Sakhalin.

* These people are generally termed 'Aino' or 'Ainos'; but this is hardly correct. 'Aino' is a nickname, and is always applied by the Japanese to the Ainu. Originally a term of contempt, it means 'mongrel' or 'half-breed', whereas 'Ainu' means 'man' or 'men'.

The way in which the Ainu were induced, about the beginning of the nineteenth century, to settle in increasing numbers on Sakhalin illustrates Japanese wiliness. A party of Ainu hunters had determined on an expedition to the interior of the island, which abounds with wild animals of various kinds. Thanks to the facilities offered by the Japanese authorities, the voyage from Yezo to Sakhalin was made easy, and the hunting-party, which included a number of women and children, was landed on the south coast, whence the journey to the inland forests was begun. The expedition proved highly successful, and a great many valuable skins were secured; but when the Ainu wished to return to Yezo, obstacles were placed in their way, and while they were waiting for a ship Japanese traders turned up, bringing with them plenty of *sake* (a form of spirit distilled from rice). In exchange for this cheap poison they obtained the costly furs, and when the Ainu had parted with these all chance of their returning home to Yezo had disappeared. The whole affair had been planned: the Ainu were left in the lurch, and were compelled to remain on Sakhalin. Other hunting-parties were similarly treated, and in time the small communities which now exist were formed; but every now and again the Japanese merchant makes his appearance, and does a good stroke of business for himself.

Naibutachi is one of the largest and oldest of the villages. It contains about 150 inhabitants. The dwellings are small and low, and the store-houses are supported on piles five to six feet high, so as to prevent the sledge-dogs (with which the place abounds) from getting at their contents. In the open spaces stand groups of whittled wands adorned with the skulls of bears, sea-lions, and dogs. These are in the nature of fetishes, and constitute a feature of all purely Ainu villages. Individually they are called *inao*, and when in clusters *nusa*. They are also to be found upon the seashore where the men push off their boats when going to fish; they are placed there for the gods of the sea, and are called *kema-ush-inao*. The Ainu of the present day are the remnant of a once numerous people who inhabited Japan long before the appearance on the scene of the Japanese. In the oldest Japanese book, written in 712 A.D., the following occurs: 'When our august ancestors descended from heaven in a boat, they found upon this island (Yezo) several barbarous races, the most fierce of whom were the Ainu.'

In the same work reference is also made to a race of dwarfs with whom the ancient Japanese waged war. They are said to have had tails, and to have lived in caves with stone floors. On one occasion the Emperor Jimmu would seem to have had a number of them slaughtered in cold blood. Thus we read: 'When His Augustness made his progress and reached the great cave of Osaka, earth-spiders with tails—namely,

eighty braves—were in the cave awaiting him. So then the august Son of the Heavenly Deity commanded that a banquet be bestowed on the eighty braves. Thereupon he set eighty butlers, one for each of the eighty braves, and girded each of them with a sword, and instructed the butlers, saying, "When ye hear me sing, cut them down simultaneously." And this was accordingly done.'

There is a tradition among the Ainu of Sakhalin to the effect that they are descended from these cave-dwelling dwarfs. If such be the case, the race has improved very considerably, for the Sakhalin Ainu are rather fine-looking people.

Towards the end of May salmon begin to ascend the rivers, and they do so in such vast shoals that many are crowded out on to the banks, where the bears, which are very numerous on the island, feast upon them. In June, July, and August, indeed, these animals live almost entirely on fish—more especially salmon, and on this diet they thrive and multiply exceedingly. The vegetation in the neighbourhood of the rivers is so dense that effective pursuit is almost impossible, but the Ainu hunters have all sorts of contrivances for the capture or the destruction of bears. In connection with these they use a poison so powerful that an animal wounded by an arrow treated with it will drop dead after going only a few hundred yards. Curiously enough, the flesh of a bear thus killed does not seem to be affected, as the Ainu eat it with impunity. The composition of this poison is a secret which the Japanese have in vain endeavoured to find out, and it is handed down from father to son.

On the eastern coasts of Sakhalin the fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*) is found, more especially during the herring season. On the island of Kaihy-to and in its neighbourhood this species is protected, and at certain times of the year, therefore, it occurs there in large numbers. This island, which lies in 48° 30' north latitude and 144° 30' east longitude, is rocky and almost entirely devoid of vegetation. Its Japanese name, Kaihjo-to, means 'Fur Seal Island,' and is extremely appropriate. Amongst the professional hunters it was always well known as one of the greatest rendezvous of these valuable animals. When, after the Russo-Japanese war, southern Sakhalin was restored to Japan, the Government of that country at once took steps to protect as much as possible the seals on Kaihjo-to. No shot was allowed to be fired there, no steamship signalling was permitted in the neighbourhood, and any disturbance of the seals was strictly forbidden. The effect of these measures became very quickly apparent, and the seals, which, owing to severe and constant persecution, had diminished in numbers very greatly, have now increased enormously. The annual increase varies, of course, considerably, but it has on the whole exceeded all expectations.

In order to indemnify to some extent the

foreign shipowners for the losses sustained by them owing to the total prohibition of sealing in these regions, the Japanese Government undertook to give them a share in the annual catch. Every year, in the month of June, a Japanese official proceeds to the island in order to superintend the slaughtering of a certain number of seals; and the value of these is distributed among the different Governments for the benefit of the shipowners. The number taken for this purpose varies with the stock in sight, so to speak, and is between 300 and 600 annually.

On Kaihjo-to female seals are absolutely immune, and the victims killed yearly consist mostly of two- and three-year-old males. They are driven in herds to a certain part of the island, where they are clubbed. The slaughtering-time

lasts for three months—June, July, and August—and after that the animals are left entirely undisturbed until June in the following year.

Naturally, of course, the occurrence of the fur seal in Sakhalin waters is not confined to the island of Kaihjo-to, although great numbers of them remain there throughout the spring and the summer months. Many wander far afield—along the east coast of Sakhalin, northwards to Kamchatka, and eastwards to the Kurile and the Aleutian Islands; but nowhere are they so tame as at Kaihjo-to, where they are protected, and are looked after by watchers who live there all the year round. Once a month a steamer brings these men provisions and other necessities. Even fresh water has to be brought from Sakhalin, there being none on Kaihjo-to.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XVI.—*continued.*

III.

FROM the time that Austin Selwyn received the note there was nothing else in his mind—as in Elise's—but the coming meeting. As playwrights planning a scene, each went through the encounter in prospect a dozen times, reading into it the play of emotions which was almost certain to dominate the affair. Although completely ignorant of her motive in writing to him, Selwyn invented a hundred different reasons—only to discard them all. Nor was Elise more able to satisfy herself as to the outcome of the meeting. It was not his actions that were difficult to forecast, but her own. Would her dislike of him be intensified? Would she experience again the momentary rapture of that summer afternoon?

It was fortunate that another lover had appeared for Marian, so that the desertion of Maynard did not leave her moping untidily about the place. She was one of those women who are so singularly lacking in self-sufficiency that, except when in the company of men, they are as flat as champagne from which the sparkle has departed.

It so happened, therefore, that Elise was again alone the following evening, dreading Selwyn's arrival, yet impatient of delay.

A few minutes after eight she heard him knock, and going to the street door, opened it for him. The night was a vapourish, miserable one, blurring his figure into indistinctness, and when he spoke his voice was hoarse, as though the damp tendrils of the mist had penetrated to his throat.

Answering something to his greeting, she led him through the hall into the sitting-room. He paused as he entered. Without looking back, she crossed to the fireplace, and kneeling down, stirred the fire.

'May I help?'

'No, thanks. I prefer to do it.'

Her answer had followed so swiftly on his question that he stopped in the act of stepping forward. She looked over her shoulder with a swift, searching glance.

His face was a tired gray, and the silk scarf thrown about his neck looked oddly vivid against the black evening-clothes and overcoat. But if his face suggested weariness, his eyes were alive with dynamic force. The intensity of the man's personality strangely moved Elise. She felt the presence of a mind and a body vibrating with tremendous purpose—a man who drew vitality from others, yet charged them in return with his own greater store.

To her he seemed to have divorced himself from type—he had lost even the usual characteristics of race. With the thought, she wondered how far his solitary life had effected the transition, if his idealism had brought him loneliness.

'Won't you sit down?' she said hesitatingly.

'Do you mind if I stand?' he replied.

She acquiesced, and took a seat in the chair from which Maynard had run the emotional gamut the previous evening. His desire to stand annoyed her. It was nothing, but at the very beginning it introduced an element of duelling.

'You look pale,' she said. 'I hope you have not been unwell.'

'No—no; it is merely that I have been so little out of doors. I could not gather from your note what kind of work you were engaged in. I see you are an ambulance-driver. I congratulate you.'

His voice conveyed nothing but polite interest in an obvious situation. With over-sensitive apprehension she listened for any suggestion of sarcasm that lay behind his words, but she could detect nothing beyond mere impersonal courtesy—that, and a far-off weariness, as of one who has passed the borders of fatigue.

'I wrote to your mother,' he said, 'when I heard of your elder brother's death. It must have been a great grief to you all.'

She did not answer him. His manner was so cold that he might have been deliberately disposing of a number of prepared comments rendered imperative by the laws of polite intercourse.

'Why didn't you let us know you had seen Dick?' she said abruptly.

'Then—you have heard?' He raised his eyebrows in surprise.

'Only last night, by the merest accident. He might have been killed in France, and we should never have known about it.' Her words were resentful and swift. 'Will you please tell me about him?'

Omitting the incident of Archibald's tavern, Selwyn told of the chance meeting with Dick, the encounter with Johnston Smyth, the night at the rooms in St James's Square, and the subsequent glimpse of them marching through Whitehall.

'Your brother asked me to say nothing,' he said calmly. 'That is one of the reasons why I did not let you know.'

'Had Dick changed at all?' she asked, trying to make her words as listless as his. 'I wish that you would tell me something that he said. You must know more about him than just'—

'I don't think he had changed,' said Selwyn; and for the first time his voice was tinged with compassion. 'He spoke of you with a kind of worship. I suppose you know how he idolises you.'

His dark eyes looked at her through partially closed eyelashes, but only the manner in which her fingers compressed the fold of her skirt betrayed the turmoil of her feelings.

'Is that all you can tell me?'

'That is all.' He made no attempt to elaborate the conversation or to introduce any new theme. The scene which had promised to be so dramatic was actually dragging with uncomfortable silences. She waited long enough for him to speak, but when he remained silent—it was a sardonic silence to her—she rose from the chair with the manner of one who has determined to bring an interview to a close.

'Thank you for coming so promptly,' she said. 'I am most grateful for your kindness to Dick—and I know enough of the law to realise that you were taking a risk in hiding him.'

'It was nothing at all,' he said. He looked at her for an indication that her questions were at an end.

'I hope you will be able to get a taxi,' she ventured helplessly.

For the first time he smiled, and she reddened with mortification. He had been so cool and unyielding, so bloodless, that he had forced her to a disadvantage. She knew he could not be ignorant of the strain of the affair on her, yet he had done nothing to ease it. If she could have

projected her mind into his, she would have seen that his conduct was as inexplicable to himself as to her. He knew he was hurting her. Perhaps it was because her warm lips and crimson cheeks were creating a torment in his soul that he could not curb the impulse to wound her. It may have been the subconscious knowledge that where one can hurt one can conquer that dominated his actions. While she resented the invulnerability with which he guarded his own feelings, it is probable that any different attitude on his part would have brought forth a more active unkindness on hers. When men and women love, strange paradoxes are found.

They went to the door together, and in the brighter light of the hall Elise saw for the first time that he was considerably thinner, and that his brow was like marble. She felt a little stab of pity for him, forgetting his own lack of sympathy towards herself; she caught a faint realisation of what he must have endured for it to have marked him so indelibly.

'Don't you think,' she said, 'that you ought to go to the seaside for a while? You are not looking at all well.'

His lips grew firmer, but there was a curious look in his eyes as he turned towards her. 'I have work to do here,' he said crisply.

'I know—but surely'—

'In London,' he said—and there was a suggestion of the fanatic's ecstasy in his voice—it is impossible to forget life. I don't want my mind soothed or lulled. You can always hear the challenge of the human destiny in London.' He had held his head erect, and had spoken louder than was his custom; but, checking himself, he made a queer, dramatic gesture with his hands.

The fire of his spirit swept over her. Once more she stood close to him, as she had done so many times in her thoughts. She did not know whether she loved or detested him. She was fascinated—trembling—longing for him to force her to surrender in his arms—knowing that she would hate him if he did. She gave a little cry as Selwyn, almost as if he read her conflicting thoughts, took her arms with his hands once more.

'If we had both been English,' he said, and his voice was so parched that it seemed to have been scorched by his spirit, 'or if we had met in other times than these, things might have been different. I know what you think of me for the work I am doing, but it would be as impossible for me to give it up as for you to think as I do. We come of two different worlds, you and I. . . . I am sorry we have met to-night. For me, at least, it has reopened old wounds. And it is all so useless.'

She made no reply; but as his eyes were lowered to her face, and he saw once more the trembling lips, her unsoiled womanliness, her whole vivid, lonely, gripping charm, a look of suffering crossed his face. He realised the

hopelessness of it all, but the admission was like tearing out a thread which had been woven into the whole scheme of his being.

'We both have our work to do,' he said wearily, letting his arms drop to his side. 'Good-night.'

She answered, but did not give him her hand. With a repetition of the farewell he left her, and she walked musingly into the room again. She felt a flush of anger at his daring to say their friendship was impossible, when she had not even suggested that it could ever be resumed. His vanity knew no bounds. . . . She was furious at having let him hold her as he did—even more furious with the knowledge that she would not have resisted if he had kissed her.

'And not once,' she murmured, with a little catch of her breath, 'did he call me "Elise."'

CHAPTER XVII.—MOONLIGHT.

I.

TWO summers came and went, and the little park in St James's Square rested once more beneath its covering of autumn leaves.

Selwyn, who was still occupying the rooms of the absent New Yorker, was looking over his morning mail. The thinning of his hair at the temples was more pronounced, and here and there was the warning of premature gray. He had lost flesh, but his face had steadied into a set grimness, and his mouth had the firmness of one who had fought a long uphill fight.

Looking through a heavy mail, he extracted a letter from his New York agent:

'Oct. 2nd, 1916.

'DEAR MR SELWYN,—You will be interested to know that the extraordinary sensation caused by your writings in America has resulted in the sale of them to Mr J. V. Schneider for foreign rights. They have been translated, and will shortly appear in the press of Spain, Norway, Holland, and the various states of South America.

'It would be impossible for me to forward more than a small percentage of the comments of our press on your work, but in my whole literary experience I don't remember any writer who has caused such a storm of comment on every appearance as you. As you can see by the selection I have made, the papers are by no means entirely favourable. I feel that you should know that you are openly accused of pro-Germanism, of being a conscientious objector, &c., &c.—all of which, of course, means excellent advertisement.

'I have had many inquiries as to whether you would care to conduct a lecture-tour. There is a Mr C. B. Benjamin, who is financially interested in Mr Schneider's affairs, and who is willing to pay you almost anything within reason, if you care to state your terms.

'Of course, the most discussed article of all is

"The Island of Darkness," in which you accuse Britain of contributing so largely towards bringing about the present war. The German-American organisations and the strong Irish section here were especially jubilant, and every one concedes that it has awakened a great deal of resentment against Britain that had been forgotten since the beginning of the war. Even your detractors admit that "The Island of Darkness" will live as a literary classic.

'Your first ten articles have been made into book form under the title *America's War*, and are selling most satisfactorily. The first edition has gone into 40,000 copies. The attached clipping from the *New York Express* is fairly typical of the reception given the book by the pro-Entente press.

'Your September statement will go forward to-morrow with cheque covering foreign rights, royalties, &c.—I am, Mr Selwyn, yours very truly,
S. T. LYONS.'

With hardly more than a merely casual interest, Selwyn glanced at the clipping attached to the letter. It was from the editorial page of the *Express*.

'THE MENACE OF SELWYN.

'In 1912 Austin Selwyn was known as a younger member of New York's writing fraternity. He had done one or two good things and several mediocre ones, but promised to reach the doubtful altitude of best-sellership without difficulty. To-day Selwyn is the mouthpiece of neutrality. He has preached it in a language that will not permit of indifference. He has succeeded in surrounding his doubtful idealism with a vigor that commands attention, even if not respect. Right in the heart of London he is turning out insidious propaganda which is being seized upon by every neutral American who has his own reasons for wanting us to keep out of war. It would be absurd to say that one man's writing could in itself sway a great nation, but nevertheless it is a vehicle which is being used to the limit by every pro-German agency in this free land.

'Truly we are a strange people. We have a President who deliberately cuts his political throat with a phrase, "Too proud to fight;" but because we think Wilson is a greater man than he himself knows, we sew up the cut and send him back for another term. In the same way, although every red-blooded American has in his heart been at war with Germany since the *Lusitania*, we permit this man Selwyn to go on cocaining the conscience of our people until our flag, which we have loved to honor, is beginning to be a thing of shame. He should be brought back from England and interned here with a few "neutral" German-Americans. He certainly can write, and perhaps from confinement he might give us a second *De Profundis*. His

book, *America's War*, which is now on the market, is a series of arguments showing that America is at war with the causes of the war. It is a nice conceit. Our advice is to add the book to your library—but don't read it for ten years. In that time it will be interesting to see the work of a brilliant mind prostituted (and in this we are placing the most charitable construction on Mr Selwyn's motives) by intellectual perversion.'

Without the expression of his face undergoing any change, Selwyn carefully placed the letter on his file, and took from the envelope a number of American press clippings. Choosing them at random, he contented himself with reading the headings:

'Author of "The Island of Darkness" again hits out.'

'"Britain has thrived on European medievalism," says Austin Selwyn.'

'More hot air from the super-Selwyn.'

'Selwyn is the spokesman for enlightened America.'

'Masterful thinker, masterful writer, is the author of "The Island of Darkness."'

'What does Selwyn receive from Germany?'

'The arch-hypocrite of American letters.'

With a shrug of his shoulders he threw them to one side. 'A pack of hounds,' he muttered, 'howling at the moon!'

He leaned back in his chair and pondered over the written word that could leap such spaces and carry his message into countries which he had never seen. It was with a deeper emotion than just the author's pleasure at recognition that he visualised his ancestor leaving Holland for the New World, and the strange trend of events which was resulting in the emigrant's descendant sending back to the Netherlands his call to higher and world citizenship.

Still ruminating over the power that had become his, he noticed a letter, on the envelope of which was written 'On Active Service,' and breaking the seal, found that it was from Douglas Watson, written at a British hospital in France. As Selwyn read it the impassiveness of his face gave way to a look of trouble. For the first time in many months there was the quick play of expression about his lips and his eyes that had always differentiated him from those about him.

At the conclusion of the letter he put it down, and crossing to the French windows, leaned against them, while his fingers drummed nervously on the glass. With a gesture of impatience, as though he resented its having been written at all, he picked up the letter once more, and turning the pages, quickly reached the part which had affected him so:

'They tell me I'm going to lose my arm, and that I'm out of it; but they're wrong. I'm going back to America just as soon as they will let me, and I'm going to tell them at home what

this war is about. And, what's more, I'm going to tell them what war is. It isn't great armies moving wonderfully forward "as if on parade," as some of these newspaper fellows tell you. It's a putrid, rotten business. After Loos dead men and horses rotted for days in the sun. War's not a thing of glory; it's rats and vermin and filth and murder. Three weeks ago I killed a German. He hadn't a chance to get his gun up before I stuck him with my bayonet like a pig. As he fell his helmet rolled off; he was about eighteen, with sort of golden hair, and light, light blue eyes. I've been through some hell, Austin, but when I saw his face I cried like a kid. To you that's another argument for our remaining neutral. To me that poor little Fritz is the very reason America should have been in it from the first. Can't you see that this Prussian outfit is not only murdering Frenchmen and Russians and Britishers, but is murdering her own men as well? If America had been in the war it would have been over now, and every day she holds back means so many more of the best men in the world dead.

'For the love of Mike, Austin, clear your brains. I have seen your stuff in American papers sent over to me, and it's vile rot. Tomorrow they're going to take my left arm from me, but'—

Selwyn crumpled the letter in his hand and hurled it into the fireplace. Plunging his hands into his pockets, he paced the room as he had done that night when Watson had called to tell him he was going to enlist. He was seized with an incoherent fury at it all—the inhumanity of it—the degradation of the whole thing. But through the formless cloud of his thoughts there gleamed the one incessant phrase 'about eighteen, with sort of golden hair, and light, light blue eyes.' Why should that groove his consciousness so deeply? He had heard, unmoved, of the death of Malcolm Durwent. A month ago he had read how Captain Fensome, of Lady Durwent's house-party, had been killed trying to rescue his servant in No Man's Land. The sight of Dick Durwent and Johnston Smyth marching away had been only a spur to more intensive writing. Then why should that haltingly worded sentence lie like ice against his heart?

A sharp pain shot through his head.

Stopping his walk, he leaned once more against the windows, and rested his hot face on the grateful coolness of the glass.

What, he questioned, had he accomplished, after all? He had gained the ears of millions, but the war was no nearer a close. America was neutral—that was true. *But why was America neutral?* Had he falsely idealised his own country? Was her aloofness from the world-war the result of a passionate, overwhelming realisation of her God-deputed destiny, as he had imagined?

Hitherto he had paid no attention to the writings in the English press chronicling the passing of the world's gold reserve from London to New York. He had ignored the evidence of nation-wide prosperity from the Atlantic coast to San Francisco. All such things he had dismissed as unavoidable, unsought material results of America's spiritual neutrality.

Yet, while the wheels of prosperity were turning at such a pitch, there was a boy lying dead—about eighteen.

He beat his fist into the palm of his hand. Who was this Schneider who had purchased foreign rights of his articles? What sort of a man was this Benjamin who wanted him to lecture? Were they, as he had supposed, men of vision who wished to co-operate in achieving the great unison of Right? . . . Or were they . . . ?

The thought was hideous. Was it possible that those writings, born of his mental torture, robbing him of every friend he valued—was it thinkable that they had been used for gross purposes?

His fingers again played rapidly against the windows as he wrestled with the sudden ugly suspicion. At last, utterly exhausted, he sank into a chair.

'There is only one thing I can do,' he said decisively: 'return to America at once. If, as I have thought, her neutrality is in tune with the highest; if my fellow-countrymen are imbued with such a spirit of infinite mercifulness that from them will flow the healing streams to cure the wounds of bleeding Europe, then I have carried a lamp whose light reflects the face of God. . . . But if . . .'

(Continued on page 371.)

SPEAKING AND SIGNALLING OVER LONG DISTANCES.

By 'SIGNALS.'

ONE of the most prominent characteristics of scientific development and discovery is the great benefit which sometimes follows from the application to commercial purposes of what at first appears to be an advance in purely academic knowledge.

A striking instance of this nature is furnished by the development in recent years of what is known as the Thermionic Valve, or the Audion. The applications of the principles underlying the audion are the subject of a steadily increasing number of patents, and the theory of its action in fulfilling the different purposes for which it is used is discussed in innumerable lectures and papers in the various scientific societies and journals.

The pioneers in the discovery of this invention were Professor J. A. Fleming and Dr Lee de Forest, and they and many other notable scientists have contributed to its development during the last twelve years.

In one of its simplest forms the thermionic valve has the appearance of an electric incandescent filament lamp of the ordinary size, with the addition of a 'grid' of fine wires of small mesh and a small cylindrical metal plate arranged concentrically around the filament. The filament, which is of tantalum, is similar to that used for a lamp, but is of smaller size and more compactly arranged. It is surrounded by the grid, which in turn is encased by the cylindrical plate, both grid and plate being of nickel.

Briefly stated, the action of the valve depends on the emission from an incandescent filament, glowing in a vacuum, of negatively charged electrons, and their power of producing a conducting medium for electric currents in the space between the grid and the plate. To increase the effect, the plate is maintained at a potential of

from thirty to forty volts by means of a battery of small dry cells.

The peculiarity of the valve under these conditions is that if the grid or mesh is now connected to an electric circuit on which minute oscillations or variations of potential are occurring, these variations will cause large increases and decreases in the current flowing from the battery between the filament and the plate.

The effect produced is a true magnification, without distortion, within certain limits, and in conjunction with a telephone very feeble currents, such as those produced by long-distance wireless signals or telephone speech, can be magnified to any desired effect, and thus give rise to audible sounds.

So far, the chief application for commercial purposes to which the thermionic valve or audion has been put is for the reception of wireless signals. Wireless waves which are too feeble to be observed by the detectors previously in use may be magnified as many times as required by the use of one or more of the valves, so that the oscillations may be easily recorded.

The facility with which faint signals may be detected and magnified by this means has enabled small reception aerials to be used which, by being carefully sited towards the sending-station and tuned to the frequency of the waves of electrical disturbance it is desired to 'pick up,' cut out all extraneous disturbances, permitting the required signals to be read without interference from other sources. This applies to both wireless telegraphy and telephony, and the distances over which wireless telephony is now practicable have been largely increased.

Another important application of this system of magnifying feeble currents is to be found in

the 'relaying' of telephone speech currents. The limit of distance over which it was possible to speak by the use of wires, without a prohibitive expenditure of copper in the conductors, appeared to have been reached before the introduction of the thermionic valve furnished a practical means of producing a telephone 'relay.'

With the employment of an audion as a 'relaying' instrument, there is now no reasonable limit to the distance over which speech can be transmitted by the use of wires of moderate gauge, and the possibility has been opened up of direct speech along an Atlantic cable suitably designed for this purpose.

The great development of wireless telephony and telegraphy for naval and military purposes, and particularly in the direction of communication with aeroplanes, has largely centred around this discovery. The simplicity and portability of the valve, and its suitability for both transmitting and receiving purposes, have opened up means of communication which were not contemplated at the commencement of the war; and it is gratifying to know that the Germans admitted in the published intelligence summaries of their General Staff that in the struggle for supremacy in the use and improvement of wireless telegraphy we held a lead which they were unable to overtake.

With the devotion of time and pains to the investigation of the possible applications of this discovery, further methods of employing it for the benefit of mankind will doubtless be revealed. One simple application suggests itself which does not appear to have been tried as yet. When a speaker is addressing a vast public meeting, the difficulty of making himself clearly heard throughout a large hall could be overcome by the use of the thermionic valve, which might be employed to amplify the sound of the voice,

and, if necessary, to reproduce it simultaneously at several points of the building; for the valve enables the vibrations produced by the human voice to be magnified without distortion, and without losing any of the characteristics of the original sound.

A small receiver in front of the speaker, and reproduction transmitters suitably placed in proximity to various portions of the audience, would enable the orator's words to be heard clearly beyond the limits to which an ordinary voice would penetrate. The strain on the speaker would by this means be very much reduced, and the effort of making the voice carry to the most remote portions of a large audience would be no greater than that involved in speaking to a small gathering. There would, of course, be no time interval between the sounds as spoken and as heard from the reproducing instrument, while the gestures accompanying the speech would synchronise with the sounds as reproduced.

Extensions of this principle would enable a speech or a declaration to be made to many audiences at one and the same time. By the use of the ordinary telephone system, as many halls as required could be connected to the place at which the speech was being delivered. At each of the connected halls the sounds as spoken into the receiver at the place where they originated would be suitably magnified and transmitted with no distortion, but with sufficient volume to be clearly heard.

Many other possibilities present themselves, such as its association with the 'electrophone' and the gramophone for reproducing loud records, and as the properties of the valve become more widely and precisely known, its adaptation for other commercial purposes may be confidently predicted.

MILLE BOMBES!

CHAPTER V.—AFTER FOUR YEARS.

FOUR years went by. Prosper had established himself in the Semois valley, and Mathilde, now in her twelfth year, had grown into a bonny girl. At school, and among the village folk, she had made a name by her silence and by a very uncommon memory. Everything seemed to be as a tale to her, she listened with such round-eyed alertness and pleasure. The curé, meeting Prosper one evening, spoke of these matters. 'As water passes into a sponge,' he said, 'so teaching, religious and other, passes into this girl's mind. If these natural gifts are not overstrained, they will grow and grow, and Mathilde will not be a peasant-woman, my good friend.'

Prosper carried these laurels with difficulty. He was eager to boast about Mathilde's good gifts, but the curé told him to guard his tongue, else the village mothers would not be on his side.

Two or three times a year there was a sketching visit from Crowley, and now and then Bertrand and Colin came. Then Prosper was in his glory, and listened open-mouthed to all the studio news. His friends had left the academy, and were trying, without much success, to pay for their painting materials by selling their pictures. 'Not to sell what you paint,' said Prosper, 'is like keeping a family. But I didn't think of this when I helped to make pictures.'

In the autumn of 1904, after a week's sketching, Crowley promised to return in the winter. 'You see, Prosper, I want to paint this country-side after a snowstorm. Will you write to me if you get a snowstorm that is really big!'

'Yes, m'sieu, of course; but I don't want any storm to be too big. This little house, you know,

is only two hundred metres from the Semois, and it isn't built with much good sense. It stands in a cup of ground, with a ridge behind it; so water would collect rapidly, wouldn't it? In winter, then, I keep my eye open for a flood.'

After Crowley's going there was much talk of snow between Prosper and Mathilde; or, rather, Prosper talked and the child listened eagerly, for she was very fond of Crowley.

'Maybe M'sieu Colin will come too, and bother the curé with his chaff about Renan and science, and other things,' said the ex-model. 'Just snow enough—not too much snow. Then you'll write the letter and I'll look on.'

A cold winter set in, with piercing winds and frequent severe frost; but no snow fell before Christmas. Soon afterwards it began to fall, with a steadiness very wonderful to see, producing enchanting effects on the wooded landscape. For about forty-eight hours a clustering white mantle gathered quickly on all things. Then a keen wind swept through the valley and piled the snow into drifts. The wind fell, snow came on again—and Mathilde wrote to Crowley. In three days an answer came. Crowley had a portrait to paint, but he would come down on Prosper's birthday, 16th January. Would Mathilde let him know if the snow went away?

The snow did not go away. No peasant, not the oldest in the neighbourhood, had ever seen such an alarming white winter. If a thaw came suddenly, not gradually, the Semois in a gathering spate would overleap its banks and become a noisy, ravaging inundation.

But human forethought is rarely, if ever, complete. Most persons like to turn from unpleasant facts to phrases that cheer; and it happened that neither Prosper nor his neighbours gave sufficient heed to the temperature, which was not yet cold enough for a long snow season.

The day before Crowley's arrival an exquisite morning shone with crystalline brilliance from a serenely ardent sky, a pale-blue infinity. The glowing white valley and its blue shadows throbbled with loveliness, as though the pulse-beat of Nature's heart had been braced by the cold bath of snow; and the air was like enchanted wine worth a guinea a glass. Peasants drew it with joy into their lungs and felt light with hopeful confidence. And then, about mid-day, a veering wind became milder and milder.

In the evening Prosper said to Mathilde, 'Fillette, will you be afraid if I leave you alone while I go to our village and seek help? Tomorrow we must move, carrying away as much as we can.'

'I've been afraid once, only once, and then you came,' Mathilde answered. 'And I cannot be all alone, as I've Lion, and also that funny, beautiful book of pictures by Caldecott that my friend M'sieu Crowley sent me. If I learn the English verses all by heart, M'sieu Crowley will be pleased. Oh, I like so much to please him!'

Lion was a large Flemish cart-dog, a Prosper of its breed. It is one of nature's laws that big organisms are usually tolerant, while the small and tiny are usually aggressive, like microbes and mosquitoes.

Prosper had two lanterns; he lit the larger one and went out into the thaw. Walking was difficult, as the pathway across the fields undulated, and the snow, somewhat more than two feet deep on the path itself, was a trap in hollows. But Prosper did not mind. He was cheered by the sky. Great clouds had collected again; only a star here and there could be seen. If snow falls again, Prosper thought, the thaw will end, and M'sieu Crowley will not be disappointed.

In the village he made arrangements with five good fellows who promised to be at the farm soon after daybreak. On his way home Prosper passed the *estaminet* and called good-night to Charles Janssens, the landlord, who had come to his door to see what the weather was going to do.

'More snow is coming,' said Janssens. 'Better have a glass before you go on! Eh? A little, sweet, warming glass?'

Prosper stopped. 'A glass?' he repeated. 'No. These three years I've not touched a drop. *Mille bombes!* What a thirst I used to have! It gnawed inside me. Well, it's gone!'

'So I don't get rich!' cried Janssens, whose gruff voice fawned. 'Still, you've done me more than one good turn, Prosper, and I'll do you one now. As an artist stays with you now and then, you ought to have a bottle of good stuff in your house.'

'True, there'll be no harm in that. Well?'

'A friend of mine in France has sent me some splendid absinthe. One little glass—one sweet little tickling glass of it—will delight M'sieu Crowley. I'll give you a bottle, then?'

'M'sieu Crowley never drinks absinthe,' said Prosper. 'He's what they call an athlete, and keeps himself trained.'

'But M'sieu Colin drinks many things,' the landlord answered. 'And M'sieu Bertrand too. I know! So a bottle you shall have!'

Janssens went indoors, but no sooner had he taken a bottle from a shelf behind his bar than he noticed another which was only about half-filled, and at once his face brightened. Why give away a full bottle when another could be diluted with water? He looked furtively towards the door; it was closed, and Prosper was outside. In a trice he added enough water, and put in the cork, but not to its full length.

In a happy mood, Janssens returned to Prosper and held the bottle temptingly near the lantern. 'See how good this drink looks!' he pleaded. 'And notice that the cork has been drawn! There's hospitality! It invites all the world to have a sip! Into your pocket it goes—there! Good-night!'

'Cabarets used to empty my pockets, Janssens ! Thanks, and good-night !'

Clouds had thickened, and, in spite of that eerie twilight which comes in the dark from snow, walking was increasingly troublesome. Wet to the knees and his feet painful with cold, Prosper plodded on. Presently the power of suggestion began to work in his mind, just as a story works in a writer's. He recalled word by word what Janssens had said about the absinthe, and soon he was fingering the bottle through his overcoat. 'It invites all the world to have a sip !' Prosper halted, hesitated, and then he walked more rapidly and without care ; missed the footsteps he had made on his way to the village, and blundered suddenly into a drift ; stumbled, and dropped his lantern. '*Imbécile !*' he cried aloud. The lantern was easy to recover, but it had gone out, and he had stupidly left his matches at home.

Prosper groped his way back till he recovered his old foot-tracks, but now and then he lost his bearings when passing through a wood. He grew colder, and soon the innkeeper's words returned. 'It invites all the world to have a sip !' It was like a melody in music, it ran so easily in Prosper's mind—so easily and so persuasively. What harm would be done if he took a sip ? At last, with a swift, hurried movement, he tugged the bottle from his pocket and fingered the cork ; and then, suddenly, he put the bottle to his mouth and gripped the cork with his teeth. At this moment there happened in his spiritual depths one of those impulses, seemingly freakish, which do more work in man's world than argument and reason. Prosper began to think of Crowley, his friend and patron, and not of Mathilde, who had altered and bettered his whole life !

'What would M'sieu Crowley say,' Prosper thought, 'if I let myself be beaten by this bottle ? Would he come to see me again ?'

These questions shot through his mind while his teeth gripped the cork. His teeth relaxed, but the bottle remained at his mouth. For the first time Prosper became fully conscious that his respect for Crowley was so deep that the loss of the Englishman's friendliness and esteem would make him self-ashamed and solitary.

'Ah, he'd give me up !' Prosper thought. 'He'd go away and tell Bertrand and Colin, and all would be over. Yes, and what would the *fillette* say ?'

On his arrival at this question he lowered his arms quickly. Mathilde would forgive and forget whatever he might do ; but although he believed so, yet thinking of Mathilde reinforced the self-discipline which his respect for Crowley had stirred into action. His mind, went on thinking till at last, and all of a sudden, another impulse came. Prosper took the bottle by the neck and hurled it away from him.

'*Mille bombes !*' he said aloud. The tone

implied that his inward struggle had been very keen and tiring. Prosper took off his cap, and with a rough movement of his hand wiped sweat from his brow. 'There's a fire in my head,' he thought ; and then with an irritable movement he stooped, and knelt, and thrust his head in the snow. The shock of cold caused him to shiver ; he rose quickly, and strode off, his mind still at work.

About half-way home he had to pass over a deepish ditch spanned by a plank. The crossing was easy ; it needed only a little care, all snow having been removed from the plank ; but, brooding and negligent, Prosper forgot the ditch, and though he reached the plank with one foot, he missed it with the other, threw out his arms to regain his balance, failed, and fell, crashing some five or six feet into a mixture of snow and water. A log of wood was lying in the ditch, and Prosper fell with his right knee upon it. Though badly shaken, he tried at once to rise, but pain in his knee was so intense that he failed again and again. At last he managed to struggle somehow to his feet, only to find that he could do no more.

In this plight Prosper's mind worked slowly. His first mood was one of bewilderment ; a gust of violent temper came next, in which he beat at the snow lying around him ; but this movement stirred his knee, and pain recalled the fact of his helplessness. A little later he began to call, '*A moi !*' His big, husky voice rang out into the night, and the sound of it cheered him. '*A moi ! A moi !*'

(Continued on page 379.)

HIS GRAVE.

His grave is far away
Across the sea,
Away from home and love—
Away from me.

I'd go and lay on it,
If it were near,
The spring-time flowers he loved
When he was here.

I'd plant the summer roses,
White and red,
Beside the wooden cross
Above his head.

Lord, I believe his soul
Is in Thy care,
Yet from my heart doth rise
This human prayer :

'Oh Lord, beside his grave
May flowers spring,
And in the air above
May sweet birds sing !

'Oh, may the spot be blessed
And brightness shine !
May Nature take the charge
That should be mine !'

EOIN GLEN.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

SOME COINCIDENCES OF THE GREAT WAR.

By Sir EDWARD PARROTT, M.A., LL.D.

A 'strange coincidence,' to use a phrase
By which such things are settled nowadays.
BYRON (*Don Juan*).

THE recognition of similarities of event or experience occurring at considerable distances of time never fails to interest and intrigue mankind. Most people are keen to notice such instances as happen in their own lives, and to comment on them, usually in terms of amazement. The majority of people do no more; but the few who are given to reflection find themselves impelled to inquire whether they perceive in these so-called coincidences evidences of design on the part of a mysterious agency that shapes and moulds their destiny, or whether they are simply confronted with examples of mathematical probability. At any rate, no striking coincidence goes without recognition, always assuming that it occurs spontaneously and is not due to deliberate stage management. In the realm of fiction 'the long arm of coincidence' is only too frequently the novelist's *deus ex machina*. When he invokes it to unravel an otherwise inextricable plot he is rightly condemned, for everybody recognises that such widely separated parities of circumstances as he employs are wholly exceptional in character, and can, therefore, play no essential part in a faithful representation of ordinary everyday life.

It is the purpose of this paper to point out a few of the 'coincidences' which occurred during the Great War. There is an old story to the effect that a Scot, when viewing the Niagara Falls, was asked by an American, 'Have you ever seen anything so remarkable or so curious?' The Scot made reply, 'As for remarkable, I'll no say; but as for curious, I once saw a pig wi' a wooden leg!' The coincidences of the Great War were both remarkable and curious, and the few instances given below can be multiplied many times by a diligent study of the records which are becoming more and more readily available every day.

No descriptive term has been more widely applied to the Great War than *Armageddon*, which indicates a struggle comparable to that described in the Book of Revelation, when 'the kings of the earth and of the whole world' gathered them to 'the battle of that great day of God Almighty.' The word *Armageddon* is simply the corrupted

form of the name of a district round the Canaanite fortress of Megiddo. It was to Canaan what Flanders was to Europe—a 'cockpit' in which nations fought out their quarrels. Strange to say, the decisive movement which marked the beginning of the end of the war occurred in the neighbourhood of Armageddon. By 8 P.M. on September 20, 1918, the Turkish resistance in Palestine had everywhere collapsed except on the Turkish left, in the Jordan valley. Our left wing had swung round to the east, and lay astride the railway and the roads running from the west to Shechem. On the north, after sundown, our mounted men left the low ground, penetrated the hills east of Mount Carmel, and rode over the field of Armageddon. It was this movement which hemmed in the Turkish left and led to its speedy and complete downfall. While negotiations for an armistice with the Turks were pending Bulgaria caved in. A little more than a month later Austria laid down her arms, and on November 11 of the same year Germany made her submission. Thus Armageddon was the scene of a movement which presaged the end of the struggle in all the theatres of war. Very appropriately Lord Allenby has recognised this remarkable fact by designating himself 'of Megiddo.'

The Marne valley is associated with a whole series of coincidences. The description 'Hun' as applied to the Germans is due to a maladroit speech by Ex-Kaiser Wilhelm in 1900, when he sent his troops to China, and sped them on their way with the following exhortation: 'Whoever falls into your hands is forfeit to you, just as a thousand years ago the Huns under King Attila made a name for themselves in tradition and story.' It is said that the Germans in China bettered their master's instruction, and that they did not leave so much as a dog alive on the blood-stained road to Peking. Everybody knows that Attila, whose deeds they were to emulate, was the most ruthless and brutal savage who ever held sway. He boasted that where his horse set its foot grass never grew again. He was the 'Scourge of God,' so monstrous in his cruelty that men trembled at the very mention of his name.

In the year 451 A.D., at the head of three-quarters of a million of his hideous followers,

he marched into Gaul, lighting his beacons in burning towns, and blazing his trail with ruined homesteads and wasted fields. Eager to reach the shores of the Channel, he advanced to Orleans; but Goth, Gaul, and Roman formed an *entente* to oppose him, and force him to retreat to Châlons on the Marne, where, on the surrounding plains, he suffered a terrible defeat, and with the remnant of his forces left the land, never to return. Thus, more than fourteen and a half centuries ago, France was saved from Hun domination in the valley of the Marne.

The historical parallel during the recent Great War is particularly noteworthy. It was at the Marne that the Allied line, knitted up anew after a long and costly retreat from the Belgian border, amazed the world by striking that mighty blow which forced the modern Huns to retire to the heights of the Aisne and there 'dig in.' That 'bolt to the burrows' marked the opening of the long trench siege which reduced the Germans to practical immobility for three and a half years, and gave the Allies that vital breathing-space during which they were enabled to develop an overwhelming strength of material, and apply the deadly grip of sea-power which ultimately destroyed the *moral* of the enemy.

In their last desperate effort to break through the trench fortress, the Marne was again the scene of Hun defeat. The Germans were across the river before the third week of July 1918, and had pushed the French from the hills that gave them observation along the waterway; but by the 21st of the month a correspondent could write: 'There is not a single German, or, rather, a single living German, on the south bank of the Marne. Under our victorious pressure they have had to recross the stream in disorder and panic.' This second repulse at the Marne was the signal for that mighty arpeggio of hammer-blows which resounded all along the line, and completely baffled and bewildered the enemy. Assuredly, in the story of the Hun, ancient and modern alike, the Marne is a name of dread. It spelt defeat for Attila, and hopeless ruin for the imperial monomaniac who, with all history to choose from, selected as his exemplar the most brutish and blood-thirsty tyrant known to man.

Another coincidence occurs in connection with that trench warfare to which I have referred. The whole region between Arras and the North Sea is full of memories of Marlborough's great campaigns during the opening years of the eighteenth century. The Lys, the Scheldt, Nieuport, Ostend, Lille, Tournai, Douai, Béthune, La Bassée, and Mons—names familiar as household words to us—were equally well known to our forefathers in the reign of Queen Anne. As I stood at the gate of Lille on October 18, 1918, within a few hours of its evacuation by the Germans, and watched the first British

troops arrive, I could not help recalling Marlborough's capture of the fortress in December 1708. In the spring of the following year he proposed to march on Paris, aiming at Arras as his initial objective. The French blocked the way by strongly entrenching themselves on a line stretching from Douai, through La Bassée, to Béthune. Marlborough soon discovered that these trenches were too strong to be carried by direct assault, and he turned aside to reduce Tournai, and later on to besiege Mons, and fight the 'murderous battle' of Malplaquet. In 1711, however, he carried out a series of movements which are said to be his tactical masterpiece, and by so doing overran the French trenches and destroyed what had been thought to be an impregnable barrier.

More than two hundred years later, during the Great War, we also found the trenches in the neighbourhood of La Bassée too strong for us, and despite persistent assaults we never carried them. They were held by the Germans right down to October 1918, and were evacuated only when the steady forward movements of Haig to the south, and the splendid dash of King Albert and Plumer to the north, had made the whole region between Armentières and the La Bassée Canal a *cul-de-sac*, the mouth of which was being drawn closer every day. The Germans clearly perceived that if they delayed their departure any longer a Sedan was in store for them. On October 2 they withdrew from the trench-line that had defied both Marlborough and our modern British generals, and immediately our men swept forward in pursuit. It is surely a remarkable coincidence that La Bassée was won in both cases by tactical movements elsewhere, and that when it fell in 1918 a direct descendant of Marlborough, Mr Winston Churchill, was Minister of Munitions.

Sunday as a day of battle recurred with startling frequency during the long struggle. The murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, which gave Germany her pretext for the long-meditated embroilment of Europe, occurred on a June Sunday of 1914. The battle of Mons, the first engagement in which the British took part, was fought on an August Sunday of the same year. It was on a Sunday that the first battle of the Marne began, and on a Sunday that our gallant troops, in the course of thirteen hours, made good the passage of the Aisne. Sir Christopher Cradock's squadron was overwhelmed in unequal fight off Coronel on a Sunday; and on the same day of the week, some three months later, the *Blücher* was sent to the bottom in the Dogger Bank battle. The great landing at Gallipoli was made on a Sunday, and the day of rest also saw the beginning of the battle of Festubert. The New Zealanders won Chanak Bair, and came within a quarter of a mile of victory, on an August Sunday of 1915; and on a December Sunday of the same year our troops

bade a final farewell to Anzac, which they had immortalised by their undying valour. An examination of dates in the later years of the war will reveal further instances of important movements which began or fructified on the Sabbath-Day. What a picture of contrasts! What a theme for the moralist!—the calm and peace of British Sabbaths, and the roaring, flaming Sundays of bloody strife on Continental battlefields—the house of prayer at home and the death-grapple abroad.

One final coincidence. The first and the last contact of the British with the Germans were made in precisely the same district of Belgium.

Our Expeditionary Force on Sunday, August 23, 1914, first faced the foe between Binché and Condé, pivoting on the mining-town of Mons. On November 11, 1918, a few hours before 'the bugles sang truce,' the 3rd Canadian Division marched into Mons. General Maurice, in his *Last Four Months of the War*, tells us that several cavalry officers who fought in the initial battle rode into Mons on Armistice Day. The 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, which held the loop of the canal to the north-east of the town in 1914, formed part of the 63rd Division, which was actually entering the same loop when hostilities ceased.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XVII.—*continued.*

II.

THAT night a glorious moonlight silvered the roof-tops of old London, touching its jumbled architecture with fantastic beauty.

Vagrant towers and angular church spires, uninspired statuary, and weary, smoke-darkened trees shed their garments of commonplaceness and shimmered like the mosques and turrets of an enchanted city.

It was one of those nights that are sent to remind us that Beauty still lives; a night to challenge our mad whirl of bargaining and barter, to urge us to raise our eyes from the grubbing crawling of avarice; a night to awaken old memories, and to stir the pent-up streams of poetry lying asleep in every breast.

It was a moonlight that descended on Old England's troubled heart as a benediction. Her rivers were glimmering paths winding about the country-side; her villages and her heavy-scented country lanes shared its caress with open meadows and murky cities. The sea, binding the little islands in its turbulent immensity, drew the night's beauty to its bosom, and the spray of foam rising from the surf was a shower of star-dust leaping towards the moon.

As a weary traveller drinks thirstily at a pool, Selwyn wandered about the streets trembling with emotion in the breathless ecstasy of the night. All day the conjured picture of the German boy, guilty of no crime save blind devotion to his Fatherland, had haunted him like the eyes of a murdered man. It had robbed him of the power of constructive thought, and stopped his writing with the decisiveness of a sword descending on his wrist; it had made the food on his table tasteless, and given him a dread of the solitude of his rooms.

With nerves that contracted at every untoward sound, he had gone out at dark, and gradually the peacefulness of the night had soothed and calmed him as the dew of dusk cools the earth

after the heat of a summer's day. The familiar strains of Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata' came to his mind, and as he walked he idly traced the different movements of the music in the moods of the evening's witchery.

His steps, like his thoughts, pursued a tangled course, and led him into the prosaic brick-and-mortar monotony of Bayswater, but the moon was lavish in her generosity, and strewed his path with glinting strands of light. He paused in a quiet square to get his bearings. There was the heavy smell of fallen leaves from the gardens on the other side of the railing.

His mind was still playing the slow minor theme of the sonata's opening movement.

Suddenly the air was shattered with the noise of warning guns. As if released by a single switch, a dozen searchlights sprang into the sky, crossing and blending in a swerving glare. There was the piercing warning of bugles and the heavy booming of maroons.

Dazed by the swiftness of it all, Selwyn leaned against the low iron fence. A Boy Scout whirled past on a bicycle, his bugle hoarse and discordant; an old woman went whimpering by, hatless, with a protesting child in her arms; an ambulance, clanging its gong, rounded the corner with reckless speed; a mightier searchlight than any of the rest swept the sky in great circles.

It seemed only a matter of seconds, though in reality much longer, when the American heard a faint crunching sound in the distance, followed by a deep, sullen thud. In rapid succession came three more, and the defence guns of London burst into action, changing the night into Bedlam.

Still motionless, he listened, awe-struck, to the din of the weird battle with an unseen foe, when the cough of exploding shells in the air grew appreciably louder. Raising a whirlwind of dust, a motor-car swerved dangerously into the square, and with a roar sped up the road,

carrying to their aerodrome three British airmen. As if driven by a gale, the battle of the clouds drew nearer and nearer, the whine and barking of the shells like a pack of dogs trying to repel some monster of the jungle.

There was a deafening crash.

Selwyn was thrown against the fence, and almost buried beneath a shower of bricks and earth. With the roar of a rushing waterfall in his ears, and blood streaming from a wound in his forehead, he sank to his knees and for a moment lost consciousness; but mastering his weakness, he staggered to his feet and looked wildly about. On the other side of the street, where there had been a house, there was a smoking chaos. A little crowd had appeared seemingly from the bowels of the earth, and a woman was shrieking horribly.

Selwyn wiped his forehead with his hand and gazed stupidly at the blood which covered it. The roar of the guns was louder than it had yet been, and from a few streets away came the crunch of another bomb, shaking the earth with the explosion which followed. Selwyn leaned impotently against a post, and a quivering uncanny laugh broke from his lips. It was all so grotesque, so absurd. *Human beings didn't do such things.* It was a joke—a mad jest. He held his sides and laughed with uncontrollable mirth.

Then his whole form became rigid in a moment. A man had shouted something. There had been a wail from the crowd. Was it true? Some one buried alive—a little girl?

With a blasphemous curse Selwyn staggered across the road, and roughly elbowing his way through the crowd, found a solitary policeman, hindered by willing undirected hands, digging in the wreckage as best he could, while a couple of women sobbed hysterically and wrung their hands.

Those who watched hardly knew what had happened, but they saw a hatless, bleeding figure appear, and, with the incision of snapping hawsers, question the policeman and the weeping women. They heard his quick commands to the men, and saw him jump into the centre of the debris. With the instantaneous recognition of leadership his helpers threw themselves to the work with a frenzy of determination. Lifting, digging, pulling with torn hands and arms that ached with strain, they struggled furiously towards the spot where it was known the girl was buried. They were like starving wolves tearing at the carcass of an animal. They yelled encouragement and fought through the chaos—and still the stranger whipped them into madness with his cries.

There in the smoke and the choking dust Austin Selwyn shook in the grip of the greatest emotion he had ever known. A girl was buried—a fraction of a minute might mean her life. With hot breath and pulses on fire, he led

his unknown men through the choking ruins to where one small, insignificant life was imprisoned.

An ambulance sounded its gong, and drew up by the crowd; the storm of the guns continued to rage, but no one thought of anything but the fight of those men for one little, unknown life.

At last. They had uncovered a great iron beam which had struck on a stone foundation and left a zone of safety beneath. Eager hands gripped it, dragging it aside, and there was hardly a sound as the stranger lowered himself into the chasm. A minute later he reappeared, and a shout broke from the on-lookers. He was carrying a little form in his arms.

But when they saw his face a hush fell on every one. She was dead.

Wild-eyed, with the ghastliness of his pallor showing through the coating of grime and blood, Austin Selwyn stood in the ruins of the house, and the brown tresses of the child fell over his arm.

Kind hands were stretched out to him, but he shook them off angrily. He was talking to the thing in his arms—muttering, crooning something.

Slowly he raised his face to the skies. In the glare of the searchlights a gleaming, silvery, oblong-shaped form was turning and twisting like an animal at bay. They heard him catch his breath; then their blood was frozen by a choking, heart-rending cry of agony and rage.

It was the cry of the crystal-gazer who has had his crystal dashed from his eyes, to find himself in the presence of murder.

The crowd remained mute, helpless and frightened at the spectacle, when they saw a young woman approach him, a woman dressed in the khaki uniform of an ambulance-driver.

'Austin,' they heard her say, 'please give me the little girl.'

With a stupid smile he handed the child to her, and she laid it on a stretcher. When it had been taken away, she took Selwyn's hand in hers and led him, unresisting, to the ambulance.

CHAPTER XVIII.—ELISE.

I.

EARLY next morning, in a large military ward of a London hospital, Austin Selwyn woke from a sleep that had been charged with black dreams, and tried to recall the events leading to his present whereabouts.

By slow, tortuous process he reconstructed the previous evening as far as the moment when he had heard the warning guns. After that the incidents grew dim, and faded into incoherency. He seemed to remember rushing somewhere in a motor-vehicle. He distinctly recalled seeing a policeman in Trafalgar Square. Yes, that was very clear—quite the

most vivid impression of the whole night, indeed. He would hang on to that policeman.

With the care of an Arctic explorer establishing his base before going farther into *terra incognita*, he attached the threads of his wandering mind to that limb of the law, and groped in all the directions of his memory's compass. But it was of no avail. Tired out with the futile efforts he had made, his bandaged head sank back in the pillows, and the vivid policeman in Trafalgar Square was reluctantly surrendered as a negligible means of solution.

When he next awoke it was to the sound of many voices. There were two that were very close—one on either side of him, in fact. Affecting sleep, Selwyn listened carefully.

'Wot's that you say, Jock?' said a Cockney voice to his left.

'I was obsairvin',' said the other, 'that Number Twenty-sax is occupied this mornin'.'

'Ow yus, so it is. I was 'op'ing as 'ow me pal the Duke of Mudturtle would buy the plice next to mine. But he don't look a bad cove, wot you can see under 'is farncy 'ead-dress.'

'I dinna think he can be o' the army. His skin's as pale as a lassie in love.'

'In the army, Jock? Don't hinsult 'im. 'E's one of the 'eroes of the 'ome front—hindispensibles, they calls 'em.'

'Weel, weel, now,' expostulated the Scot, 'dinna tak' ower muckle for granted. We canna a' gang tae the war, or wha wud bide at hame and mak the whusky?'

'By Gar!' said a third patient opposite, sitting up suddenly and speaking in the disjointed but strangely musical dialect of the French-Canadian, 'she is a wise feller, dis Scoachie.'

'Bonn swoir, Frenchy,' said the Cockney graciously. 'Ow alley you mantenongs?'

'Verra good, Tommee. How is de godam bow bells?'

'Well, the last toime I sees me old side-kick the Lord Mayor, 'e says as 'ow they was took by a Canadian for a soovenir.'

'Na,' said the Scotsman reprovingly, 'I'm thinkin' yon's exaggerated.'

'By Gar!' said the French-Canadian. 'See, the orderly come now with water for shav'. Back in de bush or on de long portage I shav' once, twice, perhaps tree time a month. Always before I meet my leetle girl I shav'. But when I say good-bye and go to war—by gollies! de army make me for do it every day. My officier, he say, "What for you no shav' dis morning?" "Sair," I say, "I no kees de Boche—I keel him." He say noding to dat excep', "Look at you. I shav' every day. Do you preten' I doan' fight?" "Well," I say, "if de cap feets you, smoke it." And for no reason he give me tree time extra for carry de godam ration.'

At this stage the arrival of wash-basins interrupted further anecdote and philosophy, and the entire ward became animated with soldiers per-

forming their ablutions, some sitting up in bed, others on the edge of their beds, and a few so weak that they could just turn painfully on their side and wait for other hands to help.

A burst of hearty greetings told Selwyn that some one must have entered the ward, and a few minutes later he felt the presence of a nurse beside him.

'Good-morning,' she said, gently touching him on the shoulder. 'How is your head feeling?'

He opened his eyes and looked into the face bending over his. 'I think it's all right,' he said weakly. 'But, nurse, won't you tell me how I got here?'

She dipped a cloth into a basin and bathed his hands and face.

'You were hit by a piece of shrapnel in last night's air-raid. I wasn't on duty when you came in, but the night-sister said you were quite delirious—though you seem ever so much better this morning, don't you? I'll take your temperature, and after you've had some breakfast I'll put a new dressing on your wound.'

She was just going to insert the thermometer between his lips, when he stopped her with his hand. 'Nurse,' he said, 'why was I brought here—among soldiers?'

'Because every hospital is filled to overflowing. The casualties are so heavy just now.' Her voice was still kind, but there was a look of resentment in her eyes at his question.

'Please don't misunderstand me,' said Selwyn wearily. 'It is only the feeling that I have no right here. This cot should be for a soldier, and I'm a civilian. I'm an American, and—and if you only knew'—

'Just a minute, now, until we get this temperature, and then you can teil me all about it.'

With his lips silenced, but his doubts by no means so, he watched her move down the ward in commencement of the countless duties of her day. She was a woman of thirty-three or thirty-four years, still young, and possessed of a womanliness that softened her whole appearance with a tranquil restfulness. But beneath her eyes and in the texture of the skin faint wrinkles were showing, thinly pencilled protests against overwork, that no treatment could ever eradicate. On the red collar of her uniform was a badge which told that she had gone to France with the first little army of regulars in 1914.

Noting her calloused hands and the too rapid approach of life's midsummer, Selwyn watched her, and wondered what recompense could be offered for those things. In ordinary life, given the privileges and the opportunities which she deserved, she would have been another of those glorious English women whose beauty is nearest the rose. She would have been a wife to grace any home, and as a mother her charm would have been twofold. But for more than two

years incessant toil and endless suffering had been the companions of her days, and the not over-strong body was giving to the ordeal.

But as his heavy thoughts drifted slowly through this channel, he saw grinning patients who were well enough get out of bed to help her. As if she carried some magic gem of happiness, her soft voice and deft touch brought smiles to eyes that had been scorched in the flames of hell. Men looked up, and seeing her, believed once more in life; and hope crept into their hearts. Men in the great shadowy valley murmured like a child in its sleep when a ray of morning sunshine, stealing through the curtains, plays upon its face.

And of the many things which Selwyn learned that day, one was that those ministering angels, those women of limitless spirit and depthless sympathy, have memories of mute, unspoken gratitude, beside which the proudest triumphs of the greatest beauties are but the tawdry, tinsel glory of a pantomime queen.

II.

After the nurse had taken the thermometer from Selwyn and marked his temperature on a chart which she placed beside him, breakfast was brought in, and he was propped up with pillows.

'Guid-mornin',' said the Highlander. 'I hope ye're nane the waur o' your expeerience.'

'Not 'im,' broke in the Cockney, eating his porridge with great relish. 'It done 'im good.'

'I am very well,' said Selwyn haltingly. 'I hope my arrival did not disturb any of you last night.'

At the sound of his carefully nuanced Bostonian accent there was a violent dumb-play of smoothing the hair and arranging the coats of pyjamas, while one Tommy placed a penny in his eye in lieu of a monocle.

'I was 'oping,' said the Cockney with a solemn wink to the gathering, 'as 'ow Number 26 would be took by a toff, and, blime, if it ain't! It were gettin' blinkin' lonesome for me with only Jock 'ere and Frenchy opposite, who ain't bad blokes in their wy, but orful crude for my likin'.'

'Where did it hit ye?' asked the Scot encouragingly.

'On the head,' said Selwyn, pointing to his bandage.

'Mon, mon, that's apt to be dangerous.'

'Nah then!' cried the Cockney, reaching for his temperature-chart, 'we'll open the mornink proper with the 'Ymn of 'Ate. In cise you don't know the piece, m'lud, you can read it off your temperacher-ticket. Steady now—everybody got a full breath? Gow!'

With great zest all the patients who were able to sit up broke into a discordant jumble of scales as they followed the course of their tem-

peratures up and down the chart. Gradually, one by one, they fell out and resumed their breakfast, until the Scotsman was the only one singing.

'Ye ken,' he said, pausing temporarily and looking at Selwyn, 'yon should be rendered wi' proper deegnity.' With which explanatory comment he finished the last six notes, and solemnly replaced the chart on the ledge behind him, as if it were a copy of Handel's *Messiah*.

The last note had hardly died away when a violent controversy broke out between a pair of Australian soldiers on one side and almost the entire ward on the other. The thing had started by one of the Anzacs venturing the modest opinion that if Britain had had a million Australian troops, they, the present gathering, would be 'hoch, hoching' in Berlin (apparently a delightful prospect) instead of being cooped up in a London hospital.

The little Cockney was just going to utter a crushing sarcasm, the French-Canadian had taken in a perfectly stupendous breath, the Highlander was calmly tasting the flavour of his own reply, when the impending torrent was broken by the entrance of the chaplain, who wished every one a somewhat sanctimonious 'Good-day.'

'I shall read,' he said, putting on a pair of glasses, 'the latest *communiqué* from the front. We have done very well. The news is quite good—quite good. "*This morning, on a front of three miles, after an intense artillery preparation, the Australians*"'—

'OORAY!' roared the Cockney.

The glasses popped off the chaplain's startled nose, and he just managed by a brilliant bit of juggling to rescue them before they reached the floor.

'I—I,' he ventured, smiling blandly, 'am delighted at your enthusiasm, but you did not let me finish. "*This morning*"—um, um, ah—"*three miles*"—um, um, yes—"*three miles, after an intense artillery preparation, the Australians*"'—

'OORAY!' It was a deafening roar from the whole crowd.

"*The Australians*"'—

'OORAY!'

"*The*"'—

'Oo'—

'Really, men, you must control yourselves. We are all glad and sustained by any victory, however slight, but you must not give way to unmeaning boisterousness. "*This morning, on a front of three miles, after an intense artillery preparation, the Australians*"'—

There was a medley of submerged, prolonged snores. The chaplain looked up indignantly. With the exception of Selwyn and the two Australians, every one had followed the lead of the Cockney and disappeared underneath the bed-clothes.

'This,' said the good man—'this frivolity at such a harrowing moment in our country's destiny is neither seemly nor respectful. Cheerfulness is admirable, until it descends to horse-play.'

With which parting salvo the worthy chaplain, who had never been to France, and who was doing the best he could according to his clerical upbringing, left his unruly flock, taking the *communiqué* with him.

A little later the doctor made his rounds, pronouncing Selwyn's wound as not dangerous, but assuring him he was lucky to be alive. Another inch either way and—— Passing on to the Scotsman, he stayed a considerable length of time; but as the screen was set for the examination, the American had no way of knowing its nature.

And so, with constant badinage, seldom brilliant, but never unkind, the morning wore on. It was nearly noon when Selwyn saw a wheeled

stretcher brought into the ward and the Highlander lifted on to it.

'Jock,' said the little Cockney, 'I 'opes as 'ow everythink will come out orlright.'

'By Gar, Scoachie!' cried the French-Canadian, 'I am sorree. You are one dam fine feller, Scoachie.'

'Dinna worry yersel's,' said the man from the North. 'I'm rare an' lucky that it's to be ma richt leg and no the left, for that richt shank o' mine was aye a wee thing crookit at the knee, and didna dae credit tae the aichitecture o' tither ane.'

Thus, amid the rough encouragement of his fellows, and by no means unconscious of the dignity of his position, the Highland soldier was taken away to the operating-room.

The French-Canadian made a remark to Selwyn, but it was not until the second repetition that he heard him.

(Continued on page 392.)

LEAVES FROM A CATALOGUER'S WALLET.

IV.—THE RIVAL ROMNEYS.

By W. ROBERTS.

I.

IN the summer of 1792 the eldest son of a distinguished commoner who owned great estates in the Midlands, and who had more than once refused a title, brought to Mr Romney's studio in Cavendish Square, London, a very beautiful young Italian, Paolina Giacometti-Langdon, for whom was claimed, in a manner not quite clear, kinship with the noble Italian family of Giacometti. The girl had had the misfortune to be born of poor parents in a working-class quarter of Venice; but money had been found to give her a good education as such went in Venice in the latter part of the eighteenth century. She developed not only great personal beauty, but a marvellously rich contralto voice, and a genius for acting, excelling equally in tragedy and in comedy.

After a course of training at Rome and Vienna, it was decided that Paolina should make her first public appearance on the stage at Venice in April 1792. It is not necessary to go into details as to the success of her début, for some of the letters of the many English visitors who 'assisted' at this great sensation have been printed and published. All testify to the beauty and to the superb acting of the young Venetian. The English declared that she outshone Mrs Siddons, Mrs Jordan, and all the other leading favourites of the British stage, and that there was no one on the Continent with such splendid qualities of voice and action.

For several nights in succession the theatre was crowded, and each performance revealed new and unexpected talents in the young *diva*. But on the seventh or eighth night Paolina created a fresh and entirely unexpected sensation; she disappeared, and for some weeks afterwards no trace of her could be found. Then it became known that Mr Algernon Langdon, visiting Venice on the Grand Tour with his tutor, had fallen violently in love with the beautiful Paolina, had induced her to elope with him, and that they were married in Paris *en route* for England. The marriage proved to be a very happy one, the bride receiving a cordial welcome from her young husband's parents. The sensation of the appearance of a star of the first magnitude on the stage in Venice, and the story of the run-away marriage, were still the talk of the West-End clubs and coffee-houses when Mr Langdon and his father brought the bride to Mr Romney's studio to pose for a whole-length portrait, for which the artist was to receive eighty guineas.

Romney was somewhat arbitrary in the matter of the dress worn by his lady patrons. He insisted where he could on a simple white gown and a hatless head; his subject thus attired, he could paint a faultless portrait in eight or ten sittings. Paolina was not only beautiful, she was self-willed, and refused to pose in a white dress. And so, put to the test, Romney excelled himself by painting her in a brilliant black-silk gown of which the sheen glints to-day as it did over a century

ago. When finished, the portrait was sent, at the artist's suggestion, to his frame-maker, William Saunders, who placed it in one of his simple but effective frames for the modest sum of five pounds seven shillings and sixpence, which included the case in which it was sent to the Langdons' ancestral home in the Midlands. Here it was accorded a place of honour in the dining-room with other portraits of various generations of the family. And here it remained, entirely unknown to the public, but admired by all visitors, and, like the other family portraits, was entailed on each successive owner or tenant for life.

II.

A few years ago an exhibition was held in New York of pictures by the early British school of artists. The exhibition was in aid of a deserving charity, and those who got it up were determined that nothing but portraits of the finest quality should be hung. Among the collectors who offered a selection from their walls was Mr Cyrus P. White, a Bostonian who had hitherto never lent any of his pictures to a public exhibition, who was almost entirely unknown as a collector, and who had bought his pictures without any kind of publicity many years before on his annual visits to Europe. He was a man of great reserve, and of unerring instinct in art matters.

Two members of the New York committee visited several Boston collections, and made their selections; but it was Mr White's superb whole-length Romney portrait of Paolina Giacometti-Langdon which overwhelmed them, and which they were convinced would be the great attraction of the exhibition. In this their expectation was more than fully justified. The exhibition was a triumphant success from the private-view day, but the success was almost entirely due to the Romney portrait of the beautiful young Italian woman. The newspapers were full of praise of its majestic beauty, its perfectly human loveliness. It was felt that if Romney had achieved fame by painting Lady Hamilton, he had attained immortality when he finished his picture of Paolina. Reproductions appeared in all the newspapers and periodicals; the romantic story was told of Paolina's début at Venice, of the run-away marriage, and of the strangest of all facts, that the marriage was a singularly happy one. Mr White himself had had the brief outlines of the story when he bought the picture, and was amused at the many fresh and surprising details which the vivid imaginations of the New York and other journalists had attached to the tale as he told it.

Reports of the exhibition, with its superb Romney, filtered through to some of the London morning newspapers, and penetrated to the country home of the Langdons. At first the head of the

family, Mr Montague Langdon, was amused, and then he was angry. How could the portrait of his great-grandmother, which still looked at him from the wall of his dining-room, be in New York, when it had, so far as he knew, never been out of the house since it was hung there in 1792? Clearly there was some mistake; but he fully realised that, unless the error was exposed and explained, the authenticity, and consequently the commercial value, of his portrait would be in jeopardy. With the aid and under the advice of the family lawyer, a statement was drawn up and sent to the leading New York papers, stating that the whole-length portrait of Mr Montague Langdon's great-grandmother by Romney had never been out of the possession of the family, that it was still in its original frame, and that it had hung in its present position ever since it was painted. Therefore the rival picture in New York must be either a copy (done many years ago, and hitherto unknown) or a 'fake.'

This statement duly appeared in the New York papers, and gave a piquancy to the interest aroused by the exhibition of the picture. It was excellent 'copy,' and the New York journalists were not slow in making the most of it. Mr Cyrus P. White was interviewed, but beyond an enigmatic smile, he contented himself with the declaration that *his* was the original, and the one in England the copy.

Obviously the matter could not rest here, for both portraits could not be original, and there was no record of Romney ever having painted a replica, as there is no entry of such in his diaries, which he kept with unusual fullness, and which are still in existence. Moreover, Mr Langdon had unearthed in the family archives his great-grandfather's cash-book, in which he had entered under date July 5, 1792, 'Pd. Mr Romney for Paolina's pt. 80 gs. ;' and there was a further entry of five pounds seven shillings and sixpence paid to Saunders for the frame. And so it would seem that the weight of evidence was distinctly in his favour. Various letters, at first polite, then a trifle charged with electricity, and finally unrestrained in language, passed between Mr Langdon and Mr White.

III.

At this point some one suggested that a minute examination of the canvases of both pictures might reveal some evidence worth having. And here we may claim to exercise the Shandean privilege of flying off at a tangent. A duty on canvas was first imposed by 10 Anne cap. 10, the 69th clause of which imposes upon all linens and stuffs (with certain exceptions) to be printed, stained, *painted*, or dyed a duty of three-halfpence for every yard in length; whilst the 97th clause directs the Commissioners on or before July 20, 1712, to provide proper seals or stamps for marking such

stuffs. The Act appears to have been more or less evaded; and one of 24 George III. (October 21, 1784) repeated the order as to the seals or stamps. These Acts remained in force until well into the nineteenth century, when they were repealed. The marks stamped on the backs of the old canvases are somewhat enigmatic and arbitrary, and most of them are probably now incomprehensible; but they constitute very important evidence in the case of English pictures painted in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As an illustration, a portrait by Romney, Reynolds, or Gainsborough could not possibly appear on a canvas with the year mark of 1830. A 'perfectly genuine' Titian was once found to have been painted over a portrait of Napoleon I., but even in art miracles do not occur every day!

The canvas of Mr Langdon's version of the Romney portrait of Paolina was examined, and on the back was found the following inscription:

TB	8	46	3
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It had no year date, and therefore the canvas must have been manufactured after the Acts of Queen Anne and George III. had been repealed, which was done in the year 1831. The marks were obviously either of the maker of the canvas or of the dealer who supplied it. The initials, in fact, stood for T. Brown, an artist's colourman resident at 163 High Holborn in the 'thirties and 'forties, and probably later, of last century, whose name will be duly found in the London directories of the time. The canvas had never been 'lined'—that is, 'backed' by another canvas to prevent the original from perishing. This was a disturbing element, and even Mr Langdon admitted that it was a very serious set-back to his claim. The significance of the other figures did not come into the story at all.

Mr Cyrus P. White's picture, on the other hand, had no stencil or other canvas-marks of any kind on the back. Moreover, it had evidently and at no remote date been 'lined.' There was only one way of finding out if the original canvas had any Government or other marks, and that was by separating the two canvases. This would at the best be a difficult and a dangerous process, and might possibly result in the destruction of, or partial damage to, the beautiful picture. But Mr White, while concerned to think that his portrait might be irretrievably ruined, was a sportsman, and wanted to get to the bottom of the mystery. He placed the picture in the hands of the most expert picture-restorer in New York. The special kind of preparation used for 'lining' pictures can be dissolved only with the greatest care and delicacy, and it was many weeks before the beautiful Paolina was 'stripped.' The original canvas

was exceedingly brittle, but about half-way down an inscription was discovered, which, so far as the fragments could be deciphered, read thus:

32 Geo III	158	14	115	1792
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Fortunately the year date in the last section was perfectly clear, and that was all that mattered, for it proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that it was this canvas on which Romney had painted the portrait, and that, therefore, this picture was the original.

During these 'delicate investigations' Mr Langdon received a request from the committee charged with the selection of pictures for the winter exhibition of old masters at Burlington House that he would lend some of his family portraits to the forthcoming show. He readily fell in with the suggestion, and invited a member of the committee to come down and make a selection. The academician to whom this duty was assigned was an elderly man of great knowledge and probity; and at lunch he was placed in a seat immediately facing the portrait of Paolina. After lunch he toured the rooms with his host, and indicated those pictures which he thought suitable. In front of the portrait of Paolina he stood still, and said, 'Unfortunately I cannot select this, for I remember most distinctly copying it in the gallery of a London dealer when a young man over forty years ago. You should find my monogram in red, (E), at the extreme edge of the top right-hand corner of the canvas.' With the aid of two workmen, the picture was removed from the wall, and at the place indicated, beneath the varnish, was found the monogram of the copyist.

'But,' Mr Langdon insisted, 'the picture has never been out of the house since it came here a century ago.' The old butler, however, who had been away ill for some months, and who knew nothing of the controversy which had arisen concerning the portrait, intervened with the remark that Mr Langdon's elder brother (now dead) had one summer, during the absence of the family, sent the picture to London to be cleaned and revarnished, and that it had come back after a week or ten days' absence brilliant in its fresh coat of varnish. 'But to me,' added the old retainer, 'the picture was never quite the same. It was, so far as I could see, the same picture in every respect, but it always struck me that Madame Paolina went away alive and came back dead.' In other words, she had lost her soul, which only a great artist such as Romney could have transfixed on canvas. The copyist had caught the form but not the spirit of the beautiful Paolina. And the picture with the soul was in the collection of Mr Cyrus P. White of Boston, Massachusetts.

SOME CURIOUS REMINISCENCES.

By KITTY NEWCOME.

IN the good old days—and they were good old days—before the most popular of our present modes of transport were in force, our forebears had to make use of such aids to travelling as were then available—namely, the boat, the stage-coach, the horse, and even of shank's-mare. Distances were undertaken on foot in those days that would positively stagger the ordinary pedestrian of to-day, and my own grandfather walked the whole of the way from Leeds to Aberdeen, averaging fifty miles per day. Both he and my father were in the habit of walking exceedingly long distances, mostly, from what I could gather, for the sheer pleasure of walking. My father, however, as a business man, could not spare the necessary time to do all his travelling on foot, even if such had been his desire. Before the railways started in Scotland he was in the habit of taking the boat from Hull to Leith, and he was also a regular passenger on the coach that ran from Leeds to London. The journey was accomplished in nineteen hours, and the horses, which galloped all the way, were changed twenty-two times. On one occasion during the winter my father returned from London on a very full coach. He told me he came the entire distance with one leg swinging quite clear, and that his ears were frozen to his head. It all sounds very Spartan, especially in our days of luxurious travelling; and yet surely there is much to be said for the hardiness of the people in those times, who lived to a ripe old age without the assistance of the specialist and the operator, those indispensables of to-day.

My father had the distinction of being a passenger on the first train to run into Scotland. The accommodation appears to have been anything but comfortable, and the carriage was exceedingly draughty; but railway travelling was a great saving of time, which always means so much to a busy man.

On one occasion when journeying to Scotland he had, for business reasons, to stay a night at Carlisle, and here a very curious experience befell him. He chose his hotel, possibly on the recommendation of some friend or acquaintance, and in preparation for the following day's journey retired early to bed. Being a keen observer, he noted that his room wore a somewhat disused air, but thought little of the matter, and having undressed, and fastened his bedroom door, he got into bed, and promptly fell asleep. He did not know how long he slept, but he awoke quite suddenly, warned by some sense of menace or danger, and lay motionless with every nerve on the alert, staring out into the darkness. He was wondering what had awakened him, but even as the thought passed through his mind he felt the sudden grasp of an icy hand upon his wrist.

Assured that his assailant was a common thief, he lay quite still, yet in perfect readiness for the moment when his antagonist should transfer the grip from his wrist to his throat. Such a moment, however, never came. After an interminable time of waiting, or what would seem an interminable time under such conditions, the hand relaxed its hold and fell away. There followed some minutes of tense expectancy, in which my father listened vainly for any sign or sound; and finally, being determined to fight his opponent in the light, if fight he must, he struck a match and lit the candle at his bedhead. The flickering light revealed nothing that he had not seen in the room on retiring for the night; so, getting out of bed, he made a thorough search of the whole room and the furniture it contained. All was as he had left it on going to bed, even to the door itself, which remained securely fastened. Utterly baffled, and feeling that here was some mystery beyond his understanding, he returned to bed, and actually slept till morning. After breakfasting, he sought out his landlady and asked her if there were not some curious story in connection with the room he had occupied the previous night. She looked grave and rather upset, but apparently either could not or would not throw any light on the affair. She offered him another room, apologised for his disturbed night, and the matter ended there, for all his questions were met by either silence or evasion, and ultimately he had to leave the episode as the unsolved problem it always remained.

The recollection of this incident brings back to mind a remarkable occurrence that befell my grandfather. My father, I may say, kept an entirely open mind on matters occult. He always held that many things happen in this world that are not explainable by any process of logical deduction. With my grandfather, however, it was otherwise, for he disbelieved in any spiritual manifestation whatsoever, and this in spite of his own peculiar experience to the contrary. The story is as follows.

A man who was well known to him, though not a personal friend, left the district and went up to London for a while. Some time after his departure came the news that he had committed suicide in London. The news was a shock to the whole neighbourhood, and a great blow to the man's relatives. Suicide was not so common in those days as it is now, and the impression created on the minds of his townfolk was deep and lasting.

About a year after this tragedy my grandfather also went up to London. What is rather remarkable, perhaps, is that he lodged in the same house where the tragedy had occurred, and with a friend, a medical student, actually

slept in the same room in which the deed was committed. The medical student, like my grandfather, had known the man who committed suicide, but I am sure, in view of what happened afterwards, that he was unaware of lodging in the same house in which the act was perpetrated.

One night after they had retired to rest the sound could be distinctly heard of footsteps restlessly wandering up and down the room.

'Joe,' whispered the student, 'there's some one in the room.'

'There is no one in the room,' said my grandfather quietly; but as though to give the lie direct to any such statement, the footsteps again began to move up and down the room.

'There certainly is somebody in the room,' repeated the medical student; and getting out of bed, he lit the gas and made an exhaustive search. Nothing was to be seen, but the footsteps could still be heard.

'There is no one in the room. Settle down and go to sleep,' advised my grandfather—hardly very soothing advice under the circumstances, and it is not wonderful that it failed to allay

the agitation of his friend. Seeing that some explanation must be made in order to pacify him, my grandfather calmly asked him if he recognised the footsteps as those of the dead man.

The effect on the medical student was instantaneous.

'My God, Joe,' he whispered, 'it is his very walk!'

'Yes; he did the deed in this very room;' and then my grandfather proceeded to lay the ghost by the simple method of requesting it to be quiet and leave them in peace. Immediately there was a cessation of the noise, and for the remainder of the night quiet reigned supreme. The following day saw the medical student in quest of a fresh lodging, but I have every reason to believe that my grandfather remained on in the house, probably still sleeping in the same room.

It seems almost impossible to believe that he never changed his views with regard to spirit manifestations, but so it was.

For myself, I prefer to echo Hamlet, and I do believe that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy.'

MILLE BOMBES!

CHAPTER VI.—MATHILDE.

MEANTIME, at home, Mathilde was busy and happy with Caldecott's dear, delightful drawings of John Gilpin. She laughed with them, and tackled the nimble verses, one by one, learning them swiftly by rote. In an accent never before heard, probably, as Mathilde had never had a lesson in English, she recited them aloud, marking time with her right hand, while Lion, surprised and interested, looked on, his ears pricked and his eyes alight with affection.

Time passed rapidly in this amusement. The clock struck nine. Mathilde counted the strokes. '*Tiens!*' she muttered, and uneasiness came into her face. About three hours had gone by. Why had Prosper not returned? Even through deep snow his journey to the village and back should have been done in ninety minutes. His business in the village would take less than half-an-hour. Prosper, then, should have been home at eight o'clock.

Anxiety grows from within itself after it is awakened. Mathilde went to and fro between the door and the clock, followed by Lion, whose moods changed with Mathilde's. At half-past nine anxiety turned into alarm, and Lion began to whimper.

As a rule silent people act with swift resolution, probably because they do not let off energy in too much talk. At a quarter to ten Mathilde put on her outdoor things, lit the smaller lantern, and went briskly to the door. Lion barked excitedly, and the door being opened, bounded out and began to leap in the snow, as terriers hunt

harvest-mice in growing hay, in spasmodic jumps comic to behold. In an instant he was following Prosper's track.

Though Mathilde had grown pretty tall for her age, anxiety and courage had sent her into an adventure full of risk. Somewhat more than two feet of snow on a dark night, with a much greater depth in hollows and drifts, is trying enough to a strong man; but to a girl of twelve, hindered by petticoats, it became horrible. Lion went ahead, keeping to Prosper's footsteps, while Mathilde struggled on as best she could with painful slowness, the lantern held up high; and when her right arm ached with fatigue, and her fingers became cramped and cold, she changed the lantern to her other hand. The snow, thawing now more rapidly, clung about her boots and legs; and presently, instead of the snowstorm expected by Prosper, a fine rain began to drizzle.

A strange fatigue—a fatigue like sickness—settled in her limbs and ached. Tears rolled with the rain down her cheeks. She tried not to weep, but it eased her to sob; then the good dog whined and kept close to her. It was this companionship and the pale gleam of light from her lantern that enabled the child to go on till she heard far off a hoarse cry. Lion heard the cry first, and instantly knew his master's voice. Barking, he began to leap forward more rapidly, but soon he stopped, and, whining plaintively, looked back at Mathilde. His love was with two persons; he knew not what to do. Prosper

answered the dog's barking, and presently the words '*À moi !*' could be heard distinctly.

A new fear, as well as excitement, moved Mathilde. What was the matter with Père Prosper? She tried to call, but her shrill cry was lost in Lion's gruff noise. When she reached the ditch, and crossed it by the plank, for some time neither she nor Prosper was able to speak. What could a brave man say to such courage in a child?

'*Fillette*,' he said at last, 'I might have been alive in the morning, for I am very strong; but to be saved from such a night by your courage! *Bon Dieu!*—it is very beautiful! Yes—well—and yet—I must ask still more from you, my darling. We can't stop here, and I can't move. So then'—he paused, greatly moved—'can you go on to the village—and seek help? I've lost the use of one leg, you see, and to pull me out of this ditch—*mille bombes!*—it'll be no light job for two or three strong fellows. It's horrible to ask you to do more, *fillette*, but'—

'If Lion comes with me, I can do it,' said Mathilde. 'I'm better now—now that I know what *must* be done.—Come, Lion!'

Without saying another word, she faced the deep-set snow again. For some time she could hear Prosper bawling encouragement to her; and a little later, when she was feeling lost without the sound of Prosper's voice, she saw in the distance a twinkle of moving light—the gleam from another lantern. Her heart beat fast with joy. The light came slowly towards her path from the right. Mathilde hailed it at once, and Lion began to bark. The lantern ceased to move, but soon it approached her once more. The district doctor, Jean Tiriard, had been to a bad case at an outlying farm, and was returning home.

When he came up to her, Mathilde was on her knees in the rain and deep snow, with her head bent in prayer and her hands clasping the lantern to her heart. The encircling gloom had gone from her pain. All would be well now.

Dr Tiriard was a man of fire, ardent and untiring. The child's courage stirred him through and through, and her condition, drenched to the skin and numbed with cold, made him infinitely pitiful. In an hour after they met he had roused up the village, and Mathilde was in bed at the doctor's house, with three hot bricks to give her warmth, and Madame Tiriard to nurse her.

Lights gleamed in the village windows; children got up and dressed; and soon the aroma of coffee implied that breakfast-hour had arrived with another day's toil. Only one person was reticent and backward—the inn-keeper, Charles Janssens, who wondered what part in the drama his bottle of absinthe had played.

After many difficulties, and with many lanterns twinkling around him, Prosper had been carried

to the village on a hurdle—an experience never forgotten by those who bore his weight. During frequent halts he told his story, forgetting no detail. He chose the village himself. Mathilde was there, and he was certain that heavy rain, aiding the thaw, would cause in a few hours a great flood, and that his cottage would be inundated. In this forecast he was right. Next morning, when Crowley arrived, eddying water had risen to a depth of more than four feet in the cottage, and a swirling, dangerous enemy raged over many miles of valley. So much damage was done in his little home that Prosper felt half-ruined, and Mathilde for a time was inconsolable. 'And M'sieu Caldecott will be gone altogether,' she said to Crowley. 'Ah, the beautiful book!'

Prosper had been carried to Tiriard's house, as no cottage had a spare room. Janssens would have taken him, as Prosper's presence at the inn would have drawn custom there, but Dr Tiriard had no faith in *estaminets* as nursing-homes. For all that, Janssens was now in full feather, sharing the honours of an eventful night with Mathilde, Prosper, and Lion.

'If,' said he, 'my heart had not spoken, I should have failed to give that bottle to Prosper, and our good giant would have gone home without accident. What then? Would he have gone to bed? Yes, would he, and the child too. How tragic! For they would have been caught by the great flood! Who knows with what dreadful results? My bottle, then, coming from my heart, was a godsend to Prosper, let gossip say what it will.'

A few days later Crowley came upon the bottle of absinthe lying in a soppy field. Prosper had asked him to look for it in order that it might be returned to Janssens. Crowley was struck by the liquor's pale colour.

'Isn't it too pale to be pure?' he asked Janssens. 'It looks like absinthe-and-water. Shall we set it side by side with a sealed bottle?'

'Hush, m'sieu!' said Janssens, flushing. 'Let me explain. Let me speak out. Was I to put too much temptation into Prosper's hands?'

'Anyway,' Crowley answered, 'this part of the story—shall we call it thrift in your gift-making?—must be made known, as you have talked so much about the other part.'

It was made known, and never was it forgotten by the peasants. 'Not too much temptation in it, please!' they said to Janssens when they asked for faro or some other drink.

In about two months Prosper was able to return home, but he was very lame, and remained lame ever afterwards.

Ever afterwards, too, Dr Tiriard and his wife took a great interest in Mathilde and Père Prosper—in Mathilde particularly; and it was

Tiriard's judgment that discovered the true bent of the child's nature and helped her to make her home in a great profession.

CHAPTER VII.—CROWLEY AND MATHILDE.

IT was in 1909, Mathilde's seventeenth year, that Crowley made up his mind to leave Brussels in order to try his luck in London, aided by only £200 of capital. Gray, anxious days had come to him all at once. His father, long a man of wealth, had become suddenly poor through unfortunate speculations in business, and was now unable to supply his son with 'a fighting fund,' as they called a handsome allowance. A cheque for £200 accompanied this news of a breakdown at home; also a brief postscript: 'Take a header, rise to the surface, and swim hard. Not in Brussels, a mere civic pond, but in London, humanity's rough Bay of Biscay. To drown bravely in London is better than to float elsewhere.'

When Prosper heard of his friend's changed outlook, he begged Crowley not to set out for London till after the summer holidays had begun, when Mathilde would return home from her convent school, in which the influence of Dr Tiriard had found her a place just five years before. Her last term there was drawing to a close, and surely the three should have a farewell gathering.

Crowley stayed, and early in July, after settling all his affairs in Brussels, went for three weeks to the Semois valley, with its hospitable peasants and its lusty old fields and trees.

Prosper had added ten acres to his farm, and two strapping lads worked for him. 'You see, m'sieu,' he said to Crowley, 'cows and my stiff knee make no end of work, with losses in it at times, *mille bombes*! But I'm still a model. These boys of mine copy me, and tell tales about me, and stand by me through thick and thin. You should see 'em when they feel the muscles in my arms! Should I have had good friends if my body had been puny, like M'sieu Colin's? Sometimes at night I fret myself over this question. To be a friend and to have friends is a food that makes me warm here;' and Prosper with a vast hand thwacked himself over his heart.

If Crowley had been going to the North Pole, a greater fuss over his farewell visit could not have been made by Prosper and his neighbourhood. Mathilde alone was reticent. Prosper wondered why, as she kept with great care all the many presents she had received from Crowley; and whenever she wished to say something pleasant about an artist or an author whom she had seen, perhaps in a photograph, she would suggest doubtfully that he seemed almost as tall or almost as good as M. Crowley.

Mathilde, at seventeen, was tall and slight,

with a sort of elastic grace, and a luminous beauty that set her apart as uncommonly gifted. Girls in the Semois valley, resenting the unsought charm that placed her in a rank aloof from their own, spoke of Mathilde as *La Duchesse des Choux Blancs*—a stroke of malice never to be forgiven by Prosper. But Mathilde liked it as clever and funny; for she was so much absorbed in her duties that she never worried about herself.

Among her aspirations was a desire to be a hospital nurse, or what she, being convent-bred, called 'a prioress over pain and disease.' This ambition showed itself after Prosper's accident, and Dr Tiriard and his wife had encouraged it constantly. It became a ruling passion, the girl's second nature, and in two or three months Mathilde was to begin her apprenticeship in a Brussels hospital. Now and then Prosper would pass a week in the little white city; and meantime he was throwing a spell over the village schoolmaster in order that letters to Mathilde might be dictated twice or thrice a week.

In several walks Crowley and Mathilde spoke from the heart about their professional outlook, all the richer thought and fervour coming from the girl, in a simple and musical French quite free from a Belgian accent. There was opposition enough in their likes and dislikes to form the strongest of all harmonies—the harmony of contrasts all in tune. Very soon they knew each other as sympathetically as a musician knows a favourite piece after learning it by heart. Feelings of caste and class took flight; talent spoke to talent, aspiration to aspiration, in that one fellowship that levels up and up to a plane where all are truly equal as comrades in gifts of the spirit.

'Mathilde, you have genius, not a doubt about it,' he said to her on the evening before his departure. 'If only I had a touch of the same great thing, I should not feel work as work, toil as toil, and get stale and fagged.'

'What right have you,' she asked, 'to use such words as "stale and fagged"? Why think of yourself at all? Is it not enough to lose yourself in your work, and to sing in it with all your heart? Am I to think that past reliance on your father's allowance has taken from you the wish to make your way through deep waters into a harbour of your own? What will "failure" matter to you, or to me, if we do our best always with hope and joy?'

She turned suddenly and looked him full in the face, her cheeks glowing and her large blue eyes deep with intense inward light. They were standing in twilight by the cottage door, while Prosper was busy in the shippen, where a calf was ill.

'Yes, of course, you are right,' he answered. 'I'll promise not to keep black-edged notepaper in my mind.'

'Notepaper?' she repeated. 'Père tells me a great deal of it is going to be used, as he cannot bear to think of being cut off from you. His gift for friendship—you know what it is, don't you? Père is fond of Colin and Bertrand, but his feeling for you is far and away deeper. It will be with him always. Never forget that. To be loved by Père is to be loved by a big tender natural force. As soon as I can earn money enough as a nurse, he must come to me, for we need each other all day long.'

Next day Crowley carried away with him a new hope, a fresh outlook, that lifted him out of that poor circle of egoism in which so many artists shut themselves up as prisoners. He loved Mathilde, but it was the influence of her mind that opened to him new and widened prospects.

CHAPTER VIII.—TOWARDS THE TERRIBLE YEAR.

THERE were no downs in Mathilde's career as a nurse. Buoyancy, good health, and such a devotion to her calling as no doctor in Brussels had ever seen before sent her up and up. Her rapidity in reading must have been as remarkable as her intuitive sympathy and her comforting touch of hand, a sort of healing touch that seemed almost superhuman to her patients. Instinct, memory, experience were all hers; she compared in a flash, understood at a glance, without conscious effort, and never forgot what she had read. Hence her positive joy in long days of labour. And great success, as usual, piled toil on toil. When three years had gone by, she was wanted by the well-to-do for dangerous cases. At first she declined these offers, because her mind was set on being a firm friend to the poor in hospitals; but Prosper and Crowley, aided by many surgeons and physicians, convinced her at last that her hospital duties would be enriched by her wandering experiences as a private nurse, which would teach her many useful things about life and the world.

'I am in a tidal river which has a great many tributaries,' she wrote one day to Crowley; 'and now I see that I must try to visit the tributaries. And you? In your letters I find too many—too many—shall I call them complaints? You tell me that you do not rise; but is this a reason why you should help yourself to sink? Oh, my dear old friend! let us not hiss the wondrous drama that Heaven makes from day to day with women and men and little children. If you do your best, you will rise to your full height—work enough, surely, in the short seasons of a lifetime. To my mind, a happy composure is quite simple, because death is a friend—if death comes with honour. No more complaints, then, if you please. Père Prosper wants to see you again; and so do I, of course.'

Crowley's tussle was keen and nasty, for the

changing tides of art's wayward fashions tossed him here and there, doing to him what they do to most modernists. As a rule artists and authors are like topical songs; and though they may talk a great deal about being pioneers and innovators in their experiments, they know that the only futurists are the very few rare spirits that become classics.

It was his love for Mathilde that made Crowley so eager to rise into a position good and secure. In 1911 he passed a week with Prosper, but Mathilde was away from home nursing the head surgeon of her hospital.

Their correspondence went on; and all at once, early in 1912, good luck came out of the dark to Crowley. He painted a far-famed American, and afterwards accepted gladly an invitation to the United States. Here he struggled to keep in step with good commissions, which thronged to his studio and took him from city to city, gathering a great many dollars.

Two years of prosperous work through all the seasons made Crowley eager to take a holiday in Europe; and at the beginning of July 1914, about a week after the tragedy at Sarajevo, he postponed some pressing new commissions, caught a good boat for Liverpool, and on his arrival in England was soon wrapped up in the anxieties of Black Week.

Mathilde in her most recent letter had told him that she was working in a hospital at Louvain, and that good old Prosper, now in his sixty-fourth year, had come to her to be nursed a little, as acute rheumatism had settled in his lame leg. He lived in two rooms near the hospital, and hoped soon to be able to sell his live-stock in order to retire from farming. He suffered much from pain, and was unable to walk; now and then he went out of doors in a wheeled chair, which he described as a foolish sort of cradle for a man of his inches and weight. But if his leg made his body no better than a sick child's, his mind was perfectly sound; and M. Crowley could be equally sure that both Prosper and Mathilde thought of their best friend incessantly, and wanted to know if a fondness for stars and stripes and dollars ought to keep him too long from Belgium. As for other old friends, M. Colin was in Brussels, quite well, and happily married to a rich widow; while M. Bertrand, who wrote perhaps once a year, was in Paris, with a family of three sons to keep his brush very busy.

Crowley telegraphed at once to Mathilde, and waited anxiously for a reply. Thirty-six hours passed before he received news. 'We fear invasion,' the answer said, 'but we mean to meet it bravely if it comes. Don't expect letters as a nurse in war must be strictly neutral. But know that we both love you.'

Soon captivity closed upon Belgium. Crowley's war experiences are aside from this story. He lost his left arm in the battle of Loos, and after-

wards was an invalid for about eight months. On his return to civilian life he was a solacing historian, for he painted for mothers a good many portraits of boy subs., whose lot at the front was horribly precarious, and far too often fatal. His palette was a small table with a white marble top.

Not a word came from Mathilde. Once, in 1915, a Belgian soldier spoke to him of her as the Belgian Florence Nightingale; and much later, after the tragical spring-time of 1918, a refugee in London passed on a rumour that Sister Mathilde had died of enteric fever.

'I don't feel it to be true,' said Crowley, who

as an artist had faith in his premonitions. Yet the rumour startled him greatly, for love is incomplete till we are threatened with loss and bereavement. Crowley read once more Mathilde's old letters, lingering over them, and responding to their sweet, serene candour and ardour. In each the spark of genius was present.

After Foch's finale had got into flood-tide movement, Crowley managed, with patient help from influential friends, to obtain a passport to be used as soon as events would allow him to enter Belgium; and a fortnight after Armistice Day he set out on his journey.

(Continued on page 398.)

PRODUCE-RAISING IN GUERNSEY.

By B. C. DE GUÉRIN.

GUERNSEY, the second in size of the Channel Islands, was once described as 'a greenhouse in the sea'; and though this is rather an exaggeration, nevertheless there is no other island of equal acreage in the world where so much space is covered with glass and occupied by the 'growing' industry.

The raising of forced and cold-house crops for the English market is a business of comparatively recent growth. Thirty years ago it was unknown, the inhabitants of the island, with the exception of the tradespeople in the quaint little old-fashioned town of St Peter Port, forming a purely agricultural community.

The boom in raising tomatoes under glass came at the end of last and during the opening years of the present century, and since that time it has indeed proved itself to be a 'growing' business in more ways than one.

As many varieties of soil as one can imagine are to be found within the compass of the island's boundaries; and as some are naturally more suited than others to the raising of certain crops, these parts quickly became the Mecca of the local builders and contractors, with the result that to-day there are points of vantage on the island where one may stand and view a literal sea of glass extending for a mile or more in every direction, until it merges at length into the real and much less stable seas of the English Channel.

Roughly speaking, Guernsey is nine miles long by three or four miles wide, and its population was at the last census 45,000. The majority of the inhabitants are engaged directly in the production of fruit, flowers, and vegetables, and the remainder are no less dependent for a livelihood upon the same trade, though in a more indirect fashion.

The principal town is that of St Peter Port, whose narrow cobbled streets, built upon a steep slope on the eastward side of the island, remind one of that first great Norman, William the Conqueror, whose possessions the Channel Islands were

at the time of the Conquest. The harbour and town of St Sampson, situated near the northernmost point of the island, in pre-war days depended for existence upon the export of the famous Guernsey granite, but the trade in this stone is at present practically dormant, and commerce at this port is now confined almost entirely to coal.

The variety of climate to be found in such a small area as the Channel Isles is truly remarkable, that of Jersey, the largest of the group, being milder and more relaxing than that of either Guernsey, Alderney, or Sark, though a distance of only twenty miles separates Jersey from her smaller sisters.

Frost of any degree of severity is rarely felt in any of the islands, while snow is practically unknown, several consecutive winters often passing without a snowflake falling, although occasional snowstorms have been blown out of their course from the Atlantic, and have burst upon the islands, where the presence of this unaccustomed phenomenon has frightened the lives out of the insular-bred horses—and even, be it whispered, of some of the insular-bred country-folk. Guernsey has an average of 9 per cent. more sunshine than the sunniest part of England, and its mean temperature in winter is considerably higher than that registered at Greenwich. On the other hand, hail and wind often play havoc with greenhouses and outside standing crops; in fact, the severe wind-storms which break upon the island in winter, with the full force of the Atlantic behind them, are the growers' and the farmers' greatest anxiety.

Since the introduction of the tomato-raising industry the business has grown from the level of a tentative experiment to that of a scientific profession. No longer can the novice or the amateur plant out his stock and go off and play golf on the excellent local links until the fruit is ready to pick. That kind of 'culture' was only too frequently practised in the old days, and the experience that it led to disaster, together

with the more intimate knowledge of the plant gained year by year, has brought growers to a realisation of the fact that to-day one must be as much a scientist as a practical man to make the business pay. And those who grasped this truth in time, and sacrificed their leisure to the study of artificial manures and their composition, plant-diseases and their prevention and cure, and like topics, which are all of the utmost importance to the successful grower, have no reason to regret their action.

Until recent years the tomato was not grown out of doors in any considerable quantity in Guernsey, although the warmer climate and more southerly aspect of Jersey made this a profitable undertaking. Now, however, the acreage of 'outside toms' is increasing annually by leaps and bounds in the smaller island, though climatic conditions will never allow the growers to compete with their more favoured neighbours in Jersey. The 'forced' and 'cold-house' tomato is Guernsey's speciality, and as such will always hold pride of place.

The seed for the earliest forced plants is sown in late October or November, and the plants are finally transplanted to their 'fruiting-pots' about Christmas-time. From this period onward no two growers adopt the same method of culture, some leaving their plants to run to eight or nine bunches or more, others stopping them at four or five to make way for a second crop of plants later in the season. Provided an average amount of sunshine is available in the late winter and the early spring, fruit can be picked in April, and the crop should be in full swing by May, when prices are at their highest. Tomatoes are packed in baskets, twelve pounds in each, and are carefully sorted and graded, the quality being stated on the label. The size of the greenhouses varies considerably, but when the fruit is being retailed at the high prices of the last few years, it is refreshing to hear a grower talking of his annual output in tons. The larger firms, however, think nothing of shipping several hundred tons of tomatoes alone in the course of a season.

But tomatoes, though they undoubtedly rank as Guernsey's main crop, are not by a long way the only produce which is raised locally. Bulbs of all kinds, grapes, melons, and figs, to say nothing of early spring flowers, potatoes, and broccoli, constitute a goodly percentage of the total annual export from the island.

Bulb-growing especially ranks as one of the leading branches of the trade, as, although the greater profit is made from the sale of the bulbs themselves, they are also raised for the sake of their flowers. These can be obtained very early in the year by forcing, and for this purpose the bulbs are planted out in boxes in the autumn, and slow heat is applied throughout December and January. After forcing, the bulbs must have a rest for a period, and they are planted out in beds and left for a few years.

The favourite bulb for this purpose is the narcissus, which is also grown as a main crop in the open; and a truly delightful experience it is to cycle through the narrow country lanes on a sunny spring morning and view field after field upon either hand waving and nodding in a flood of white and yellow bloom. These flowers are bunched and packed in boxes by women and girls, who often work all night, so that the blooms will be fresh enough to stand the journey on the morning boat for England.

Next to bulbs in importance come grapes, though the culture of the vine requires very expert knowledge. The nature of the soil and its drainage are subjects upon which the grower must be an authority to achieve success, and he must also possess more than an idea of the practical work of planting, pruning, disbudding, thinning, and the thousand and one other items connected with the growth and health of the plant. Prices realised for best quality produce, however, amply repay the grower for the time and labour which he devotes to his stock.

Melons and figs also require the attention of an expert, though the work necessary to produce a crop is not so exacting as it is in other lines. Coal is a heavy item of expenditure for early melons, but as they are on the market in March, they command prices which leave a substantial profit.

Enough has been said to give a general outline of the occupations followed by the majority of the inhabitants of Guernsey, and a decidedly peaceful life it is, though the fighting-blood of their Norman ancestors still runs in their veins, as was proved by the way in which they flocked into the ranks of the British Army during the late war. Ninety per cent. of the people are bi-linguists. French is still the official language used in their 'States' or local House of Parliament, and the people talk a *patois* of their own, which, though now fast dying out, is a relic of the ancient Norman language spoken by their duke when he conquered England.

HAIL AND SNOW.

OFFSPRING of a fleeting cloud,
Begotten in mid-air,
I often wonder why they are
So contrary a pair.

For Hail is noisy, hard, and cruel,
Of desolating power
That wounds and strips the tender branch,
And mars the beauteous flower—
It revels in a summer's day
When warm aerial currents play :

While Snow is quiet, soft, and kind,
Protecting by its fall
The bounteous earth's frail progeny
Beneath its shelt'ring pall—
Its gleaming crystals deck the ground
When winter spreads her chills around.

JAMES T. JOHNSTON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

AN ECHO OF THE 'FORTY-FIVE.'

By IAN MACKAY.

I.

I WAS staying with my friend James Macdonald, at his place in Stratherrick, when the extraordinary experience befell that I am about to relate.

We were seated in his library one evening, and the conversation had turned to the subject of local legends.

'By the way,' said my friend, 'here's something that ought to have a history;' and opening a drawer, he took out the skull of an animal and a piece of rusty metal.

I examined the latter curiously. It was evidently a weapon, some sort of dagger, with the remains of a horn handle secured at the top with a cap of brass ending in a small knob of the same metal.

'It's a dirk,' said Macdonald; 'quite a good pattern. I found it away on the hill about two miles from here, between two great rocks. There was a human skeleton there too, which I had removed and buried in the kirkyard at Boleskine; and the bones of some sort of a dog—this is the beast's skull. At first I thought that a shepherd had taken refuge there in a snowstorm and perished, but I soon saw that theory didn't fit. This is not the head of any sheep-dog I've ever seen. What do you make of it?'

I took the skull into my hands and examined it closely. It was massively formed, with heavy jawbones, and a pointed frontal development. 'It was certainly no sheep-dog,' I said. 'It's much more like a bloodhound.'

'A bloodhound!' cried Macdonald. 'I've often heard that Butcher Cumberland used to chase our people with such brutes. Well, that's all past history now, and I suppose we shall never know the truth of these old stories.'

The conversation then drifted into various channels, but I found that my thoughts would keep turning to the strange discovery on the hillside. A thousand speculations pursued each other through my mind. How had this man met his end? What connection had the dog—no ordinary animal, judging from the skull—with the poor remains that my friend's care had laid in a more fitting resting-place? I heard Macdonald's voice pouring forth details of sport,

but my answers were mechanical. My thoughts were still busy with his find. The thing seemed to have obsessed me. Something within was urging me to discover an explanation of the mystery, and I felt that there would be no peace of mind for me till I had done so.

We retired early, but most of the night I tossed about sleeplessly. In the morning I felt stale and unrefreshed.

Macdonald noticed my condition. 'I'm afraid you haven't had a good night, doctor?'

'No,' I replied; 'that old dirk and the dog's skull seemed to get between me and sleep. I cannot get them out of my head. The whole atmosphere of your discovery has gripped me.'

'Well, you must get a good rest to-night,' he said; 'and if walking in this air doesn't have the desired effect, I don't know what will.'

We covered a good many miles before dusk, and when we returned to the house I was thoroughly tired.

After dinner the talk turned to stories of haunted houses, and Macdonald related several strange incidents from his own experience. I had made some study of occultism, and the conversation stirred up much that lay dormant in my memory. All at once an idea occurred to me that seemed to bear directly on the matter that had so persistently occupied my thoughts.

'Do you know,' I said, 'that it is an accepted theory among psychic students that material objects are able to retain and give out, under certain circumstances, definite impressions that they have received in the past? That is one theory to account for haunted houses.'

'I never heard that before,' he said, 'but it would account very well for some of the queer things I have been telling you about.'

'And more than that,' I said; 'for instance, that dirk and skull. Suppose you let me have them for the night? I'll sleep with them by me and see if anything happens.'

My friend looked at me curiously. 'Do you mean it?' he said. 'Do you really believe in such things?'

'It will certainly be a new experience for me,' I replied; 'but I have heard of very remarkable results following such experiments, and have often desired to test their possibilities.'

'Well,' said Macdonald, 'good luck to you!'

I shall await your revelations with much interest.'

When I retired to my room I took the skull and the dirk with me, fixing the latter to the head-rail of the bed with a strap in such a manner that the brass knob of the handle was just over my pillow. The skull I placed on a chair at the bedside.

When I lay down, the dirk-handle was a few inches above my eyes and a trifle behind the line of vision. I fixed my gaze upon the little gleam of brass above me, lit up as it was by the flicker of a fire at the other end of the room. This I knew to be one of the methods of inducing hypnotic sleep. My bodily weariness was a factor in favour of the success of my experiment. I lay in this manner for several minutes. A clock somewhere in the house struck eleven, and that was the last thing I noticed before sinking into unconsciousness.

II.

I have no idea how long I had been asleep, but all at once I became conscious of a change. I was no longer in my friend's house, but in what appeared to be a small hut constructed of rough stones. Heavy beams supported a roof of thatch. A peat-fire smouldered on the wide hearth; and in the middle of the apartment were a rough stool and a table. A few simple domestic utensils lay about. In one corner was a clumsily made bedstead, upon which lay a man in Highland dress fast asleep. I noticed the heavy breathing of the sleeper, and the smell of the peat-fire.

Then the quick patter of feet sounded outside, and the door opened to admit a woman with her head and the upper part of her body wrapped in a plaid. As she came into the firelight I saw that her face was drawn and pale, and terror was in her eyes. With swift steps she crossed the floor, and shaking the sleeping man by the shoulder, cried, '*Thiad a tighinn! Thiad a tighinn!*' ('They are coming! They are coming!'), pointing to the door in evident terror and excitement.

The man sprang to his feet—a strongly built fellow, with a shock of dark hair and a tangled beard. He said a few words to the woman in a low tone, then embraced her and darted out of the hut; while the woman sank down at the table with her head on her arms, and I saw the heave of her shoulders and heard the catch of her sobs.

All this passed before my senses quite clearly and unmistakably, but I was conscious of a curious feeling of detachment. I was keenly alive to all that was going on around me; my senses were peculiarly active, but I had no cognisance of movement or will-power. I was simply there, and an influence outside myself seemed to control my actions.

I passed out of the hut, and found myself upon the hillside. The Highlander was speeding

along the face of the hill, and some way behind I saw three or four figures running, and heard shouts. Overhead the stars shone brilliantly, and a soft breeze blew gently through the heather.

Then I saw another figure spring up in front of the flying man. The fugitive paused, and looked back as if to measure the distance between himself and his pursuers, then dashed straight on and hurled himself upon the single opponent in front. I saw a flash and heard the report of a shot, and the two went down together, the Highlander uppermost. He raised his arm above his head. Something that gleamed bright in the starlight was in his hand. He brought it down twice upon his enemy; then, springing to his feet, he ran diagonally up the hillside in the direction of a dark patch of wood, and disappeared into its shadow.

The pursuers came up, and stopped at the prostrate figure of the man who had fired. They were soldiers, as I saw by their faded red coats and the white belts and the brass buckles of their equipment.

The leader, a heavily built man, evidently a sergeant from his dress, was panting with his exertions. He stooped over the body on the ground. 'Dead!' he grunted. 'Damn him! Too much flustered to aim straight, I suppose. What's to be done now, I'd like to know?'

One of the party had moved ahead, and was closely examining the ground. 'Here's blood,' he cried. 'And here's more. The shot must have told, after all.'

The sergeant joined him. 'You're right,' he said. 'He was hit, then. We'll put the hound on this.'

Placing his fingers to his lips, he emitted a shrill whistle, which was answered some way down the hill.

Presently a man appeared holding a huge dark-coloured hound in leash. He put the dog on the trail of blood, and the creature at once set off with a whine of eagerness.

On reaching the wood it ran in among the trees, baying loudly. I heard the sound of a fall, a volley of oaths, and then saw the hound bounding rapidly forward with the leash trailing loose, while the man who had held it picked himself up, swearing volubly.

'You've let the dog go, curse you!' growled the sergeant. 'Now we're done.'

'He can't be so far away,' said the other, 'and wounded too. Anyway, we'll hear the hound giving tongue.'

And again the clear bay of the hound smote the still night-air, and the whole party moved forward in the direction of the sound.

III.

The influence that was controlling me, and yet was not myself, carried me on again. I became aware that I was much farther up the hill; the wood was behind and below me. I

looked down upon it. Toiling upwards with many a stumble, swaying as he came, was the Highlander. His breath was coming in gasps, and as he drew near I saw with a thrill of horror that his breast was mottled and flecked with blood. He looked back over his shoulder, but his pursuers were not in sight, and there was no sign of the hound. He struggled on in evident distress, stopping every few yards and looking back at the wood. It was certain he could not go much farther.

Again the bay of the hound sounded, and the hunted man made another despairing effort. I saw a dark form emerge from the wood and come bounding up the hill.

The Highlander saw it too. He looked about him for a moment; then, with the air of a man who has made a desperate resolve, he turned sharply to the right and made for two huge rocks that stood side by side upon the brae, and threw himself down between them. I saw him stretched upon the ground, and heard his laboured breathing. Pity filled my breast for a fellow-being in such sore straits. But there was scant time for feelings of sympathy, for the grim drama before me moved swiftly to its tragic conclusion.

The baying of the hound now sounded much nearer, and the wounded man raised himself on his knees and peered out into the starlight. He held a weapon in his hand; it was a dirk, and the blade was no longer bright.

Once more I heard the ominous bay of the hound, and down the hill I saw its dark form moving like an evil shadow among the heather and scrub of the hillside. Up it came, nearer and nearer, bounding forward, its nose near the ground; but ever and anon it raised its head and uttered its sinister cry.

The man between the rocks leaned forward to watch its progress. I saw the gleam of his staring eyes, and the white line of his clenched teeth through the tangle of dark beard. Sometimes he looked towards the distant wood, but there was no sign of his pursuers; and ever the hound drew nearer to his hiding-place.

I find it difficult even now to analyse my feelings; all I know is that I looked on, spell-bound, something telling me that I was about to witness the climax of events. Once or twice the hound paused, but the trail was too fresh for it to be long at fault. It reached the place where the man had turned aside. It was a patch of boggy ground. Round and round the creature ran whining, but ever drawing nearer to where the hunted man lay. He was kneeling upright in the opening between the stones. His position was well chosen. It was secure on each flank and in rear. The boggy nature of the ground in front would hinder attack in that quarter. The hound was now close upon him. I could hear its panting breath, and the sucking sound of its feet in the soft, wet soil. Another

moment and it had reached the opening; it gave one clear bell-like cry, and sprang straight forward.

I saw the Highlander stiffen into a tense attitude, his arm drawn back. As the beast sprang the man's arm shot forward to meet it, his hand grasping the dirk. The blow took effect in the creature's neck, and it fell, limp and bleeding, just outside the opening. One convulsive effort to rise, and it rolled over and lay still. The Highlander swayed dizzily for a moment, then with a hoarse cry fell forward upon his face.

I had remained a spectator of this thrilling scene, unable to relax my attention, to move, or utter a sound. But at the death-cry of the Highlander something seemed to give way. The controlling influence under which I had hitherto acted suddenly ceased, and in a moment I was wide awake.

IV.

The hillside, the dead hound, the man under the rocks, had all vanished. The morning sun was shining in through my bedroom window, and above my head there was the twinkle of brass, the last object upon which my eyes had rested before I went to sleep. I was still thrilling with the excitement of this extraordinarily vivid dream, and lay for some time thinking over my strange experience.

Could it be possible that the dirk had really given out impressions received more than a century and a half before? Was it just a dream, or had a piece of history been enacted before me?

Macdonald listened with the deepest attention as I related my experience. When I had finished, 'It's like enough,' he said. 'The place where I found the dirk was just what you describe, and the wood is there too. Let's go and see the place.'

For the greater part of an hour we scrambled up a steep hillside, and at length reached a place where two huge rocks stood out among the heather, leaning inwards till their tops met. There was just enough space between them for a man, and Macdonald had to stoop to enter.

It was the very place I had seen in my dream. There was the same hillside, and about half a mile below us was a dark belt of pines.

'Macdonald,' I said, 'this is the most remarkable experience I have ever had. Here is where the man crouched to await the hound; there is the wood. It is all exactly as I saw it.'

My companion was silent till we came in sight of the house; then he suddenly turned to me. 'Did you notice the tartan?' he asked.

'Yes,' I replied; 'it was the same as yours.'

'So he was a Macdonald,' said my friend. 'I'm glad he had a decent burial at last—and,' he added after a pause, 'that he died game.'

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

II.—THE PINE-MARTEN.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

THIS beautiful and graceful creature is now so rare that to most people it exists only as a name on the list of the British fauna. It can still be said to inhabit north Devon, Yorkshire, Cumberland, and Durham, but in all these English counties its occurrence is such a rarity that when one falls foul of the gunner the event is considered worthy of comment in the local press. In the north and west of Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland, and the wilder parts of Wales it is a little more plentiful, but it is to be feared that the depredations of this active little creature must ere long lead to its final extermination. Indeed, if the marten is to keep its place among the wild-folk of our woods, its protection should be made as thorough in this country as is that of the osprey.

The era is long since past when the pine-marten could justly be persecuted on account of its destructiveness. A creature of the trees, it is far less likely to destroy the nests of ground-birds than are stoats and weasels. Tree-birds of all kinds, from hawks and ringdoves to the smallest songsters, are its natural prey, and its cleverness in circumventing them is largely due to its knowledge as to the whereabouts of their favourite perches. It will lie invisible in the crotch of a tree, and the very instant a bird alights near—while, indeed, the unfortunate victim is absorbed in gaining a footing—the marten darts forth like a streak of lightning and clinches the deal.

The pine-marten is a beautiful tree-weasel, possessing gifts of all the musk-bearing fraternity, together with several unique accomplishments of its own. It does not, however, secrete musk; in fact, while a weasel in spirit, and of the pukka fighting breed, it seems to have been shorn by nature of the repulsive features most conspicuous in the land-weasels—the polecat, the skunk, the mink, the fisher, and the two smaller members of the family resident in this country. It is so large and formidable a beast that it has no wild enemies on British soil, while all, excepting the fox, the badger, and the otter, probably come within the scope of its destructive powers. Even wild deer enjoy no immunity from the marten cat, for the tiny mottled fawn, lying among the leaves, has been known to fall to it. It will, moreover, dispute the right of way with any wildling of our woods, and has been known vigorously to pursue a fox out of its home range.

The exquisite sable is a marten, though in

this country the marten's fur is not of great value. In general colour the creature is chocolate-brown, the longer hairs being richly glistened with sepia and umber. The under fur is squirrel-red, the paws are generally black, and the tail is long and bushy. The hall-mark of the marten is, however, its flaming orange breast, touched with lighter shades towards the sides. Sometimes, but rarely, the breast is pure white.

The 'tip-to-tip' length of adult specimens is generally about twenty-two inches, the tail being from nine to twelve inches.

II.

In a small town in the Vosges which served as a base hospital during the war there lived a tame (beech) marten which afforded me many an hour's happy diversion during brief spells of alleged 'rest' from the line. The town was subjected to shell-fire almost daily, and aircraft usually helped to enliven the hours of darkness; in fact, the condition of things became so bad that there eventually followed an almost complete trek of the civilian population to healthier quarters. This meant the departure of the marten's mistress, duly succeeded by an influx of American soldiers, each intent on occupying in the little captive's heart the place previously held by that lady. Bread, nuts, biscuits, cheese, and chewing-gum littered the cage in unsavoury confusion; but whether these attentions or the shell-fire were responsible, the marten became so fierce and distrustful in disposition that it was the height of folly to attempt any liberties.

I was told that before the war this creature was as gentle and lovable as a kitten, curling itself round the woman's neck in poses of affection, and spending hours gambolling on the veranda and about the eaves while she sat at her sewing. It was said to be seventeen years of age; and the son of the house, who was aged twenty-one, told me that he could remember its existence in the yard for so long as he could remember anything. This fact would appear to indicate that the pine-marten is a long-lived creature, albeit the most active and restless of all the wild beasts with which this series of articles deals.

The cage which held the captive was about six feet high, three feet wide, and nine feet long, and the antics it performed in this confined space were truly marvellous. Choosing a quiet time and sitting at some little distance, so as not to excite the animal's interest, I have watched it for minutes on end looping the loop

round its cage at a speed which made one giddy and bewildered to watch. It would mount the wire netting on one side at a speed which carried it, back downwards, across the narrow span of corrugated iron roof, obtain fresh impetus as it descended the opposite wall, head down, to tap the floor, and bound up the wire again, so lightly that the movements of its paws were scarcely audible. It was more like some accurate machine on frictionless wheels than a living creature of flesh and blood, though occasionally it would vary the programme by lengthening the loop, mounting the wire, and descending the wall at an angle from the perpendicular. It must have run miles in this way every day, and except for the very natural sense of pity one feels for so active a thing in confinement, its evolutions were certainly a joy and a wonder to behold.

The only wild marten I have ever seen in a natural state lived in some low crags in the heart of a beech wood in a secluded West Riding valley. I saw it on two occasions, and each time its behaviour was identical. As I silently approached the foot of the crags it darted from a cranny somewhere among the heather and ferns at the brow of the cliff, and ran up the slanting trunk of a blasted mountain-ash growing from a shelf. Here it crouched, tilting its head, now on one side, then on the other, as it regarded me with an air of playful innocence. One could not but be struck by its exquisite beauty. A picture, indeed, amidst its rugged setting; yet in those bright eyes was a hint—the merest hint—of the devilish brain which commanded that death-darting body. After a few seconds of closest scrutiny it descended the trunk a little, as though to obtain a better view; then, like a flash, it was gone.

Seton, in dealing with the Canadian species, comments specially on the marten's powers of avoiding detection. While in northern Ontario we used regularly to take marten in steel traps and deadfalls, but I have never seen a wild one in those woods, nor have I met any white man who has. It is possible, therefore, that this beast is not so rare as is generally thought, and that where it exists its presence may be unknown even to the oldest woodsmen. Seton comments also on the animal's preference for dense timber, and on its habit of retreating to more remote cover, never to return, on being disturbed by man; and if this be so in the wilds of Canada, where most animals are utterly fearless of man, owing to their ignorance of his ways, it would certainly apply with far greater strength to the wild martens of our own woods, where man is a much more potent enemy than in a bush country.

III.

Mice, birds, squirrels, rabbits, hares, rats, berries, fish, lambs, and occasionally poultry are, in the order given, the pine-marten's special fare. As the otter has specialised as a water-weasel

and become a past-master in the art of swimming, so the pine-marten has developed the art of climbing to such a standard of skill that it can truly be described as the weasel of the trees. Like the otter, the marten is a creature of exceptional gifts, but whereas the first named is of a loving and sociable disposition, the pine-marten is fierce and solitary, avoiding its own kind at all times except during the mating season.

All the weasels are notorious for their reckless bravery, which often outruns sound judgment, and the marten is by no means an exception. It is both nocturnal and diurnal in its habits; in fact, like the otter, it is one of those creatures which seem never to rest. Probably it curls itself up in some sunny or sheltered spot after a meal, and when the meal is digested, an hour or so later, sallies forth again on its lifelong pathway of destruction.

Martens have been known boldly to raid heronries, attacking the young birds in their nests, forthwith to be themselves attacked by a croaking, gasping, screeching army of bayonet-armed defenders! Herons readily unite to help members of their own clan, and the marten that failed to make himself scarce when the massed attack descended would have a very thin chance of getting to earth alive.

The squirrel is no sluggard in the branches, yet compared with the marten it is an indifferent climber. In hunting squirrels the marten is at a disadvantage at the outset, for, being a heavier animal, it must leap sooner and alight later in passing from tree to tree; it cannot run to the extreme end of the slender branches as does the squirrel, and so must take much longer leaps at every turn of the chase. Well the squirrel knows this and tries to profit thereby, seeking the slenderest branches and making the longest leaps; yet its chances of escape are as good as nil from the outset. Its stronger and more agile foe is its superior both in speed and in distance, and a short run, generally tending earthwards, usually suffices to bring the little drama to a close. The squirrel is caught and killed instantly, then speedily borne off to some fork high up in the timber, where its remains are left to bleach.

Often, however, in the lightning fury of the chase, the marten miscalculates its own abilities, and if there is no undergrowth to break its fall it may be crippled or even killed on striking the earth below. Martens have been found lying dead owing to a fall of this kind, and in the slender likelihood of such a mishap lies the squirrel's only chance of escape.

In the Highlands at one time a good many lambs were killed by martens, and the little murderers have been known so to mangle the faces of the defending ewes that, but for man's merciful intervention, a lingering death would inevitably have followed the injuries.

As a raider of hen-roosts the marten is a very occasional offender, save in those localities where

it may have become more or less indifferent to the close proximity of man, and where its raids are consequently common. A half-tame animal is at any time calculated to be infinitely more destructive to man's property than a truly wild one, and whereas a wild marten characteristically steers clear of all human habitation, seeking the most lonely glens and corries, a marten educated out of this highly desirable characteristic will very readily attack hens, ducks, geese, turkeys, even cats—anything that suggests a meal and a lively exchange of sentiments.

The marten will pursue hares and rabbits in just the same manner as does a stoat, and in the case of a well-seasoned hare the chase is often of considerable length. This may be owing to the fact that the pine-marten is scentless, and therefore incapable of exercising upon the fugitive the same hypnotic effect as do its musk-tainted relatives. (It cannot be doubted that the stink of stoat or weasel is as fear-inspiring to its normal prey as is the very sight of the beast itself, for many animals well able to defend themselves, such as foxes and cats, will turn away in fear from that ominous taint.)

The pine-marten is an expert swimmer, and has been known to live by hunting such creatures as musk-rats and beavers, so no doubt it just as readily hunts water-voles and gray rats, whose swimming-powers would not suffice to save them from it. In common with its near relative, the fisher—which, by the way, does practically everything except fish—the marten can be said to angle only in so far as it will attack partially stranded fish, lying in such shallow water that they are unable to escape; though one or two authorities hold that this animal will systematically work a stream as does a cat while the trout are running.

Berries the marten eats greedily, but probably more by way of medicine than as a staple article of diet; and so far as I know this is the only exception to an otherwise strictly carnivorous fare. If facts were obtainable, I believe we should find that all our four-footed warm-blooded carnivores eat berries to a greater or less degree. From the evidence afforded by the captive (beech) marten in France, I should say that the marten, in spite of its squirrel-like form, strictly eschews anything in the way of nuts.

IV.

During my early studies of this animal I was of the opinion that at any rate it observed the laws of propriety and decency so far as its marriage customs were concerned—that, indeed, the marten was strictly monogamous, and that both parents shared in the upbringing of their young. The occasional newspaper reports that 'two martens were shot at so and so' were probably responsible for this belief, together with the fact that I had constantly heard Highland keepers state that, one marten having been shot, it

was usual to find 'the other' somewhere near. Unless, however, the British marten differs widely from its Canadian cousin in this one respect, and unless the habits of caged martens stand as no criterion for the customs of free specimens, the marten is totally despicable in its mating habits. In this respect, if in this respect only, its habits indicate a standard of morals lower than that of the common stoat, for in the wild morality usually begins with the observance of marriage bonds and some sense of tenderness on the father's part towards the young.

Seton says that after the young are born the less they see of their cut-throat sire the better. He also says that no two martens have ever been known to meet with feelings other than those of deadly enmity. It is probable, then, that the 'mated' couples run together only for a short time, and that thereafter, though their respective home ranges may not be far apart, they do not associate as mated couples.

Wild British martens kept in captivity behave in just the same way as do those on the fur-farms in Canada. The big-cage system, in which a number of martens are allowed to run together in a large confined space, has never yet proved possible. This is owing to the fact that the member of the clan who is strong enough to kill all the rest cheerfully proceeds to do so—or, rather, he kills the survivors of the general *mêlée* with which the social intercourse begins. In this way a cage of promising martens has been reduced to one tattered and moth-eaten specimen when the man came next morning with food for a dozen—a somewhat expensive process by which, nevertheless, a very fit strain can speedily be arrived at!

Thus, fur-farmers, having found that the big-cage system merely resulted in providing amusement for one solitary specimen, speedily tried the separate-cage method, which is to-day yielding good results. Marten-farming, however, is not likely to prove widely profitable, as, owing to the disposition of the marten, its rearing is somewhat precarious. Overfeeding leads to infertility, and a large cage must be employed for each individual specimen; otherwise the beast suffers from lack of exercise. The violence of the males is, however, the chief difficulty and the most common cause of loss. The cage of the female must be provided with shelters into which she can retreat in order to escape her lord; though even when every provision is made in this way the female is apt to be killed by the male's long corner teeth penetrating her brain. The death of the female is instantaneous. Only by long weeding out, the gentler males being kept for breeding purposes, can loss in this way be reduced.

It is probable that in a wild state such mortality does not occur. It is as unjust to judge the characters of wild creatures from examples afforded by their less fortunate kindred kept in captivity, as it would be to attempt to gauge the character of man by a study of

prisoners in solitary confinement; and particularly as concerns the mating and breeding habits of animals does captivity upset the natural order of things. How can they be natural when everything that nature gave them as a birthright is taken away?

The wild marten usually adapts a bird's nest as a nursery for its young, though it may choose a hollow tree or a crevice among boulders, in the latter case loosely constructing a nest of grass and moss.

Gestation lasts about ninety days, very considerably longer than with the otter and the polecat; but whereas the young of the otter are blind for three months or more, the young martens receive their sight at the end of four weeks. When they are about six weeks old, the parent marten begins to take meat to her offspring, and by about the end of the seventh week they first leave the nest. They are full-grown at six months.

The number of young per litter ranges from two to five. Three is the usual number, and occasionally as many as seven occur. Sir Harry Johnston thinks it probable that two litters per season are born; but in view of the fact that the first litter must occupy the mother well on into the summer, this would seem rather an open question.

It is probable that the young begin to breed in the spring succeeding their birth; so, considering their longevity, martens cannot be said to be unprolific creatures.

v.

The marten has not developed its climbing-powers at the expense of its powers of running. On the ground it is considerably the fastest of all the weasels. A boy of twelve can easily outrun a stoat on open ground, while an otter is comparatively helpless if surprised far from its beloved element. A marten, on the other hand, can hold its own over a short distance against a normal sheep-dog. True, it will tree up at the first possible opportunity, or seek refuge among the rocks; but, nevertheless, it will probably escape the dogs unless the run be a long one. The marten is a past-master in keeping up a running fight, and will punish an inexperienced dog severely at every effort made to close.

The marten's hankering to learn and to know is a characteristic by which hunters are often able to profit. The unaccustomed sound of an axe is calculated to bring any marten hearing it to the spot, to peer through the leaves in eager inquiry, then to dart off to the uttermost corner of the forest on having satisfied its curiosity. Any unwonted sound has the same effect, and a trick sometimes practised by keepers is to remain perfectly still, making at intervals the grouse-call by sucking between closed lips through the stem of a pipe. The marten will then come quite near, moving from point to point in search of a better view, and a quick shot probably puts an end to the little creature's craving to see and to know. In the same way this animal is sure to be

attracted by anything moving which it does not immediately recognise, and a common way of trapping it is to use as a lure some conspicuous object, such as the wing of a partridge, so placed that the bird moves from side to side as the wind blows. A marten will always go for a moving bait even though he be suspicious of it, and such a set generally yields good results, as the animal is not likely to escape seeing it.

More especially along the west coast of Ireland martens regularly become attached to the sea cliffs, making their homes in the rocky fastnesses, and seldom or never venturing inland. They become almost a cragland species, and owing to the constant abundance of food are apt to grow into finer specimens than those inhabiting inland forests.

Naturally, the marten is thoroughly at home among sea cliffs, and a vast variety of food is always at hand. Rabbits are generally abundant among the crags, shore-scavenging rats exist in thousands in many parts, and almost countless forms of wild-fowl life throng the ledges. These seaside dwellers are said also to quarter the seashore in search of shellfish or any stranded sea-life washed up by the tide.

Probably the day is not far distant when the marten will no longer exist as a creature of our woods, but long after that day has dawned it will continue to hold its own here and there along the coast crags. It is not likely to be exterminated on the west coast of Ireland for many decades to come, for among those wild and inaccessible crags it is practically secure from destruction by man. The only trouble is that a little marten goes a long way—by which is meant that, since they are not sociable beasts, two martens for every mile of coast would be a comparatively dense population, and the rising generations that could not claim and hold a hunting range along the crags would, perforce, have to travel inland in search of their fortunes.

The shrinkage of its home range during the last few years has proceeded rapidly. So far as I can ascertain, it is eight years since the last pine-marten was shot in Wigtownshire, where once it was abundant; while it is entirely gone from Kirkcudbrightshire and Dumfriesshire, where it is a creature unknown to the present generation of gamekeepers, though comparatively familiar to their fathers. The marten can be said, indeed, to have gone entirely from the Scottish Lowlands—or at any rate to have become so scarce as to go undetected. In the Highlands its range is slowly gathering in on every side. In England it can only just be said to exist.

Is the marten to go?—while we, like Tamahawa, spread out our hands and say, 'Farewell, little brother! My heart is heavy for you; but, alas! it cannot be otherwise. Farewell!'

Why preserve the marten? Why preserve any other gem of nature or of art? If there is anything at once tragic and pathetic in the ways of Dame Nature, it is that she should have

presented this least lovable of all our fur-clad fauna in the most lovely form. The beauty of the marten is in its quickness, its restlessness, its darting, animated poses, in its very *life*. Take that life away and you have left a bit of carrion. A dead marten is an object from which we shrink,

knowing it to have been a blood-thirsty and cruel thing; but to have seen a living marten in the trees is to go your way the richer and the happier for the view, for you have seen *Life*—Life radiantly materialised, the most living and lively of all God's moving things.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XVIII.—*continued.*

III.

ABOUT three o'clock that afternoon a little stream of visitors began to arrive, and Thomas Atkins, with his extraordinary adaptability, gravely, if somewhat inaccurately, answered the catechism of well-meaning old ladies, and flirted heartily and openly with giggling 'flappers.'

To the visitors, however, Austin Selwyn paid no heed. He was enduring the lassitude which follows a fever. He knew that the crisis had come, the hour when he must face fairly the crash and ruin of his work; but he put it off as something to which his brain was unequal. Like slow drifting wisps of cloud, different phrases and incidents floated across his mind, shadows of things that had left a clear imprint upon his senses. With the odd vagrancy of an undirected mind, he found himself recalling a few of Hamlet's lines, and smiled wanly to think how, after all those years, the immortal Shakespeare could still give words to his own thoughts: 'This goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, . . . this brave o'erhanging firmament—this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.'

The wings of memory bore him back to Harvard, where once in a scene from *Hamlet* he had mouthed those very words, little dreaming that in a few short years he would lose the sense of euphony in the cruel realisation of their meaning.

Then, before he saw her or heard her step, he knew that she had come. His heart quickened, and his breathing was tremulous with mingled emotions.

'Well,' she said, coming to his bedside and offering her hand, 'how is the invalid?'

'Elise,' he said, 'it is wonderful of you to come.' He looked at her khaki uniform, at the driver's cap which imprisoned her hair. 'Now,' he went on dreamily, 'it all comes back to me. It was you who brought me here.'

'Had you forgotten that already?' she said, bringing a chair to the bedside.

'I couldn't remember,' he answered weakly. 'All I know is that I was walking alone—and there came a blank. When I woke up I was

here with a head that didn't feel quite like my own. But I knew, somehow, that you had been with me.'

'What does the doctor say about your wound?'

'It is not serious.'

'You have heard since what happened?'

'Yes.'

'It was absolutely topping the way you fought for that child's life.'

He made a deprecatory gesture, and for a moment conversation ceased. He was wondering at her voice. A subtle change had come over it. Her words were just as uncomfortably rapid as in the first days of their friendship, but there was a hidden quality caught by his ear which he could not analyse. Looking at her with eyes that had waited so long for her coming, he felt once more the affinity she held with things of nature. Her presence obliterated everything else. They were alone—the two of them. The hospital, London, the world, were dimmed to a distant background.

'After such a night,' he said, 'it is very kind of you to make this effort.'

'Not at all. We're cousins, you know.'

'I—I don't'—

'The Americans and the English, I mean. Relatives always go to each others' funerals, so I thought I might stretch a point and take in the hospital.'

'Oh! That was all?'

'Goodness, no! You automatically became a protégé of mine when I picked you up last night. Isn't that a horrid expression!—but frightfully fashionable these unmoral days.'

'You must excuse me,' he said slowly, 'but I was foolish enough to think you came here because—well, because you wanted to.'

'So I did. An air-raid casualty is ever so much more romantic than a wounded soldier. If he lives through it, he always proposes the very next day either to the nurse or to the ambulance-driver, whereas a Tommy, after his third wound, becomes so *blasé*.'

'You shouldn't torture me,' he said, wincing noticeably under the incision of her words.

Just for a fleeting instant her eyes were softened with a tender look of self-reproach. His heart warmed at the sight, but before he could convince himself that it was not a creation

of his own fancy, it had passed, and once more she was holding him at bay with her impersonal abruptness.

'Will you tell me about yourself?' he urged. 'Please.'

'What do you want to know?'

'Everything—everything!' he blurted out, impetuously leaning forward. 'My heavens! Don't you know how I've longed and waited for this moment ever since that night at your flat? I want to hear all about you—what you've done—where you've been, and—and in what mysterious way you've changed.'

'Have I changed?'

'Of course you have. You're trying to appear just as you were when we first met, but you can't do it. Even if I hadn't noticed the difference in you, I should have known that no one could live through these times and remain the same.'

'Why not? Haven't you?'

He laughed grimly, and his head sank back on the pillows. 'I want to know all about you, Elise,' he repeated dully.

'Very well.' She smoothed her skirt with her hands, and folded them Quakeress-fashion. 'As you know, I once had a flat in Park Walk—which I shared with various and variegated female patriots, also engaged in guiding the destinies of motor-cars. Edna was the first one to follow Marion, after she and I quarrelled; but Edna couldn't break herself of the habit of wandering into the Ritz for luncheon every second day with only a shilling in her pocket.'

'But I don't see how'—

'You poor innocent! Some one always paid—don't worry. So we parted company on that issue, and I asked Mabel to take Edna's place. Mabel was frightfully nice, but took to opium cigarettes, and then to heroin. She disappeared one night, and never came back. Poor girl! Her going made room for Lily, who read the very nicest modern novels, and always cried through the love scenes. I wish you could have seen her sitting up in bed reading a book, eating chocolates, and sobbing like a crocodile. Lily had only one weakness—marrying Flying Corps officers. It was really the army's fault giving two of her husbands leave at the same time.'

Selwyn frowned. 'What a dreadful experience,' he said.

'Oh, I don't know.' She gave a little shrug of her shoulders, but the spirit of badinage had vanished both from her face and from her voice. 'It didn't take long to lose most of one's illusions. It is one thing to meet people as Lord Durwent's daughter, and quite another as a free-lance ambulance-driver. I've seen what people really are since I've been on my own, and I'm sick of the whole thing.'

'You don't mean that, Elise?'

'I do. Men are rotten, and women are cats.'

He smiled quizzically, but she kept her eyes

averted from his. It almost appeared as if she were determined to retain her pose of callousness at any effort, but his sense of psychology told him that his first conjecture was correct. The girl who had endured was trying to hide herself behind the personality of her old self.

'My dear girl,' he said slowly, 'it is an old trick of women to talk for the purpose of convincing themselves. I don't care what you have seen—you could not have passed through the ordeal of these long months and believe in your innermost soul that either men or women are rotten. In many ways I feel as if what little knowledge I possess dates from last night; and I have learned things about men right here in this ward to-day that have made me humble. These chaps that we call ignorant, the lower classes—why, they are superb, wonderful. I tell you they have greatness in them. I wish you could have seen them'—

'Haven't I seen them,' she cried, with a little catch in her throat, 'hundreds and hundreds of times? Almost every day, and at all hours of the night, I've gone to meet the Red Cross trains. I have seen men die while being lifted out of the ambulance—men who would try to smile their thanks to us just before the end came. I have'— She caught her hands in a tight grip, and her eyes welled with tears. 'But they're just jingoes, I suppose,' she said, blending a scornfulness with her repressed grief.

'I have deserved this,' said Selwyn, his face drawn. 'Nothing that you can say is half so bitter as my thoughts.'

'I didn't mean to hurt you,' she said.

'If ever a man was sincere, I was, Elise. Since I left you at Roselawn I have followed the one path, thinking there was a great light ahead. Now I am afraid that, perhaps, it was only a mirage.'

'No, it wasn't,' she replied vehemently. 'I hated you for thinking English women would not aid their men to fight, and I wanted never to see you again. But do you remember when I said that the glory of war was in women's blood? There was a certain amount of truth in it at the beginning; for when I first saw the wounded arrive I was madly excited. I wanted to shout and cheer. But as the months have gone on, and I have seen our soldiers maimed and bleeding and suffering, while thousands of their women at home have simply broken loose and lost all sense of decency or self-respect—oh, what's the use?'

'But you mustn't forget the women who have done such great things for the country.'

'I know—but what's it all for? Since this battle of the Somme our casualties have been frightful, and every day means so many of our real men killed, and so many more shirkers and rotters in proportion to carry on the life of England. We've had our women's revolution all right. There are not many of the old barriers

left; but what a mess we have made of our freedom! When I think of all that, and then recall what you said about war, I know that you were right, and we were wrong.'

'You are wonderfully brave,' said Selwyn, 'not only for having done so much, but in telling me that.'

'No,' she said, lowering her eyes to the gloves which she held in her hand; 'I have lost all my courage. Every night I feel as if another day of meeting the wounded will kill me. . . . If it could only end! Anything would be better than these awful casualty lists.'

'Elise'—he raised himself on his elbow and leaned towards her—'you prove yourself a woman when you say that; but you're wrong. I can't give my reasons yet, but since last night I have been seeing clearer and clearer that Britain not only must not lose, but must win. I know other men have said it ten thousand times, but only to-day have I begun to see that, in its own strange, unidealistic manner, this Empire is fighting for civilisation.'

'Then'—her eyes were lit with sudden, glistening radiance—'then you don't think our men have died uselessly?'

'I could not believe in God,' he answered, wondering at the calm certainty of his voice uttering things which would have infuriated him a few hours before, 'if I thought that this war's dead had fallen for nothing.' His hand, which had been raised in gesture, fell limply on the bed. 'Up to yesterday,' he went on slowly, 'I reasoned truth; to-day—I feel truth. I wonder if it is not always so, that higher knowledge begins with the end of reasoning.'

For a couple of minutes neither spoke, and his head was throbbing with anvil-beats. Twice she started to speak, but stopped each time as though distrustful of her own words.

'I am going back to America, Elise,' he said, without looking at her, 'to try to discover what I really think. After all these wasted months, with last night's climax of damnable murder, every conviction has been stripped from me, except two: first, that Germany, for her own sake and for the future of humanity, must be beaten; the other—well, it is hardly a conviction. It is more like a hunger—a gnawing hunger—for a civilisation that will in some manner atone for all these lives that have been lost.'

A wall of pain pressed against his head, and his face went gray with agony. In an instant she was standing over him arranging his pillows, and soothing his temples with the gentle pressure of her hands.

For the first time in many months he knew the help and compassion of a woman—and the woman was Elise. He was weak from loss of blood, weary from the long travail of the mind, and her presence, with its indefinable fragrance of clover and morning flowers, was as exquisite music to his senses.

'If you only knew,' he murmured, 'how I have longed for this moment. And though I have been dreading the hour when I should have to face the future, and admit my terrible failure to myself, your coming has made it all so easy. Listen, Elise dear'—

The Cockney patient leaned over with a bag in his hand. 'Ave a gripe?' he said genially.

'No, th'—' began Selwyn.

'Thanks so much,' said Elise, taking the bag and picking a small cluster for the American, afterwards handing the bag back to the Tommy.

'Ave a few yourself, won't yer?' said the warrior.

'May I?'

'Ere,' said the Cockney, with mock brusqueness. 'Tike a bunch.'

As she selected two or three of the grapes and smiled her acknowledgments to the delighted donor, Selwyn's conception of the new Elise grew in certainty. Without being in the least dictatorial, she had overruled his thoughtless refusal of the fruit; and, equally without patronage or maudlin effusiveness, she had contrived to make the most of the little incident, giving as much pleasure to the wounded Britisher as was possible in so trifling a matter.

But, small as the incident was, Selwyn noted her delicacy, and the quick understanding of the different personalities involved. Many people possess the virtue of unselfishness; to him, it seemed that Elise had attained to the art.

Perhaps from the very intensity of their previous talk, the threads snapped, and her quickly uttered sentences, with the accompanying sparkle in her eyes, showed him that he could hope for little more than badinage for the rest of her visit. Almost as if she desired to eradicate the memory of her emotional admission, she gave her vivacity full play. For a few minutes he tried to bring back the close intimacy of their souls, but she fenced him off, and met his heart-hungry glances with the gayest of smiles.

Roselawn, she told him, had been transformed into a convalescent home, and Lord and Lady Durwent were living in one of the wings. Practically all the servants had enlisted or gone into war-work; and even Mathews, the groom, after perjuring himself before a whole regiment of army doctors, had been accepted (with grave official doubts) for military service.

Interspersed with these details she recounted incidents of her London life as an ambulance-driver, and it was all her listener could do to follow the swift irrelevance of her course. Only once did she pause when, in answer to his question, she told him she had heard nothing of Dick.

But though her sentences still had the crispness of a whip, and though her cheeks were lit with life's fire, as in the days when she led Boy-blue through leafy paths of adventure, she was not the Elise of former times.

Marred as she had then been by the domination

of her intensive dissatisfaction, the tyranny of her moods, the lack of human response, yet she had gripped his imagination as no other woman had ever done. But out of the moonlight, in the very presence of hell's vapours, had come the new Elise whose utmost efforts could not succeed in belying her changed personality. She had lived in close companionship to suffering, and though, in her dislike of self-righteousness and her hatred of mock sentimentality, she tried to deny the fact even to herself, her experiences had diffused all her wilful, unbridled paradox with the warm glow of sympathy—that gentle, wonderful, secret gift of deft understanding; that transcendent power of the mind to penetrate another's soul, and call to life the slumbering best.

Even her face, the revelation of the soul, showed her achievement. There was no longer the dulling of eyes and the pouting of warring lips, demanding their little moments of ascendancy. She had not lost her spontaneity or the instinctive charm which had made her seem so much more in tune with out-of-doors than with the confines of a house, but all had blended. Her spirit and her body had become an indissoluble unison. In the forgetfulness of self, she had found herself.

And while his veins were coursing with the potent fluid of his love for her, and only her, he

found himself glorying in the very femininity of the girl. Even in the quick exchange of conversation, and in the grip of his newly awakened passion, his mind experienced a delight in contrasting her with other women he had known.

He had seen so many whose only attempt at individuality was an aping of men's habits and mannerisms; he had met such numbers in his own country who had let the acquiring of a certain tabloid intellectuality make them sexless; he had encountered countless women, too frivolous or callous or timorous to admit the verities of life. But before him was a girl whose warm-coloured pride of womanliness linked her with the great women of the past.

The daughters of vikings, looking out to sea with their bosoms, like its own, rising and falling in the salt-foamed air; the daughters of Norman kings following their fathers into the Saxons' land; the daughters of Royalists defying the Roundhead hordes—this English girl, in her admission and acceptance of womanhood's traditions, had become sister to all of these.

And looking at her with half-open, dreamy eyes, the unuttered words came to Selwyn: 'Daughter of a great past. . . . Mother of a greater future.'

(Continued on page 405.)

LA PAZ DE AYACUCHO.

By A. R. GROVES.

HARDLY any railway journey in the world can be more fascinating than that across the uplands of Bolivia—that roof of the Western world, the Tibet of the American continent. Hardly any city in either hemisphere can seize so dramatically the traveller's attention, or retain so long his interest, as La Paz de Ayacucho, which, before the memorable day of 9th December 1824, when Antonio José de Sucre captured the viceroy, routed his forces, and ended for ever the rule of Spain in South America, was called Nuestra Señora de la Paz. Was it consummate art, one is inclined to wonder, or was it mere caprice, that led the *conquistadores* to select so beautiful a site for the city whose name was to them commemorative of the peace attained only after the long, bitter struggle between Pizarro and Almagro? The truth is that it was neither. The previous existence here of an Indian settlement, Chuquiapú ('the place of gold'), determined Alonzo de Mendoza in 1548 to lay the beginnings of a town; greed of gold brought into being the 'City of the Clouds.'

The great Titicaca plateau, which stretches a hundred thousand square kilometres round the lake of that name, approaches its limits at La Paz, where the Andes rise in towering majesty, the rugged depths of their *quebradas* giving

picturesqueness to a scene of imposing grandeur. The snow-capped peaks of Illimani and Sorata stand out in pristine splendour against the bluest of skies, or, under the clear light of the moon, seem to tower like twin guardians over the sleeping city. It is a wonderful panorama. 'God,' said a traveller once, on beholding La Paz for the first time, 'when He created the world, must have wished to leave a souvenir of primeval chaos, and so neglected to mould into form this corner of His world.' Around and above La Paz all is titanic, overwhelming. One is surrounded by the testimony of ages, so little of man's handiwork is to be seen. Some giant hand might have set these mountains here, and have scarred the plateau with huge rents and chasms, have overturned and by the pressure of his palms thrown into a strange chaos these vast, lonely regions, in order to fix them in an eternal savagery of nature.

The traveller who alights from the train at Alto La Paz sees only this vision of desolate grandeur, at times a little chilling and overwhelming in its bleak aridity. Nothing prepares him for the unmatched spectacle of La Paz. Around the little station-house there is nothing; the cloud-capped mountains dominate all. He will, if he be wise, walk a little way along the

stony and dusty road. He will, indeed, almost instinctively do so, for the cold at Alto La Paz is often intense, lying as the station does 13,000 feet above sea-level. But he will look in vain for the distant towers and high buildings of a city which shall come into his view gradually. The vision of La Paz is instantaneous, startling. A sudden turn in the rough road brings him to the superb spectacle of a city of glowing colours lying at his feet, at the bottom and along the sides of a great natural basin, whose scarred basaltic cliffs are coloured by the red-tiled roofs of the houses and the vivid green of trees and flowering creepers. From so great a height, as one gazes over the edge of the precipice, the town looks small, though it contains 70,000 inhabitants—a fantastic patch of colour in the midst of these gray, stern surroundings, an exotic growth upon the bed of this ancient inland sea, a wonderful oasis in a weary desert.

Nowadays an electric-car service conveys you from the heights above to La Paz, which itself, situated nearly two and a half miles above sea-level, is one of the highest cities in the world. The old mode of reaching your destination by mule-driven stage-coaches was perhaps more exciting, and certainly coincided more with the essential spirit of the place. Electricity and the brilliant red and green ponchos of the Aymará herdsmen do not seem to harmonise; though, once in La Paz, one meets with signs of the most advanced civilisation. You are in a city of contrasts, of contradictions, where summer and winter alternate by hours, and where the sixteenth century jostles the twentieth and is no whit abashed. In no other town, perhaps, is there so intimate a mixture of the indigenous and the European. It is a Spanish city which Indians seem to have invaded and made their own. They are everywhere, and they do everything. Grave, silent people, these ancient herdsmen of the stony hills, the Aymarás of the Bolivian highlands; strange, gaudy figures in their bright ponchos, without which they are never seen; the universal and omnipresent porters in a city where there are few carriages—not so long ago there were but two, those of the president and the archbishop; dignified during the day, as only Indians can wear a dignity that is born of race and suffering; and then, having drunk their fill of the potent native beer at some roadside *chichera*, dancing for hours into the night in a kind of ecstatic frenzy, till they sleep the sleep of exhaustion, wrapped only in the bright-hued poncho, on the cold stones, under a pallid moon.

One is often tempted in La Paz and throughout Bolivia to ask if the ancient races who so long possessed the land have derived a single 'benefit' from the civilisation which has dispossessed them, other than the taste for strong liquors. Even the War of Independence did not liberate the Indian. The whites of to-day have the same disdain for him as had

their ancestors, the first Spaniards. Some rights he has received—the right to live in a certain freedom. But it is rarely that he is allowed to possess the land which for centuries he has sown and cultivated. He bears the stamp of serfdom upon him; he has but seldom revolted, and his voice is not often heard. Since the time of the last Tupac Amaru he has had few sympathisers, and none to voice his woes. In all South America there is nothing which so compels the attention as the irremediable sadness of the Indian of Bolivia and Peru. It is more noticeable, of course, as one leaves behind the rare cities with their change and opportunity; but everywhere it is a misery without horizon, without escape, without any other compensation than the stupor of drunkenness, or the periodical forgetfulness induced by the chewing of coca. The *chuspa*, or little pouch, which is ever at the Bolivian Indian's belt holds the green leaves of the coca-plant from which he can draw a few minutes of oblivion whenever he wishes. You watch a string of Indians working in any of the rough hillside streets of La Paz. One of them falls out of line, and withdraws from his fellows; for, like opium, the coca must be taken with deliberation. He will stretch himself down under a tree, or inside an empty building, and slowly from his *chuspa* draw forth the leaves with a little unslaked lime. With infinite grace and patience he rolls them into a ball (*acullico*), which he chews contemplatively for from fifteen to twenty minutes, rising thereafter refreshed, and then, as quietly as he lay down, returns to that monotonous round of labour in which the coca is his only and much-prized distraction.

Some take coca to excess, and to these the name of *coquero* is given—usually, it has to be admitted, with the addition, *coquero blanco*. The Indian has always regarded the coca-leaf with far too much reverence to misuse it. Von Tschudi, the Austrian scientist, who made a most thorough study of the customs of the Incas, tells how 'during divine worship the priests chewed coca-leaves, and unless they were supplied with them it was believed that the favour of the gods could not be propitiated. It was also deemed necessary that the supplicator of divine grace should approach the priests with an *acullico* in his mouth.' Among the Quichuas and the Aymarás it is still believed that any business undertaken without the benediction of coca-leaves cannot prosper, and to the shrub itself worship used to be rendered. To-day the miners at Cerro de Pasco will throw chewed coca upon hard veins of metal, in the belief that it softens the ore and renders it easier to work. They still put coca-leaves into the mouths of dead persons in order to secure for them a favourable reception on their entrance into another world; and if a Bolivian Indian journeying across the

Atacama desert falls in with a mummy, he, with the timid reverence characteristic of his race, will present to it some coca-leaves as his pious offering.

The Aymará woman is sometimes very beautiful, and the gravity of her expression lends her a strange and sympathetic allurements. She toils throughout the day at the most unfeminine tasks. To meet a train of women, in the broad light of a twentieth-century day, toiling up a steep hill carrying loads of earth or of bricks in their coarse shawls slung behind their backs, like so many human ants, gives one something of a shock. Yet the practice is immemorial. The first railway in Bolivia was built in this way, and most of the Inca works relied for their foundations upon the labour of the women. But the real foil to the Aymará in his poncho is the Chola—the Bolivian belle of mixed ancestry. A Chola of La Paz, when adequately dressed for a *fiesta*, has veritably, in the words of an old slang phrase, 'got 'em all on.' As the Argentine *gaucho* carries all his worldly wealth in the trappings of his horse, so the Chola bears hers on her back, or, it would be more true to say, round her waist. For she wears at least a dozen starched white petticoats, embroidered half-way to the waist, and over these a red, green, blue, or yellow velvet skirt, which reaches to the calf of the leg, the voluminous petticoats showing their ruffled edges beneath. These petticoats are the Chola's pride and wealth. Twenty-five is said to be the record worn at once, which point of ostentation reached, one would think walking were impossible. Yet, in general, the Chola has a fine and easy carriage, in no way hampered by over-adornment. Two bright-coloured shawls are worn, coquettishly pinned, one on the right shoulder, the other on the left; a high, dome-shaped straw hat, with an absurdly narrow brim, rather spoils the effectiveness of this *tout ensemble*; stockings are not always worn, but invariably high-heeled buttoned boots of bright-coloured leather. And if, after staring with unaffected bewilderment at so brilliant an apparition, you meet two or three of the *damas distinguidas* on their way to or from church, their dead-white, impassive faces framed in the severe black *manta*, you will realise again how La Paz is above all a city of contrasts.

With all its wealth of fruit and flowers, Covent Garden Market is a drab affair compared to the Mercado of La Paz. The Mercado's colour-scheme is one of barbaric splendour. It glows and radiates like a moving prism under the strong light of the sun on the high plateau. Wherever there is colour it seems intensified, and the bright blues, yellows, and greens of the ponchos and the voluminous velvet skirts are not more persistent than the tones of the adobe walls in their neighbourhood, painted to match the costumes. Even the vegetables and the flowers appear dyed in the deepest hues; the sky is bluer; the fleecy clouds are whiter. It is as if Nature amused

herself in this little corner of her domain, this giant hollow plunged among the everlasting hills, by putting great splashes of colour on everything, to offset the severity of her grays and browns in the dreary stretches of highland plain which she has so generously bestowed upon Bolivia, and which geographers call the Altiplanicie.

As there are few carriages in La Paz, so there are few horses. But there are mules, and there are llamas, long droves of which are constantly entering and leaving the city at all points.

La Paz has never played a great part in the national history. In the colonial days and later it was too far from the coast—a journey of forty-five days by horse across a waterless region—to have any importance as a distributing centre; and it has only had an occasional existence as the national capital, the Bolivian Governments having for long been as nomadic as they were unstable, and seeming, like the knights of the Middle Ages, to seek always an ideal residence. The palace of the chief of the state was fixed sometimes at Chuquisaca, sometimes at Oruro, sometimes at La Paz, where revolutionary outbreaks have been frequent and progress slow. For many years now the executive power has been installed here, since communication with Mollendo, on the Peruvian coast, became regularised *via* Lake Titicaca; and now that La Paz has good railway facilities with the Pacific, and looks forward to the making of a line that will give her an outlet on the Paraguay River, and so to the Atlantic, the growing prosperity of this little 'City of the Clouds' seems to be assured.

Through La Paz flows the Chuquiapú River, a noble mountain-stream spanned by many bridges, one of which—a massive stone one—remains from the time of the Incas. It is on the lower side of this bridge, where the air is less rarefied and locomotion less painful, that the white population mainly lives. This river is a remarkable stream, in that it does not flow into the Pacific, as do most rivers formed on the western slope of the Andes. The Chuquiapú defies the natural order and flows through a cleft in the mountains, joining the streams bound for the Amazon.

La Paz has its Plaza Mayor, its Alameda, and its Prado, but their one-time glories have for the most part left them. Their interest is archaic rather than persistent. They were laid out for other times and other manners, when romance was as the breath of life to the Spaniard and servitude the badge of the Indian tribe. There is an enormous cathedral, which, if it is ever completed, will rank as the costliest in South America. It took over forty years to raise the edifice. No derricks or machinery of any kind were used in its construction, but the walls were raised in a curious way. As fast as a tier of stone was laid the earth was banked up against it inside and outside, and upon this inclined plane the stones for the next tier were laboriously rolled into

their places, more earth thrown on, and the process repeated, until, when the walls were finished, the whole building was immersed in a mountain of dirt. This was allowed to remain until the roof was laid, when the earth was carried away upon the backs of llamas and Indians. Thirteen years are said to have been occupied in clearing out the inside of the building, as the earth could be taken away only through the narrow windows and doors.

Railway enterprise and international trade have to some extent changed the face of La Paz. Business-like Americans from the States are to be seen in increasingly large numbers, mining

prospectors and rubber agents come and go, and La Paz grows a little more cosmopolitan and a little less unique in its isolation every year. It must needs be so. Even in the clouds, under the shadow of Illimani—'the Everlasting'—change must come with the passing years. Yet still the troops of llamas walk about its rough unlaidd streets; still the herdsman in his russet poncho plays on his reed-pipes to the Chola of his fancy; still the Indians of the highlands celebrate their dances to plaintive music centuries old; in spite of the inroads of modernity, some of the simple splendour of the past still pervades this city of high lights.

MILLE BOMBES!

CHAPTER IX.—THE SEARCH IN BELGIUM.

CROWLEY travelled first to Louvain, and made inquiries about Prosper and Sister Mathilde. Both were well known; but they had left Louvain early in 1915, and as to their present whereabouts nothing definite was to be gathered. Rumour had said many things, and in a country invaded by German militarism rumour had barriers to pass through that increased its usual untrustworthiness. One clear-drawn picture of Père Prosper Crowley obtained, and at once he put it into a sketch. After the Germans, revelling in carnage, had poured over the doomed land, Prosper declined to use a wheeled chair. He hobbled out in great pain to the streets, and stretched himself to his full height whenever German soldiers passed by, his blind eye twitching, and the other alight with challenging independence. He said nothing more than '*Mille bombes!*' but even this would have been too much, probably, but for the protection thrown around him by Sister Mathilde's fame.

Crowley went from town to town, and at last made his way to Namur. Here he visited a hospital where very critical cases were nursed. In a ward where sixteen soldiers lay, he seated himself beside an English Tommy who, as the patient said, had 'caught it bloomin' 'ot and strong in the battle of St Quentin—one leg blown into pulp almost, and afterwards some pepper over the body from a M.G.' His case had been badly septic, but now he was on the mend.

'Yes, sir,' he said, '*She* has pulled me through. If anything can be done *She* 'll do it, never fear. Lord bless me! Such patchin' and mendin' as *She* can do—it's orf the top shelf, I can tell you. Top-hole it is! Blarsted wonderful!'

'*She*?' Crowley questioned.

'Yes, sir; the head nurse, of course; our matron. Who else?'

'Hasn't she a name?'

Tommy looked at Crowley. 'Why, yes; but I don't bother abart it. To us she's *She*, an' to the nurses and surgeons she's matron. My

word, aren't they bloomin' fond of her! You bet! Don't you see all the chaps here are lookin' at that door over there? What for? 'Cause it's Her time for the afternoon go-round. It's like a bloomin' 'oliday when *She* comes. But it's 'ard to find words.' Tommy thought for a moment, and went on: 'It's this way, sir. When I wuz a lad an' went to the theatre, an' saw a lovely gurl in a fix that made me gurgly in the throat, I used to think of that gurl as a wision in white an' gold, or some such, an' that, though I'd fight for her like fits, I'd be mortal feared all the time to 'urt her feelin's. Sky-high above me she was! Well, *She*—our matron—hits me in the same way; only, *She*'s a bloomin' sight more than a gurl. *She*'s a saint! . . . Yes, an' I'm a married man wi' kids o' me own. That's true.'

Crowley watched Tommy's face, and mentally softened the routine trench oaths with which the brave fellow had tried to dilute his affectionate gratitude. Then he said with deep emotion, 'Old chap, I can say something to interest you. Perhaps I know your matron, though I haven't seen her for about ten years. I am searching for such a nurse as you describe.'

A queer look of mingled surprise and envy settled in the soldier's face. 'How I wish I wuz you, sir!' he muttered. 'But if *She* is the nurse you mean, you'll tell me, won't you, sir?'

'Yes; but not in her presence. If I do recognise her, I shall steal away from this ward before she sees me. I don't know what has happened to her father, a very great chum of mine; and if the good old man has died, as many old Belgians did die during the war, she would be too much moved if she recognised me here.'

'But, sir, you'll tell me later?' Tommy persisted.

'Yes. I've promised,' said Crowley.

At this moment a rustle came from all the beds, as though the patients were being slightly moved all at the same time.

'I know that sound,' said Tommy. He spoke in hushed tones. 'My word! She's coming! Look, sir, the door's opening!'

It opened quietly, and a tall, slim woman, dressed in white, with pale golden hair showing against the white coif, entered noiselessly, followed by several other nurses. 'A vision in white and gold.' These words described her accurately; for the large blue eyes were singularly luminous and appealing, and the pale, intense face was that of a mystic inspired by a faith that put heart and soul into every motion, into every action. In this woman, clearly, nursing was a wondrous varied charity, a beloved devotional office, a genuine religion; and Crowley, standing erect, and awed by sympathy and eagerness, recalled to memory one of Mathilde's ideas—that she 'wished to be as a faithful prioress over pain and disease.' Her face had been changed greatly by sorrow and overwork; but he knew her at once.

The matron went slowly from bed to bed, examining clinical charts, talking to each patient in looks, smiles, and undertones, and giving advice to the nurses. Every movement had in it that spontaneous sympathy which is musical and solacing. The matron was entirely unconscious of herself and lost in her calling. When she passed on, a patient's eyes followed her, yearning and grateful, fully responsive to the healing grace in her faith and her ardent presence.

'Yes, isn't she wonderful?' Tommy whispered.

'God in her charity is very wonderful,' Crowley murmured.

'My turn soon,' Tommy whispered again. 'My word!'

In fact, Sister Mathilde had begun to visit the eight patients on Tommy's side of the room, so Crowley moved away, tiptoed to the door, and went downstairs.

Tommy's turn came; and at once it was clear that Sister Mathilde was greatly interested in his character and case. She asked many questions, speaking in a soft, low, hesitating English that charmed with its wayward accent. Tommy's natural voice was gruff and harsh, but it acquired from somewhere a gentle modulation as he related how his wounds itched in their healing, and that he felt 'as cocky as a robin with one leg and a few feathers blown from its bloomin' wings.' 'I'm—I'm a fair credit to you,' please,' he ended, and looked down suddenly at the bed-clothes.

'You are too English,' she declared. 'You are far too hopeful, so you tire yourself.'

'One in the eye for me!' said Tommy, looking crestfallen.

'And I want you to understand me,' the nurse went on. 'My English patients do not *collect* their returning strength; they get rid of it again by being too active, too lively, too hopeful. Oh, they worry me a great deal, far

and away too much! They seek trouble because they do not control their hope. They seem to be afraid of unpleasant facts, for they turn away from them, to be happy with dreams and illusions. Yes, I know the English soldiers! So I want you to remember that hope is a spring of holy water—not to be wasted like steam from a kettle. Do you understand?'

Her eyes grew full of light as she spoke, and Tommy took a deep breath. 'Yes, please, I've got the 'ang of it all right, and it's true; truer 'cause you sez it, please, matron. We *do* get into messes, us English. We don't bother about the bad side o' good things, so we get fixed up in "too late," so to speak. Bless me! "Take cover!" is the right ticket—done at the right time everywhere. You mean *that*, matron, don't you? Lud, but I'm learnin'!'

Sister Mathilde nodded and smiled. 'You had a visitor just now,' she said. 'Did he excite you? Your temperature has risen since yesterday.'

'Oh, my visitor was a bit of all right. Did me no 'arm, not 'e! And—well, yes, matron, I think you'll be glad to see 'im too.'

Tommy stopped suddenly, feeling that he was not playing the game. Sister Mathilde repeated his last words; then she passed on and left the ward.

In her room downstairs she found the hall-porter. 'Matron, an English gentleman sends you his card.'

She took the card and looked at it. 'Yes, I'll see him at once;' and her voice trembled.

CHAPTER X.—TO END WELL IS TO BEGIN RENEWED.

WHEN Crowley was shown in Sister Mathilde stood at her bureau, and through a long casement the winter sun splashed her white figure with keen lights, and also with shadows from a plant standing in a copper bowl on a small table below the window. Her face was very pale and agitated; but at once, without an instant's pause, she met Crowley and took his hand fondly and tremulously.

'Only one hand!' she said, her lips quivering.

'A shell at Loos; but I'm quite well.'

'I saw you in the ward,' she went on, 'but at a distance and carelessly; saw just a man, a visitor merely.' In her low voice was a tone of wonder. 'Père Prosper would have known you at once, at any reasonable distance. He thought of you always, as you know, longing week after week for letters. Shall we sit down? There's much to be said.'

The room was bare and large, an office rather than a place for rest; but a little pile of Caldecott's picture-books was on the bureau, recalling bygone days. Near the stove, facing each other, were two arm-chairs without cushions. Mathilde chose the one that faced the window. She

smiled at him and waited; while Crowley, shy, and self-conscious like most Englishmen, was tongue-tied.

Presently he said, 'For a fortnight I've been searching for you and Père Prosper. You see, your letters—I was all alone without new ones.'

'Yes,' she said. 'The loneliness in war is dreadful, and we long for letters to unite hearts and minds together. Yes, I know.' She seemed to be speaking to herself. 'We had many delightful letters from Colin and Bertrand,' she added wistfully.

'Since the war!' asked Crowley.

'Not from Bertrand, of course; but it was my lot—and I was moved through and through—to nurse two of his younger brothers, dear brave lads. One of them—Charles—came to me after the first battle of the Marne; the other—Robert—during the intolerable misery of Verdun. Ah! Robert was saved, if a boy crippled for ever can be called saved; while Charles—Charles died as bravely as he fought. "*Vive la patrie*" was the passion to which he offered his twenty-five brief years—and offered them with a glad pride and will. . . . Colin—poor Colin—now a broken man, has given to the cause his other lives—his two baby boys! He tried to escape with them and his wife from Brussels, and his little ones, after two nights out of doors, died of fatigue and privation. Poor Colin! Père Prosper was moved as only a noble soul can be moved by the long, unceasing sacrifice of the young and promiscuous. To him, as to me, the sun set in young blood and rose wet with young tears. His heart ached. Every day he told me that boyhood and early youth paid in their blood for the pre-war blindness of their seniors. He believed this passionately, and in fierce words blamed himself for voting without thought at pre-war elections. One evening he said to me, "What is the thing they call Justice? I cannot see it anywhere, but I feel it inside me. If Justice ruled, the battles would be fought on all sides by men between thirty and sixty, and not by the cream of youth. *Mille bombes!* Why should the boys be slain? What had they to do with politics when Germany was getting ready for another war?" Oh! Père Prosper did not cheat himself with pretty words. He tried to see the whole truth—and at last he became very aged and infirm.'

Her voice broke, and Crowley, watching spell-bound the anguish in her eyes, waited silently till she continued.

'One thing troubled him very much when friends came to see him—to talk alone, always in undertones, and quite frankly. His friends used to say, "Will the English ever come?" and Père Prosper answered always, "Yes, will they, for I know the English!" Well, during last spring, when great defeats came to our cause in the West, the friends said, "Père Prosper, after these new blows, so terrible, can the English

ever come? How can it be possible?" Then the darling old man was enraged. "*Mille bombes!*" he cried. "Do I tell lies? Have faith, and the English will come!"'

Again Sister Mathilde broke off, and Crowley's eyes were full of tears.

'At the beginning of June,' she went on, 'Père Prosper became ill with enteric. "I must live to see the English; I must indeed," he said to me many times as he fought fiercely against death. His little strength ebbed away; he passed into a stupor. Père did not know me. On 5th June, at midday, the stupor began to leave him; and at one o'clock, quite suddenly, he rose in bed with a strange light in his face. I took him softly in my arms, but he did not feel me, for he was gazing far into the distance. And then, in a thrilling voice impossible to describe, he said, "Ah, *mille bombes!* I see them coming, the dear English—I see them plainly! . . . My wife was English, my best friend is English, and I knew—I knew they would come!" And Père Prosper's dying presentiment was right. Thank God! the English did come; and now—now his best friend is with me.'

As she spoke these words the sweet, soft, pitiful music of her voice rose and fell; all self-control as a nurse melted away, and she wept bitterly.

Crowley gripped the chair with his hand, awed, overpowered. Inwardly he looked at the noble drama of his old friend's death, and outwardly, through tears, at the noble woman he loved. A moment later he went to her, put his arm round her shoulders, and held her while he said, 'Yes, I am here, and never will I leave you unless you wish it.'

At first she did not seem to hear, but presently she drew herself away from him and gazed up at him. 'Why should I tell you to leave?' she asked very low. 'Am I not otherwise alone? But hush! It would be wrong to say any more now, for this hospital is a symbol of all that agony by which many nations have been wrung and torn. Let us wait, then, till my work here is finished.'

THE END.

DRIFTWOOD.

WE are nought
But driftwood on the open sea of life
Without free-will. What is the empty strife,
The empty tumult, of the souls we own?
Can they affect the rising of the tide?
Or what avail the fears that we have known
Save to chastise the folly of our pride?
Great men are only those the waters lift
Above the rest; we all drift with the sea,
With neither hope nor aim, despairing, lost.
And when our friends and dearest ones are tossed
High on the dreadful waves of tragedy,
We cannot help them; we can only drift.

KATHERINE GOWER.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, Yesterday.

LADIES and gentlemen at home in England, diligent readers of their daily papers, being accounted well informed upon events and transactions in a disturbed world, were moved to the utterance of a 'Dear, dear!' and a 'Good gracious!' and also a 'What next?' when, upon a recent morning, their eyes lit upon some slight telegraphed news to the effect that revolution of the most drastic kind had broken out in Portugal, and that there, first to follow the wild example in the East, a government by Soviets had been proclaimed. And in these exclamations of the astonished readers there was, as it might be said, something of reproach. There are troubles nearly everywhere. We of Britain, who have so many difficult problems of our own to solve, must by day and night, and all the time, pre-occupy ourselves with such anxieties as other nations, in their social and political turmoils, have prepared for themselves, or in some measure have had thrust upon them, for, alas! more and more as the days pass do we discover that no country of this modern world is a thing apart and independent, sufficient for direction of its own destiny, self-contained and complete, as was imagined up to most recent times, and in some measure even when the Treaty of Versailles, setting out to arrange the future world, was made. We, the nations, all of us, depend the one upon the other, each a link in an endless chain of earth, and by no power of industry or policy or self-provisionment that we know can we escape that mutual dependence. It is like a newly discovered fact that gives humanity, in its disposition towards continual fratricide, something severely to think upon. And so when Britain, general financier and assistant, one exercising a certain moral guardianship here and there, perceived that Portugal also had broken loose and was turned to most horrid internal strife—the Portugal that was imagined to be peaceful and patient and not unduly suffering, conducting herself with diligence in her own distinctive corner of the continent, to which the shrieks of social strife in other lands did not penetrate—the British people felt they had some sort of grievance against this now misguided Portugal. Least of all was this expected of her. '*Et tu, Brute!*' they would say to their old protégé,

as Cæsar is said to have reproached the last to stab him. But in this attitude there is some misconception.

* * *

The upheaval in Portugal was not a thing to be so much wondered at as those British newspaper readers imagined. Had they been properly apprised of the situation as it existed in Portugal for months, and indeed years, previously, they would have understood how the people were being urged towards it, how desperately strife was being fomented, how enormous were the problems presented, and how dangerous was the state of things. It was quickly discovered that the news about the Portuguese Soviets was an exaggeration; that there were no Soviets thus far, but only strikes of various kinds, on the railways, in the post and telegraph offices, and in sundry other important departments of life and labour, that paralysed the efforts of the country for the time being. But yet, as those who have lived there understand, the most gigantic upheavals among the people of the little state we are wont to describe as our oldest ally are far from being an impossibility. In her present situation there is something that is amazing. It is an enormous contradiction, a strange perplexity. Here we seem to have paradox established as a system of general method and control; and so little to national governmental conventions has Portugal in these latter days attached herself that, fearful and desperate as the situation may have been and is, yet, as at all times when people turn aside from the ordinary way, there has been something in it quite romantic. With a little imagination, walking and ruminating through the *ruas* of Lisbon, across the splendid public squares, the Praza de Commercio and the Rocio, up the Carmo and the Garrett, the most popular and fashionable shopping streets, along the noble Avenida da Liberdade, seeing the people apparently happy, and yet always with the Portuguese solemnity of visage (but remembering the bombs that only the other night exploded almost beneath the window of my hotel), observing that there is apparently a plenitude of the necessaries and even the luxuries of life, and that all seem so amazingly cheap in contrast with our British prices, though we are told that the country is in the most desperate

financial and economic straits, and that such machines in Portugal as work most busily night and day are those which manufacture the paper money which is universal from almost the smallest values upwards—one wonders, and with only the utmost difficulty comes by a little understanding. Here, one considers, are all the romance and illogicality of a republic in Ruritania! And as to the surprise of the British people that the patient Portuguese, as they had imagined them, should thus turn to turmoil, there are two things to be said. The first is, that the world is at the present time far too full of difficulties and strange events for any people to be apprised of all of them and fairly to comprehend even more than the smallest part; while, again, the more one wanders in foreign places in these days, the more does it appear that our own insularity, our failure of appreciation of the world outside, has not lessened as the result of the tremendous events of the last few years, when we were flung into the strange mosaic of a world conflict, but seems in some strange ways to have increased.

* * *

Perhaps it is for the reason just expressed—there is so much to be considered and comprehended—that, the task seeming hopeless, it is relinquished, and the homelanders revert to willing obsession by the politics of their place. The second thing in explanation is that circumstance expressed a month ago, that communications having been broken, suspended, or materially injured and delayed by the war, so that the world has become bigger, wider, more abounding in vast and untraversable spaces than it has been since early Victorian days, Portugal, instead of being so near at hand as six summers back, has receded far. She is so distant as to seem in a region for new discovery; sailing up the Tagus on a sunny morn one may feel that here there is some emulation of Vasco da Gama himself. A fortnight at times for letters from London to Lisbon; sometimes the same or nearly the same for a telegram; parcels despatched, but never arriving; officials smiling indulgently and pityingly if you should ever murmur a complaint, as who would say, 'Forget not that you live in 1920, and even yet the great war of civilisation smoulders!' So it is. The communications, the most vital necessities for the economic ordering and the social healing of the people, fail, and no politician has such moral sense or disinterested desire for the welfare of humanity as to attempt or assist to put them right again. We are back to the Middle Ages. The aeroplane gives us hope; but now it appears that there is room in literary fiction for an antithesis to Jules Verne, one who, by marvellous means and cunning contrivances, an exploration of the resources of human ingenuity in hindrance and delay, could achieve the slowest

transits, journeys most encumbered with strange and perplexing adventures in unexpected and unnecessary difficulty. There are real facts for such romancers as would inspire them to marvellous stories about Piccadilly to the Strand in forty days, or of Edinburgh to London by shanks' pony. So Portugal has receded, and, having receded, there has been less inquiry for her. For these and for other reasons—perhaps of a political character—there has been at times little or no news of Portugal in the British newspapers of the most passionate and, from the readers' point of view, deeply entertaining events. Hence surprise when some one exclaimed, 'Soviets!' Recently I happen to have spent many weeks in Lisbon and other parts of this most interesting country; occasion placed me in close contact with places, events, and persons greatly concerned with the drama that was being unfolded. Indeed, I left Lisbon for Madrid on the eve of the general railway strike by what was believed might be the last train to run on that long line for some time. Even then soldiers and marines were being suggestively marched through all the streets of Lisbon, bands playing most vigorously at the head and the tail of each column. The people knew what was meant by such a demonstration of armed force—that it was a warning; but some murmured that it did not matter, as the forces were themselves more than half disposed to revolution. . . . One might give a brief account of a few observations and thoughts in Portugal at this period in her history, beyond doubt the most critical of all.

* * *

In general, Portugal, and especially her capital, puts a light appearance on the gravest situations, but only the newest stranger can be deceived. This country has not been in the habit, outwardly at all events, of meeting her troubles half-way. Rather has she seemed to live for the hour, with little care for difficulties that might be ahead. It is a philosophy of national life that has certain advantages, and many disadvantages. But the war-worn European, having been in the thick of conflict, privations, and restrictions, and being disgusted with such paltry political machinations as have followed on an immense sacrifice of human life in the name of patriotism, liberty, and goodness, coming to Lisbon when her crisis had arrived, would say to himself that here was a happy and contented city in which, with certain reservations, he might like to live always. Portugal, it might appear to him then, though she had fought in the war, had for herself been too far from it in her snug corner of the peninsula to be harshly affected as other peoples had. Her sufferings had been limited, and under the pleasant sun of Portugal, shining agreeably and with a nicely regulated warmth during most of the winter-time, it

would seem easy to forget. Seeking explanations of seeming paradoxes and mysteries, that stranger would put it to himself that Portugal was a self-sufficient country, that she could and did grow her own food, and had little need of the assistance of the outside world; and, again, he would say, seeing the free way in which money was being spent, that this country had really more of it than others had thought, and that she was rich indeed. It might seem also that in some matters of war and peace the people were more righteous, and that there was less of what we call profiteering, than in some other countries. Yet there has been very much of that, and it has been the cause of many of Portugal's difficulties; and in the other respects referred to the stranger who thus answered his own questions from superficial observations and simple conclusions would be wrong. There is an appearance of plenty in Portugal, but the distribution has been bad, unfair. The stranger may have enough of the most splendid food to eat. Portugal's meat does, indeed, come from her own pastures, and it is far better meat than Europeans in general have been privileged to eat for some years; and so with other foods. And as for the cheapness thereof, the first meal I had on Portuguese soil last winter—an excellent three-course lunch, including such a beefsteak as had not been seen in any public place in England for five years, the like of which some pessimists think will never be seen there any more, with a small bottle of mineral water—cost less than three English shillings, and this was in the best restaurant in Oporto. A few miles from Lisbon, on a picturesque strip of coast which they are calling the Portuguese Riviera, where, indeed, on Christmas Day I lolled in flannels in the sunshine (but it is not always thus, and there was some bitter weather later), one may be housed in a very fine hotel, with all the best advantages, and fed far better than I have known any people to be fed—splendid food, perfectly cooked and handsomely served—since we were called to war, for four guineas the week; and many wise and eminent British folk were assisting themselves in this manner and at this charge. Here at Mont Estoril there is a very considerable British winter colony, who for the most part advertise not their advantages, lest by advertisement they should disappear; but these people go by steamship from England to Lisbon, and they linger there through the winter. In our hotel there were more than a hundred rooms, and the proprietor says that during one winter all but one were occupied by British visitors. The Portuguese are a peculiar people in respect of matters of warmth and chilliness; and on those days when the hardy and joyful Englishman would be happy in his summer flannels you would see these native Portuguese creeping along their sunlit roads muffled in their overcoats, which only with reluctance and apprehension

do they ever seem to discard. They have told me that there are more dangers in climate, and especially sunshine, than other peoples seem to think; and in particular they say that there are 'sun colds' that one may catch through walking in sunshine when not most thoroughly protected from this dangerous thing.

* * *

The Portuguese are certainly a strange and an interesting people. Always they clothe themselves in the darkest costumes, and the women in general take little pains to make themselves attractive, though such a rule applies not to the males. A French cynic—and there are many such—has written unkindly, and perhaps unfairly, that the true explanation is that beautiful women in Portugal are rare, and that the men deck themselves to their very best to capture them. If unfair, it seems at least a natural explanation. Taking their lives in a somewhat heavy way, the Portuguese are particularly strange on their gala-days, as on the carnival in February, when their festivities, even in Lisbon, seem to the stranger, enlightened upon all the maddest ways of modern merriment, to be crude and stupid. Such a stranger finds this carnival the most depressing thing. The enterprising public entertainers will assemble outside his habitation at early morn a sort of band of some five pieces of brass, the performers attired in tail-coats of cotton print, gorgeously striped trousers, and so forth, and for an hour or two will play to him a steady succession of 'God Save the King,' 'Tipperary,' and the Belgian National Anthem. Being, after four or five such cycles, much depressed by this, he gathers energy and goes out to the city, and there he finds the young people in an adventurous and a rollicking mood, which finds vent in their procuring muddy water and squirting it upon the faces, collars, and garments of the passers-by. This is an honoured custom of continual and intense occurrence. But if these things seem to be said against the Portuguese, let it be added here in passing that these people, lacking the quickness, the sharp animation, and the spirituality of the Spaniards, have some most excellent qualities of which their near neighbours know little. They compare with the Spaniards much as the British might be said to compare with the French. They are more serious—as some would say, more dull—but they have a splendid perseverance, a dogged persistence, and a capacity for labour. So on this carnival-day, while the bands blared their tributes to other nations, and the old war-tune one had almost forgotten—and, with fair respect to it, wished to forget—was vigorously jerked into this smiling morn, Portuguese brick and stone and mortar men alongside were busily engaged, as usual, in building a new house, and doing their business with all that steadiness of

application and excellent industry that in former days we were led to understand the excellent Balbus applied to his task in Rome. It is one of the mysteries of the country, as it seems to strangers, that, with all the economic and labour difficulties that exist, and all the menaces that are supposed to hang upon this land, one sees everywhere this building going on, and most splendid building of new villas, veritable palaces, too. Mont Estoril is being occupied by innumerable new villas that must be among the prettiest in new Europe, and is becoming something like what Tivoli and Frascati were in olden times. It is a mystery, perhaps, but we lead ourselves, or are led, to the old and true explanation of the war millionaires and the profiteers.

* * *

But upon the general affair of wonder and doubt, the seeming plenitude and cheapness of things, as exemplified in many ways (ladies have told me that here they could buy the nicest hats of Paris at less than half of what they regarded as the proper price), there are four main points of explanation. In the first place, there is a general recklessness, such as has been experienced in other countries, due to the feeling that the basis of life and things is unsound and bad, and that vast troubles, a tremendous breakage, may be ahead. In this circumstance there is a disposition to live for the day, and to pay little heed to true values. Ordinary business rules are relaxed; the profiteers make their piles; but many others seem not to care what they make so long as they get rid of things. Then there is the gambling spirit which is abroad—this, again, leading to the destruction of true standards of value. There is gambling in everything; and, as will be shown later, Portugal last winter reached a terrible crisis when it was perceived that she had become a gambling country such as had never been known before. There is gambling in everything. The leading hotel in Lisbon was sold last summer for 650 contos, a conto being a thousand escudos, and an escudo nominally a little more than an American dollar, being the old milreis, which is still the term most commonly applied to it. A month later the hotel was sold again for 1100 contos, and at the end of the year for 1800 contos. On its existing lines and at its existing charges—which were by no means light or anything at all of the four-guineas-a-week description—it could not be made to pay, and for a time it became a question as to whether it might not be converted into a gambling establishment. It had changed hands in this manner not as a business proposition, but each time just in the way of gambling. So it is with other things, and so there is demoralisation. But the two other points are more germane to this present explanation of some apparent cheapnesses, and the

first is that the British stranger, much as he may growl at home about the loss of value of his old sovereign, finds here that it is still a power among the moneys, for as the result of the exchange-rates his pounds sterling all last winter—and it may still be the same—were worth nearly thrice their ordinary value in Portugal; that is to say, the escudo, which normally and nominally is of the value of nearly four shillings and sixpence, was now worth very much less. When I reached Portugal in December the exchange rate was roughly one shilling and sixpence to the escudo, and from that it sank at times to about one-and-threepence. Hence, even with allowances made by some wily Portuguese traders, the British shilling here had an enhanced purchasing-power, as the result of which all things seemed cheap, since for four guineas, a figure we have quoted, one might in terms of Portuguese thought and reckoning, as one might say, read ten or twelve. And the fourth point is the paper money. Portugal is sadly flooded with it, as elsewhere; but here, to the most exaggerated extent, it aggravates the general difficulties. The whole economic situation is false; again values are lost, people treat this paper money with contempt, and rid themselves of it as best they can and in the quickest way. The finances of Portugal are very bad, and the country can scarcely see its way through its difficulties. Governments in the recent past, playing the old game of easy expediency, with certain future disaster as to which they were minded not to think, have sought to stifle troubles of the hour by the printing-press. Practically all money in Portugal is made of paper. There are a few bronze coins of one and two centavos, and some nickel ones of four (the centavo is a hundredth part of the escudo, and so nominally a halfpenny, but now actually of much less value), but these are comparatively rare. There is no silver money in circulation. Instead there is paper for five centavos upwards, and so for the smallest purchases one must use this insignificant stuff, and the pockets become packed with it. The five-centavo note is a little thing printed in green, measuring three and a half inches by two and a half; the ten-centavo is printed in brown, and is a quarter of an inch longer. More and more money being needed, the printing-presses have been gaily producing it in the most reckless way for long past, and it is remarked that the small denominations have not been numbered, and so no count is taken of them. There is vastly more paper money in the land than there are real funds with which to meet it, and it is in these circumstances that economic, political, and all other difficulties have been created and speedily intensified, and some most extraordinary situations established, as to which more may be written in continuation.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XVIII.—*continued.*

IV.

A FEW minutes later she rose to go. 'I have stayed much too long,' she said. 'I do hope you'll get better quickly.'

He took her hand in his, but made no attempt to translate the meaning of the moment into language. He had worked against her country; while she plied her rounds of mercy, he had written on the debasement and the fallacy of it all. Lying in the wreck of his idealism, in the grip of physical pain, dreading the torture of his own thoughts, could he express what her coming had meant? He wanted to tell her of his heart-hunger, of his loneliness, his gratitude, understanding, reverence, and, above all, of his love. There was so much that it made him silent.

'Good-bye, Elise,' he said.

'Good-bye,' she answered.

That was the end. Of such paltry substance are words.

'By Gar!' said the French-Canadian, looking after her as she disappeared down the ward, 'she mak me tink of my leetle girl Marie; only Marie, mebbe, is only so high, *comme ça*, and got de black hair, so! I am homeseeek. Yes. It mak me verra homeseeek. *Godam!*'

V.

She did not come again. Every morning his heart quickened with hope, and each afternoon grew heavy with discouragement as the hours passed by without the step he listened for. The arrival of the mail was an instant of mad expectancy and mute resignation. But every day carried its cargo of renewed hope, and he grudged the very hours of sleep that separated him from it.

He wrote to her three times—pleaded with her to come again. He begged forgiveness for omitted or committed things which might have hurt her, but no reply came. He thought of writing to Roselawn, fancying she might have gone there, but he was certain that before it could reach her she would have come again, and they would only laugh at the idea of any misunderstanding.

He blamed himself for a hundred imaginary crimes. He had not asked her if she would return. Perhaps he had carelessly uttered words that wounded her. He knew her pride; knew that after their parting at the flat it must have been hard for her to make the first move towards reconciliation—and she might have mistaken his joy for petty personal triumph.

Or—had he been an utter fool? Was this her punishment of him? With the consummate artistry of her sex, had she simulated sympathy and forbearance to make his torture all the more exquisite? He dismissed the suggestion as some-

thing vile, but, feeding on his doubts and longings, it grew stronger and more insistent with every hour's passing. A hundred times a day he closed his eyes and lived the sweet memory of her visit; but with the gathering arraignments of his doubts, he wondered if it had all been the studied act of the English girl's reprisal on the American who had dared to challenge her nation.

Weary, weary hours; the inactivity of the body lending fuel to the flames of his mind. He determined to dismiss her from his thoughts, and with his power of mental discipline he reduced his mood to one of mute resignation.

Then the thought of America came to him, and he was seized with an impetuous craving for his own country, his own land, where men's natures were broad and mountainous, like America itself. He pictured New York towering into the skies, the charming homes of Boston, where so many happy hours had been spent in genial, cultured controversy. He smelt the ozone of the West, where sandy plains melted into the horizon; where men lived in the open, and a man was your friend for no better reason than that he was following the same trail as yourself.

America. . . . He was impatient now of every day that kept him in England. He felt that his emotions, his brain, his convictions would all be rudderless until he breathed once more the air of the New World, with its vassal oceans bringing tribute to both Eastern and Western coasts.

He would not call himself a failure or a success until he looked on his handiwork in the light of the great Republic. As his ancestors leaving the shores of Holland and Ireland, as millions of men and women had done with the Old World dwindling away in the distance, he looked towards America for the answer to existence.

Ten days after his admission he was allowed to leave the hospital for his rooms in St James's Square.

He took his leave of the little group who had been his companions for the time—the little Cockney with his incessant exuberance; the French-Canadian, picturesque of language and imagination; the one remaining Australian, vigorous of thought and forceful of temperament; the nurse, carrying Florence Nightingale's lamp through the blackness of war. He tried to say a little of what was bursting for utterance, but they only laughed and fenced it off. They wished him 'Cheerio—good-bye—good luck;' and he wondered if the whole realm of lived or written drama held any farewell more sublimely expressive of a great people enduring to the uttermost.

His servant had a taxi-cab waiting for him.

Driving first to a florist's, he purchased roses for the nurse; then, stopping at a tobacconist's, he left a generous order for all the occupants of the ward. After that he went directly to the American Consul's office and made arrangements for his return to New York.

VI.

It was late in December when, driving to Waterloo to catch the boat-train to Southampton, Selwyn was held up in the Strand by the crush of people welcoming the arrival of Red Cross trains from the front.

Leaning out of the window, he watched the motor-cars and ambulances coming out from the

station courtyard, while London's people, as they had done from the beginning, welcomed the unknown wounded with waving handkerchiefs and flowers, with hearts that wept and faces that bravely smiled.

With a suppressed cry, Selwyn opened the door and leaped into the crowd. He had seen *her* driving one of the ambulances, and he fought his way furiously through the human mass to the open roadway. But it was useless. The ambulance had disappeared.

Struggling back to the taxi, he re-entered it, and turning round, made for Waterloo Bridge by way of the Embankment.

(Continued on page 423.)

BEES IN STRANGE PLACES.

By HERBERT MACE.

THERE is an incident in the fascinating story of Samson which has at times—like other Scriptural stories—been the subject of criticism.

In the course of a journey the strong man encounters and kills a lion. On a subsequent journey he finds a swarm of bees in the carcass, refreshes himself with the honey, and subsequently propounds a puzzling riddle based on the experience. Various people have ridiculed this story as absurd and impossible, but in the course of considerable beekeeping experience I have come across many instances of bees taking up almost as strange abodes.

Any one who has been in the East knows that dead animals do not receive decent burial, but beasts of prey are so numerous that it is not many hours before a carcass is reduced to a mere shell. In such a shell there is nothing very surprising about a swarm of bees, unable to find a suitable hole in which to start their new colony, taking up their abode. And in the height of a honeyflow, when a strong hive of bees, even in England, will sometimes store more than ten pounds of honey in a working-day, it would not be long before the carcass became a storehouse of sweetness.

The favourite places for swarms of bees are holes in cliffs, rocks, and banks, or hollow trees. In England nine out of ten choose a hollow tree, these being as a rule not only commodious, but safe, the entrance often being too narrow to admit enemies with which bees are not capable of dealing effectively.

In cases where trees are scarce and the country-side broken and rocky, holes in rocks are generally chosen, and usually the entrance is narrow enough to be easily defended. It was, therefore, a great surprise to me when I found in a Balkan ravine a colony established in a cave which was entirely open on one side, so that the sun shone full on the hanging cluster. It had been there some time, for several combs

had been built, and were filled with honey and brood. What its fate would be when the honeyflow ceased, and prowling wasps and bees came round, one could readily imagine. Nothing but desperation could have induced them to select such an exposed position.

In civilised surroundings, where holes in the ground are scarce and hollow trees are not allowed to remain long, bees frequently select human constructions for founding their homes, and all sorts of hollow and more or less inaccessible places are occupied by them. The most common is a chimney, which has some resemblance to a hollow tree. Entering at the top, the swarm finds a suitable place for attachment of its combs in the arch of the stack or under a ledge where two chimneys converge. When winter comes and fires are lighted there is a commotion, and bees, dead or alive, come tumbling down. If the chimney is entirely disused, however, it proves a very safe home, and colonies have been known to occupy one for years. There was such a chimney in Bletsoe Castle. It was particularly inaccessible, and although bees had been known to be there for years, no one had been able to dislodge them, until Mr Mason, of Bee Cinema fame, who used to make a speciality of removing bees from difficult places, succeeded in exposing the hive. Many of the combs in this chimney were as much as nine feet in length, and contained great quantities of honey.

Immense stores are often found in places where bees have been undisturbed through several seasons. I have known more than two hundredweight of honey taken from a church roof where bees had been ensconced from time immemorial.

Another favourite place is the hollow between the inner and outer layers of lath-and-plaster houses. Although the space is not very wide, there is plenty of room for expansion downwards,

which is the bee's favourite method of enlarging its combs, and I know more than one old house wall which hums day and night during the summer with the song of a strong hive of bees. The space between the ceiling of one room and the floor above is occasionally occupied by bees, and one can imagine the perturbation of a stranger sleeping in the room on a July night, hearing the high-pitched hum of a busy hive under the floor.

The wife of a beekeeping crofter near Buchan was surprised one summer day at seeing bees entering a store-room through a broken pane of glass. On investigation, she found them going in and out of the upper part of an old wardrobe. Looking inside, she found the swarm had taken possession of the goodman's top-hat, in which comfortable abode they had already accumulated a considerable store of honey.

When Lord Selborne was in South Africa he had two experiences with swarms of bees in a place where he was staying. One entered the drawer of a wardrobe in the room he occupied, and not long after this had been removed by a professional beekeeper, his man found another swarm had taken possession of a portmanteau he was about to pack for his lordship. Naturally its deportation was not attended with much difficulty.

Indeed, all sorts of places, providing a fairly uninterrupted refuge, have been occupied by bees at one time or another. They have been found in tombs, pumps, and clock-cases; in tea-chests, piano-cases, and hay-lofts; and often in situations where human beings and horses passed and repassed frequently, yet have never been troublesome or been interfered with.

On the other hand, big swarms of bees have often lodged themselves in places where they were able to hold up the public for hours together. Last year there was a case in the west of England of a swarm settling in the entrance to a railway goods-yard where there was a great deal of traffic, and as no one dared to go near them, and they were very active and irritable, traffic was suspended until an expert beekeeper could be found to take them away. I well remember, in a northern suburb of London,

a swarm entering a pillar-box and effectually preventing any letters being posted there for a whole day. When the time came for clearing the box, the postman made it his business to seek out a beekeeper before he opened the box.

The place where a swarm intends to take up its abode is carefully selected by scouts before the swarm leaves its hive, but it sometimes happens that the queen, who has not been on the wing for a long time, is unable to fly far, and in such a case the swarm will endeavour to carry on where it first settles after leaving the hive. In the middle of a hedge, or on the bough of a tree, I have found swarms which had been there weeks and built much comb. But the first alighting-place is often more unsuitable still. Swarms have settled on horses, dogs, and men, to their mutual discomfort. The most extraordinary case I have heard of was of a swarm which issued as a boy was passing on a bicycle, and the queen elected to settle upon him. Her followers, who were very numerous, copied her example, and the boy was soon busy flicking bees from his face and neck, fearing to be suffocated. This irritated the bees, and he was badly stung before they decided to leave him.

Perhaps the most singular cases on record are the following. In a certain French town there is a monument, consisting of a tall column, on the top of which is a cast-metal figure of the Gallic emblem—a cock. From a hole, caused by a flaw in the casting, bees can be seen flying all through the summer, a swarm having taken possession and thoroughly established itself there; and since there is no way of dislodging them except by breaking open the figure, they are likely to remain.

At another place in France, a wayside calvary is occupied in the same way, the bees entering near the base of the figure at the back. These also have occupied their strange home for many years.

The most striking thing in connection with these last two places is the fact that metal is a substance bees do not, as a rule, have anything to do with, for, on account of its conductivity of heat, such a home is likely to be overpoweringly hot in summer and bitterly cold in winter.

THE DAY.

By HARIZ.

IT was a hot day for January, but particularly hot and sultry there on the bank of the half-dried river, where the dense belt of date-palms seemed to catch the heat, and the small channels of sluggish, muddy water to reflect it.

They had been sitting there, some four hundred of them, for over two hours in the heat of the day; but what are two hours to an Indian peasant? They had had their *roti* (bread), and,

the stomach being full, having to wait was a small matter; and was not this 'the Day'—the day of reunion with their *bhais* (brothers) who had been at the war from October 1914 to the fall of Kut, and prisoners in the hands of the enemy ever since?

It was a gay scene, this motley crowd of sepoys—all in their best mufti, as befits the great occasion; spotless white shirts, some with

bright-coloured waistcoats over them; snowy loose pantaloons of the Mohammedans, and tight white trousers of the Sikhs and the Jāts; and *pugris* of white or biscuit or blue and white, or black with scarlet and gold fringes. And, if this were not enough, there was a great Union-Jack spread between two poles, and a guard of honour in scarlet *kurtas* (blouse-tunics), red-striped navy-blue trousers, with navy-blue puttees, dark-green *kamarbands*, and dark-blue *pugris*, with red and white silk stripes, tied round a *kulla* or conical skull-cap of scarlet. The band, too, was there with its glittering instruments.

The place, with its date-palms and its bridge of boats, the low river and the stretches of sand that showed where the bed was dry, vividly recalled another country; and Mohabat Khan, with his memory thus stimulated to reminiscence, was recounting to a small group of admiring friends tales of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the Karun and the Karkheh. The old wound that showed on his brown forearm as, before passing it on, he took a couple of long and meditative pulls at the cigarette that was being shared by the five of them, gave extra weight to his words in the ears of his hearers, and rendered them more ready to accept the personal deeds of valour that were not altogether absent from his story.

He was plodding again, with his battle-weary friends, marching away from the scene of an amazing victory, whose fruits could not be reaped. Behind, shrouded now in darkness, stood, vast and lone and seemingly eternal, the great Arch of Ctesiphon. It was the last he remembered of those gallant friends who were now to be welcomed back after a year of victories, five months of heroic defence and privation, and nearly three years of bitter, galling captivity and oppression—the little remnant of the old regiment that had fought its way to Ctesiphon, and endured the sufferings of Kut al Amarah.

He saw again visions of hard-fought fights amongst the palm-trees and the irrigation channels; swamps green with slime and vocal with frogs; a strong, swift river swum by a dauntless little party in the face of the enemy; a hard-shelled village; breastworks built by us where it was impossible to dig on account of the water, and enemy trenches, thronged with dead, on the only dry ground; but all led alike to that classic battlefield, and over all towered the great Arch of Chosroes.

Soon they would be here—that remnant; but many there were who now lay in some lost grave in the Mesopotamian desert. Never again would they see cheery Jaggat Singh, or faithful Bahadur Khan, or stolid Kishan Chand. Many a little, flat-roofed mud hut on the plains of the Punjab or the terraced fields of the lower Himalayas had long grown resigned to its loss. But did Mohamed Khan still live, or Badlu, or Harnam Singh?

They are late. The prisoners cannot have come by the first train. Surely they will be in the second.

Anon comes a string of camels laden with merchandise of Ind, and led by a big-boned, ragged man, whose florid, bearded face shows him to be an Afghan. He strides along in front of his shuffling, superciliously indifferent camels, with his stick held at both ends across the nape of his neck, and the nose-rope of the leading camel in his hand.

It is no use asking him, for it is long since he left the distant station, and he is a foreigner and a stranger in the land. Beside him trots a great, fierce, shaggy, yellow hound. 'Powindah,' grunts Mohabat Khan, and resumes his odyssey.

Now a cloud of dust is seen, and a tum-tum appears far out on the road that leads, from bridge to bridge, across the river-bed. Can it be they? No; for no bugle-call has been heard from across the river, where buglers wait to herald the approach. As it crosses the last bridge in a cloud of dust of its own creating, a jemadar steps into the roadway to stop it and make inquiries.

There must be a woman in it, for a sheet hanging from the hood completely hides the occupants of the back-seat, providing the necessary privacy.

'Peace be on you,' the jemadar hails the driver, who is a local Mohammedan.

'On you be peace,' replies the tum-tum walla, as he checks with difficulty his weary nag that has at last awakened to the proximity of home and a feed. 'Oh *sura*!' (pig), he vociferates as he gives its obstinate mouth a final tug.

Yes, the train was in when he left. There were two or three carriages full of sepoy on it.

So they had arrived.

The tired animal exhibits as much reluctance to start again as it did to stop; but at last the little gray, decked with blotches of orange stain and a necklace of blue beads, is prevailed upon to resume an awkward canter, to the tinkling accompaniment of its many bells.

A hum of conversation arises amongst the men as the news becomes known; excitement and curiosity permeate the many recruits, and speculation arouses the few old soldiers.

A score of names are eagerly discussed by the little groups, and the chances of various old friends being amongst the survivors.

'Mirza Khan is my *chhota bhai*' (younger brother), says Mohabat. 'He came out in a *darāf* [draft], and joined us at Kut. He was wounded at Suleiman Pāk [Ctesiphon], and got a *tagma* [medal] for *bahadure* [bravery]. Allah knows if he yet lives, for no news has come of him for over three years.'

'Mirza was all right when I saw him last,' breaks in Ali Haidar, who escaped from the Turks after a year's drudgery on railway construction at Ras el Ain. 'He was taken away

with many others towards Haleb [Aleppo], but I was too sick to go. He was a sturdy *jawān*, and his wound did not trouble him any more.'

'I, too, have a kinsman whom I hope to greet to-day,' says a big bearded Sikh who had been standing behind the group that squatted round Mohabat Khan. 'He is my cousin, Rattan Singh, the great wrestler. Only Ganda Singh could beat him, who was killed at Nasiriyeh. We had a post-card from him a year ago, from Konia, and that was fifteen months old. But perhaps he, too, has gone to be with the *guruji*.'

A faint bugle-call from across the river interrupts their reveries, to be taken up by one nearer, and by yet another—the regimental call, and 'Fall in.' So they are near.

The sepoy rise with a buzz of excitement, and line the roadway from the bridgehead.

Far away is a long cloud of dust, and then, as the tongas come in sight, the excitement increases.

The tongas draw nearer, while the buglers, now no longer needed, run at their sides.

They halt, and the prisoners get out. They seem so few—only about seventy. They fall in, form fours, and, headed by their Indian officers, march towards the little bridge over the last narrow channel. As they step upon it a whistle blows, and three 'Hip, hip, hurrahs!' are given, as the occasion demands, and the prisoners cheer in return; then, as they reach the bank, there is a wild rush of friends and relations to greet them.

The hubbub dies almost to silence, for now, in the embracings that follow the years of priva-

tion and grief and separation, hearts are too full for speech.

And now, again, men find their voices, and on all sides are heard the Hindu, Mohammedan, and Sikh greetings: '*Rām, Rām,*' '*Salām aleikūm,*' '*Aleikūm salām,*' and '*Sat sri akālgur bar akāl.*'

Mirza Khān is there, and even now he and his brother Mohabat are locked in the fervent embrace of reunion. But it is not the strong, clean-built, athletic Mirza of old; he stands only with the help of a crutch, for his left thigh had been smashed while he was working on a tunnel through the Taurus range, and his right hand is gone from the wrist from a blasting charge.

But Hākim Singh seeks his *bhai* in vain, for Rattan Singh has indeed gone to be with the *guruji*.

Then once again they disentangle themselves from the crowd, and, garlanded with roses and jasmine, fall in behind the great Union-Jack—the emblem of the King-Emperor whom they have so faithfully served.

The band strikes up '*Zakhmi Dil*' ('The Wounded Heart,' a famous Pathan love-song), and they march in state through lines of cheering sepoy to a thunder of '*Ganga jī ki jai!*' (Hindu war-cry), '*Alla-a-ah!*' (Mohammedan cry), and '*Wāhī guru jī kā khalsā, sri wāhī guru jī ki fatteh!*' (Sikh cry), that drowns the memory of the first alien cheers; and all the bitter, dreary past, and all the death and the suffering, are forgotten in the glorious, happy present.

The dream of years has become a reality, and this is, indeed, 'the Day.'

AGATES AND AGATE-COLLECTING.

By A. R. HORWOOD, F.L.S.

VISITORS to the seaside, whether they be young or old, frequently have some hobby or other. Often this takes the form of collecting. Many people bring back shells or seaweed or what they term curious stones, picked up on the seashore. Very often, however, knowing something of the various kinds of pebbles to be found on an ordinary beach, a fair percentage of holiday-makers and tourists, not to mention the professional collectors, go in for collecting a particular kind of stone, especially if it has some intrinsic value. Amongst such stones are agates, which are very plentiful on some coasts, and present considerable variety in colour and markings. Being susceptible of a high polish, they are put to a variety of purposes, and there is a considerable trade in agates. To know something about them, and how best to search for them, is therefore of interest.

Agates occur chiefly in rocks of igneous origin, in rounded nodules in cavities, and usually have an irregular surface, or they may occur in veins.

Sometimes a rock is crowded with these nodular agates, and is then amygdaloidal. When the rock weathers the nodules drop out, and are found in the beds of streams, or are obtained in quarries. Many find their way to the sea, and are washed out of cliffs and are distributed along the coasts.

In this country agates occur in Cornwall in quartz rocks on Carnbrae Hill, and in serpentine rocks at Kynance Cove, Devil's Bellows, near Lizard Point. They are also found along the coast on the Chesil Bank, and on other parts of the south coast. They are, too, abundant on the east coast, especially in Norfolk and Suffolk, where there are shingle beaches. In Cumberland agates are obtained at Carrock Fells and Falcon Craig. In the Midlands they occur in older rocks at Mickleton, Gloucestershire, and in gravel-beds at Lichfield, in Staffs.

Known also as 'Scotch pebbles,' they are found at Jedburgh (Roxburgh); in the Pentland Hills (Peebles); at Dunure, Galston, and

along the Ayrshire coast; at Habbie's Howe (Midlothian); Montrose (Forfar); Dunbar; of fine red mottled type at Dunglass (Haddington); Stonehaven (Kincardineshire); Kinnoull Hill (Perth); in the bed of the river Tay; and in Fife, Kinross, and at Dunvegan Head, Isle of Skye, of a gray colour. In Ireland agates are found in Antrim, on the Ballycastle coast, on the shores of Lough Neagh, in Donegal, near Malin Head, on Lough Swilly, and on the Clonca coast. The Wicklow agates are reddish in colour. Jasper agates come from Bray Head, and occur in amygdaloids in Donegal and at Lambay.

Abroad, the chief centre of the agate industry is Oberstein, in Germany. Large factories for polishing and colouring them exist here and in other places. They are also found in Hungary, Brazil, Uruguay, India, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands have furnished a large proportion of the supplies in recent years.

As a variety of quartz agate is a cryptocrystalline form of silica, and may be considered as a variety of chalcedony. It contains 70 to 96 per cent. silica, and a variable amount of alumina, coloured by oxide of iron or manganese. By some agate is used as an aggregate term to include chalcedony and carnelian, and thus is composed of chalcedony with quartz and jasper or opal in patches. But it may occur in a purer form and be uniform in colour, differing in colour from carnelian, and lacks then the opaline appearance of chalcedony. Occurring in cavities in rocks into which silica, which is soluble in natural waters, permeates, it has been formed by the deposition of layer after layer within this cavity, differing in transparency, or colour, thickness, &c., the outer layer being often a greenish one, coloured by chlorite, which is the colour of prase. The pure silica layers are clear and translucent or gray, but the silica is often impure, and successive layers are of various colours, giving a banded, variegated appearance, often of great beauty. Oxides of iron produce red, brown, or yellow colours; whilst other combinations afford green, purple, or pink. The layers following the outlines of the cavity are concentric, and give rise, when irregular, to what are known as 'fortification agates,' where the bands are angular. Agate is hard like quartz, but brittle.

Treated as an aggregate, agates include chalcedony, the browner forms of agate, and carnelian, which is reddish and translucent; mocha stones, clear gray moss agates, with dendritic markings caused by manganese as if including mosses; bloodstone, dark green with red markings; plasma, grass-green and coloured by chlorite, found on the Schwarzwald; and chrysoprase, apple-green, coloured by oxide of nickel, found in Silesia. In another way agate is a variety of chalcedony, which is one of the nine varieties of quartz, and is included as a sub-variety of it along with chalcedony proper, onyx, sard, sardonyx, carnelian, jasper agate, heliotrope,

mocha stone. Flint is also regarded as a form of chalcedony in the same manner. These forms may be distinguished by their degree of transparency, colour, and markings.

When they occur on the seashore agates are in the form of rounded pebbles, from an inch to three or four inches in length or longest diameter. They are most abundant where a shingle bank is formed. In some cases these banks consist of a series of successive tiers, the oldest being at or above high-water level. In such cases the proportion of agates in a mass of shingle is probably large, and the point to consider in collecting from these natural agate stores is what to collect and what to reject. The older pebbles are bleached; the surface is dull, and it is necessary to moisten it to ascertain if a stone is of a fine colour or well banded. The very opaque forms with milk-white bands will, of course, at once reveal themselves, as will others, such as fortification agates.

Elsewhere the shingle is less abundant. A bank may not exist, or may be in only a very early stage, and may lie up near high-water level or farther down, occurring as an irregular band with a few stones only, and in not more than one layer. Where this leaves off there may be patchwork arrangements of scattered shingle and sand, or this mode of distribution may obtain above the shingle band proper. It is where the pebbles are more scattered that one has a better chance of singling out the best and choicest varieties.

How to find agates is necessarily largely a matter of experience, but certain main principles and a method of working the beach may be explained; and these will help the collector to work on right lines and to enrich his collection with the better varieties, and enable him to save time by the immediate discardment of rubbish.

As has been said, the pebbles require when bleached to be wetted in order to examine them most readily when held up to the light. It is well, as the pebbles are often large and many occur on a beach, to take with one a small can of water in which to dip them. If, as is sometimes done, a pebble is placed in the mouth to wet it, a repetition of this process will cause, especially on a hot day, when a shingle beach radiates a tremendous amount of heat, a disagreeable taste and a parching thirst. A good plan, also, is to take a stick, partly as a support for one hand in leaning down to pick up a pebble with the other, and partly to turn likely pebbles over as one is going along. Walking on shingle is tiring work, it must be remembered.

As the shingle in tiers is covered by the tides up to a certain level, it is necessary to examine each tier at a time, partly because the tiers are separated by slopes, and the only method is to walk along one level at a time, and

to return along the next lower, as one cannot wander up and down or across the tiers; but more especially because by following the coast-line parallel to the ebbing tide one finds the pebbles naturally moistened, or wet, with the receding water, and the agates when wet show up more readily, being transparent when clear, and they then glisten in the light and can be readily detected. This fact is one of the most helpful in searching for agates. A further aid is the shining of the sun on the wet pebbles, causing them to show up amongst the surrounding mass of more opaque or non-transparent pebbles.

The importance of these two factors having been grasped, the method of working the beach may be adapted to local circumstances. The tiers may be worked first one way, then the other. Special attention should be paid to the tides, so that the stones may be examined when wet. Also, the sun should be called to one's aid. For the rest, the selection made should be of the best, and all mediocre specimens thrown away.

It will be found that a large proportion of pebbles that look at first like agates or carnelians are only rolled pebbles of quartz of a more or less transparent colour when wet, but quickly becoming dull when dry; and there is usually a large amount of flint of the same type on the beach, generally of a pale straw or yellow colour, sometimes tinged orange or red with iron. Care must be taken to distinguish between these and agates.

Agates are very porous and lend themselves well to polishing, and the colour may be heightened very readily by the Oberstein methods. The stones used are those that take up water most readily. First of all they are dried naturally,

and are then soaked in honey-and-water, and placed in a heated oven, and left for from two to three weeks, being afterwards washed, dried, and put in an earthen vessel with sulphuric acid. The vessel is covered, and put in an oven for from one to twelve hours. They are then taken out, washed, and dried. They are placed in oil for twenty-four hours, cleaned, cut, and polished. By this method, the different layers being porous to a different degree, the colour is varied. The gray is strengthened, some are made of a shade varying from brown to black, and the white parts are intensified by the darker layers in contrast. By this means veined agates are converted into onyx. The brown and yellow rings produced are formed by a process of carbonisation. In other cases sugar is used in place of oil for immersion. The forms treated as onyx were cut for cameos and intaglios, like the stones used in the antique sculptured gems fashioned by the ancient Greeks, and still earlier by the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Etruscans. A yellow stain is produced by treating them with carbonate of soda at a high temperature.

Agates have been used in the manufacture of jewellery in Scotland and in other parts of the country for a long time. Cut and polished, they may be used for making handles for knives and forks, cups, and rings, and they are often carved in the form of animals, human figures, &c. Owing to its hardness, and its not being affected by damp or chemical fumes, agate is also used as a knife-edge for beams in chemical balances, and in the making of mortars and pestles. In jewellery agates play an important part, being fashioned into brooches, ear-rings, cameos, gems, charms, and into beads for bracelets, necklaces, and other ornaments.

LINKED WITH DICKENS.

By CHARLES M. CLARKE, LL.D.

HALF a century has swept swiftly away since the reading-world was staggered by the intelligence that 'The Great Master of Modern Fiction,' as George Augustus Sala dubbed Charles Dickens, had been suddenly removed from our midst. The fiftieth anniversary of that fatal 9th of June recalls vividly to the writer's memory an interview and a conversation which took place with the genial humorist earlier in the month.

On a certain bright, fresh morning I was strolling up Ludgate Hill, and when nearly opposite the Daniel Lambert tavern, met Mr Dickens. For the moment I could scarcely realise the fact. The man who approached was crawling limply along, with a weary progression as different as it was possible to conceive from the alert, springy action of his accustomed stride, in which every muscle seemed to quiver with the

ecstasy of exercise. No other man of my acquaintance ever appeared to derive so much physical enjoyment from walking as did the novelist.

But there was no mistaking the sad, serious face, the lofty intellectual brow, with the hair brushed forward over each ear, or the refined aquiline nose, the drooping moustache, and the short iron-gray beard, let alone the expressive eyes, which even weariness could not rob of their natural brilliancy.

I raised my hat in courteous salutation as I said, 'Good-morning, Mr Dickens.' A look of bewildered inquiry flashed from his eyes, while he replied, 'I do not remember you, sir. Really you have the advantage of me. Pray, where have we met?'

'It is not surprising,' I hastened to add, 'that a literary triton should find some difficulty in

recognising a journalistic minnow; but perchance you may remember that George Augustus Sala introduced me to you some months ago at the Savage Club.'

'Ah! yes, yes, of course, dear old Sala, dear old Savage Club, to be sure; yes, now I place you;' then, extending his hand, he cordially shook mine. 'Forgive me, dear boy,' he continued. 'Expect I'm losing my memory. Why—would you believe it?—only t'other day lady asked me who wrote *Sketches by Boz*. For the life o' me couldn't remember. All I could say was, "How the dickens should I know, madam?"' However, the genial smile that rippled round his mouth and the gleam of humour which twinkled in his eyes considerably discounted the accuracy of his statement.

After walking beside him in silence for a few minutes, I presently remarked, with possibly a slight absence of tact, 'I am sorry to notice an appearance of languor in your walk; your step lacks its wonted elasticity. Is it the weather, or are you not feeling well?'

'I'm all right. Well, well, dear boy, perhaps I am a little run down. I must confess I don't feel quite up to concert-pitch. I guess I have been rather overdoing it lately, not only burning the candle at both ends, but setting it alight in the middle as well, with the result that for about the first time in my life I do *not* enjoy walking.'

I murmured some conventional regret, but, without heeding my words, he continued: 'Sure I'm not taking you out of your way? No? Then I'll make use of you. No, don't be afraid; I'm not going to put you into a book. Still, I will immortalise you. Just give me your arm, and long after I am laid to rest in Westminster Abbey you can boast to your grandchildren that you are the only man who ever walked arm-in-arm with Charles Dickens.'

The look of whimsical drollery by which the speech was illustrated robbed it of all sense of egotism, and from that instant he began to lean less heavily on my arm. Throwing off all lassitude, he stepped out briskly with more of his old form, the while he discoursed in the most entrancing manner, quoting in character whole passages from *Edwin Drood*. One minute he personated Rose Budd; then he drifted into Durdles, and changed into Mr Crisparkle, the minor canon; anon he imitated the saturnine Jasper, reproduced the pompous Mayor Sapsea, or illustrated the vagaries of the lovable hero of the unfinished novel.

In reply to a question as to his favourite production, he said, 'Of all the books I have written, my favourite is *David Copperfield*—very possibly from its containing more of my own life than any of the others. At any rate, I derived more pleasure in its composition. But the book which took most out of me, which carried me quite out of myself, is *The Tale of Two Cities*. That certainly is my supreme

effort. That work will, I believe, live long after all my other books are forgotten.'

It was the most memorable walk of my life. It was the *last walk* that Charles Dickens took down Fleet Street, and the sole occasion on which I or any other man was linked arm-in-arm with him.

All too soon we arrived at Charing Cross Station, where he took a ticket for Rochester; then, pausing under the station clock, he announced that there was still five minutes to spare before his train was due to start, and his gaze wandered furtively in the direction of the refreshment-room.

'I don't know, my young friend, whether you have been cherishing any "great expectations" of a modest quencher, but if you have, why, here's a buffet, as Wemmick would have said. Suppose we go and get a drink.' So saying, he led the way up to the counter, where the presiding genius, having satisfied herself as to the condition of her coiffure, suddenly remembered some item of news which she desired to convey to the other female assistant. Then, with a sniff of supreme disdain and a fixed stare of astonishment, she sailed gracefully down the bar, and condescended to supply us with a sawdust sandwich, which was washed down by a glass of tepid sherry.

I accompanied him across the platform past the book-stalls. Passing the ticket-barrier, I escorted him to the door of a first-class compartment, which I closed after him; and just before the clock indicated half-past one the train slowly steamed out of the station, while the last thing I saw was the delicate white hand of the novelist waving an adieu from the window of the carriage ere it finally disappeared in the distance. I turned slowly away, my hand still tingling under the pressure of his valedictory grasp, and my mind suffering from an unaccountable impression of sadness.

Four days later, in the upper apartment of that Swiss chalet which had been given to him by his friend and admirer Charles Fechter the actor, and which stood in the garden of Gad's Hill Place, forming the favourite workroom of the great author, he died. Here, on the 9th of June 1870, seated at his table with the ink scarcely dry on the page of *Edwin Drood* at which he had been writing until the last moment of his life, he passed away. As a matter of fact, it was within two hours of his being engaged on Chapter XXIII. ('The Dawn Again'), containing the words, 'And preach the Resurrection and the Life,' that the great writer died.

Thus passed away suddenly, in the prime of life, the spirit of a genius well-nigh as immortal as Shakespeare; a genius that appealed equally to prince and peasant; a genius that fought ever on the side of honesty and chivalry, and unflinchingly opposed sham and shoddy.

Leaving aside the reform of abuses which the

novels of Charles Dickens brought about, it is a grand record to have called forth the tear-drop of sympathy, to have aroused innocent laughter, and to have stimulated the love of humanity, as no other writer ever did, in millions of readers whose lives have been brightened by the message of the great master of fiction.

In his will he had desired that he should be

buried in an inexpensive, unostentatious, and strictly private manner, without any announcement of the time or place of burial. These conditions were observed; but his executors did not consider them inconsistent with his receiving the honour of interment in Westminster Abbey, which took place accordingly on the 14th of June 1870.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A FLOATING SAFE FOR MAIL-STEAMERS.

HOLLAND has always been noted for her shipping, which in recent years has grown considerably in importance, more especially as regards the services between Europe and the East Indies. It is not altogether surprising, therefore, to find the Dutch postal authorities taking the lead in adopting means for safeguarding mail matter in cases of shipwreck, as shown in those which have been applied to the mail liners of the Netherlands Steamship Company. This development takes the form of a huge safe, carried upon the deck of each vessel where it can float off should the ship sink. The safe is cylindrical in shape, with hemispherical ends, and it is carried in a cradle which releases it when the vessel has sunk to a predetermined depth, this condition being necessary to avoid the possibility of a big sea coming on board and carrying off the safe. After floating to the surface from a sinking ship the safe is almost human in its apparent efforts to attract attention, these being carried out by automatic appliances which come into action half-an-hour after the safe leaves the ship. They comprise an occulting light shown during every fourth minute, while for one minute in every nine a signal-horn is blown. Moreover, these signals will continue for three months if the safe is not picked up. Should the light and the horn fail to attract attention in twelve hours, a rocket is sent up, this signal being repeated every hour. Every possible precaution is taken to safeguard the contents. The safe has several doors, one inside the other, and of these the innermost can be opened only by means of a secret code. 'Finally'—says James Anderson in the *Scientific American*—'every safe is provided with one separate compartment which automatically destroys all its contents should an unauthorised person attempt to open the safe.' Letters to be shipped in the safes have to carry special stamps, which are on sale in all Dutch post-offices, and also on board the mail liners. For a small fee passengers can have letters or valuables put into the safe during a voyage, the captain being provided with keys for this purpose. As in the case of safes in banks, the joints are welded, and there are three shells of special steel, one inside the other. Besides,

the safes are in full view of the bridge, where they are continually under the eye of the officer on watch throughout the voyage.

SIGNALLING BY INVISIBLE LIGHT.

By no means the least remarkable invention of the war was a system of invisible signals, requiring no wires, developed by J. Herbert-Stevens and A. Larigaldie for use in the French Army. Like the heliograph, and a similar instrument for telephoning which formed the subject of a recent note, the new device is based upon the transmission of light by parabolic mirrors. It has, however, this advantage, that no light is visible to outsiders; consequently signalling may be carried on at night without the enemy's cognisance. The infra-red rays of the rainbow and the spectrum, although invisible to the human eye, can be reflected and projected, and these are used for transmission in the new instrument. The transmitter consists of a searchlight fitted with a screen which cuts off all the visible light and projects only the infra-red rays. For the small portable apparatus an incandescent electric-lamp of the nitrogen or neon-filled type is used, this being rich in red rays; while for longer range transmission an arc-lamp is employed. The small lamp is supplied by a storage-battery at about six volts. With a lamp of 100 candle-power and a reflector eleven inches in diameter, signals can be transmitted over two-thirds of a mile. More powerful forms of the apparatus have ranges up to eight miles. Signalling is carried on by the Morse code in dots and dashes, the searchlight being fitted with a shutter for this purpose. The same instrument is used for both transmitting and receiving, a detector being placed in the focus of the reflector for the latter purpose. These detectors may transmit the message to the eye or the ear. As with all similar systems of signalling, the direct line between the transmitting and receiving points must be clear of obstructions, and the instruments must be pointed exactly towards each other, which is done by sighting-tubes in line with the beams projected.

A SIMPLE OIL-BURNER AND COOKER.

In these days of threatened strikes it is just as well to have some alternative source of heat

to coal, gas, and electricity, supplies of which may become scarce, or, in extreme cases, be cut off altogether. This desideratum is well met by the 'Welcome' heater, which burns paraffin, and has been designed to take the place of a coal or gas fire for all kinds of cooking and heating. The essential parts of the apparatus are a burner, which is put into the fire-grate, a paraffin-tank to be hung on a wall or placed on a shelf, and a small flexible pipe connecting the two. Where the pipe joins the tank is a screw needle-valve, which is used to regulate the supply of paraffin to the burner. As the paraffin flows to the burner by gravity, it is necessary to place the tank well above it, a height of about five feet being recommended by the makers. After flowing down the tube, the paraffin, as it passes through a pipe over the flame, is vaporised ere it reaches the point where it is consumed. The burner is very simple, and comprises, among other parts, a horizontal U bend, which forms the vaporiser, whence the hot vapour passes down into another horizontal U provided with two small holes, which constitute the flame-jets. The lower U is fixed in a rectangular pan with an open top and holes in the bottom to admit air. The pan has an asbestos lining, and contains an asbestos pad at the bottom. The *modus operandi* is as follows. A little methylated spirit is poured upon the pad and a light applied, as the vaporiser must be heated before the jets will ignite. When the methylated spirit is well alight a trickle of paraffin is admitted to the vaporiser by opening the needle-valve a quarter of a turn for five seconds. When vapour begins to come out of the jets, the needle-valve is again given a quarter of a turn, and the jets are lit. Air coming through the holes in the pan mixes with the vapour at the jets, and the combination produces intensely hot blue flames, which continue so long as there is any oil in the tank. The apparatus gives as much heat as a coal-fire at full blast; moreover, the vaporiser is fitted with deflectors, which can be so manipulated with a poker as to direct the heat where it is most needed. As compared with some other kinds of stove, there is the great advantage that the paraffin is not under pressure, and the stove is, therefore, safe to handle. It is also portable, and can be moved about from room to room—a very valuable feature in the small household. Used in the kitchen-range first thing in the morning, it will provide water for washing in five minutes, and for baths in twenty, and will then serve to cook the breakfast. It can next be placed below the copper or transferred to a sitting-room as desired, and may afterwards be returned to the kitchen for further cooking operations. In country districts without a gas-supply the 'Welcome' heater should prove invaluable, as the price is comparatively low, and the cost of the paraffin consumed is only about

twopence an hour; while its use dispenses with the handling of coal, the cost of firewood, and the cleaning of grates and flues.

LOCKING DEVICE FOR NUTS AND BOLTS.

Practically every form of mechanism is held together by bolts and nuts, and it has always been a difficult problem in those mechanical appliances subject to vibration, such as motor-cars and locomotives, to prevent the nuts from shaking loose in course of time. Numerous locking devices have been invented to overcome this difficulty, but until recently all have been open to some objection. Those which were effective were too costly; while the cheap ones could not be depended upon. These drawbacks have been overcome in the 'Palnut' safety lock-washer, of which the half-inch size is sold for less than a penny. It consists of a thin, slightly conical, steel disc, with the edges turned up to form a hexagon of the same size as the nut. Through the middle of this disc is a circular hole, the edge of which fits into the screw-thread on the bolt. After a nut is screwed on to its bolt one of these washers is screwed up against it, and then tightened with a spanner, the effect being slightly to flatten the cone, and so cause the washer to grip the thread tightly. It will be noted that no alterations need to be made to either nut or bolt, and neither is damaged. All that is necessary is that the bolt should project through the nut to the extent of a couple of screw-threads, and this is generally the case with any combination of bolt and nut.

A NON-DRIP CANDLESTICK.

Even when stationary and in perfectly still air, few candles can be depended upon to burn away without trickles of grease running down the sides; and if they are carried about, not only is the socket in which they are placed apt to be filled with such overflows, but often the whole candlestick becomes liberally sprinkled with grease. In fact, unless extreme care is exercised, not a few drops of grease fall on to clothes, carpets, or furniture. Owing to this, bedroom candlesticks in households having any pretensions to smartness have to be cleaned daily, which involves a considerable amount of irksome work. Again, the piece of candle left in the socket is wasted. All these drawbacks are overcome by the 'Sunbeam' non-drip candlestick. In this device a cone-shaped hood with a hole through the top is placed over the top of the candle, and falls automatically as the candle burns away. The hood is somewhat similar to that of a carriage candlestick, but there are two important differences. First, the pressure is very light, and is perfectly even from start to finish, being due only to the weight of the hood. Second, the hood is made in two pieces, soldered together, leaving a chamber between them to hold the melted grease, which is thus prevented from

overflowing. A pillar and a bar at one side guide the hood in its downward course, and hold the candle from falling out should the candlestick be knocked over. The writer has burnt a candle away in one of these holders without a drop of grease escaping, although the candlestick was purposely jerked about and knocked over several times. Moreover, the candle burnt steadily without the slightest attention until its height was little more than the thickness of a shilling, and when it became necessary this small remaining portion could be easily extracted without causing any mess. The 'Sunbeam' candlestick is made of tin, is painted an attractive colour, and is so constructed that it may be hung up on a nail or a hook, if that is desired.

REVIVAL OF JET-PROPULSION.

Among the more interesting features of the recent motor-boat show at Olympia were two examples of the apparatus used for propelling ships by water-jets. One of these was the model of an experimental hydraulic propeller, lent by the Admiralty; the other was a jet-propulsion outfit installed in a twenty-six-foot boat. These exhibits were novel so far as the apparatus was concerned, but the water-jet is quite an old method of propelling ships, having been tried in H.M.S. *Waterwitch* many years ago, while at least two of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution's boats were at one time fitted with jet-propulsion. The system was not repeated in naval craft until the end of the war, when a number of vessels to be propelled in this way were built by the Admiralty for a special purpose. In the case of lifeboats liable to ground on sandbanks, or to be called upon to operate frequently amongst wreckage, jet-propulsion has obvious advantages; but in spite of these the system was abandoned by the Institution. The model lent by the Admiralty is of apparatus designed by Mr D. V. Hotchkiss, and constructed at the Admiralty experimental station at Shandon. The propelling arrangement is very simple, water being drawn in through inlets facing the direction in which the ship is proceeding, to be whirled round by an impeller and discharged towards the stern. A simple device, worked by a lever, reverses the jets and drives the vessel astern, or cuts them off entirely. Any speed, from zero to maximum, is obtainable in either direction. The apparatus fitted to the twenty-six-foot boat worked on similar principles, except that the impeller was of the turbine type with a vertical spindle. In this case all three jets could be swung round by turning a hand-wheel, so that the boat could be driven ahead or astern, or turned about in any direction, with the greatest ease. Either of these appliances may be actuated by any form of prime mover, but they offer special advantages in combination with gas or oil engines, which can be kept running at their

normal speed, while all manœuvring is done by the propelling device. It will be interesting to note whether these new forms of jet-propulsion meet with more success than previous ventures in this direction.

ALARM-BELLS RUNG BY WIRELESS.

Our readers will remember that last month we published a paragraph dealing with a new device recently designed by the Marconi Company for ringing alarm-bells on all ships fitted with the necessary apparatus within a range of eighty miles, and thus attracting attention at once, even should the operator be off duty. Further information is now to hand as to the working of this latest product of the inventive genius of those in charge of the Marconi Research Laboratory. In the receiving instrument there is a small magnet carried on a spindle in jewelled bearings, and fitted with what corresponds to the hair-spring of the balance-wheel of a watch. This magnet, if pulled round half a turn or so, will swing to and fro, at the rate of 180 times a minute, until it gradually comes to rest. Most of our readers will know that if a magnet is surrounded by a coil of insulated copper-wire through which an electric current is passing, the magnet will try to set itself at right angles to the coil. In this case the coil is connected to the wireless apparatus. When the initial electric waves pass over the aerial they produce therein a feeble current. This current is amplified to a convenient intensity, and then rectified—i.e. transformed into direct current, which energises the electro-magnet just referred to. Such currents, however, are too feeble to swing the magnet to its limits, unless they are received at the rate of exactly 180 to the minute, the natural rate of swing of the magnet. What happens is this. The first current produces a slight movement; this is increased by the next, and so on until the magnet swings round to its full limit. When this takes place a platinum-pointed arm on the spindle makes an electrical contact, which causes a strong current to flow from a battery round the coils of another electro-magnet. The magnet, thus brought into action, attracts a soft iron bar, the movement of which switches the current through an electric-bell, and causes it to ring until the operator attends to it. A message made up of dots and dashes would not swing the magnet; the signal must be all dots, transmitted at the rate of 180 to the minute. The instrument for transmitting the distress-signal, like that for receiving it, also has its 'balance-wheel.' In this case, however, it is fitted with a bar of soft iron which is attracted by powerful electro-magnets, by means of which the 'balance-wheel' is pulled round against what may be called the 'hair-spring.' The spindle of this 'balance-wheel' is also fitted with a contact arm, which makes an electrical connection at each end of its stroke.

In this case there is no question of getting up a swing, the magnets being powerful enough to turn the wheel at once. When a key is pressed, current is passed through the electro-magnets, which, thus brought into operation, pull round the wheel to the contact-point. The operator then releases the key, current is cut off, the electro-magnets no longer operate, and the 'hair-spring' swings the wheel back 'with a run,' so that it makes another contact at the other end of its stroke. This contact passes current through the magnets again, which turn the wheel back to the first contact. In this way the wheel keeps swinging and making contacts at each end. The spring is so adjusted to the length of the swing that the first contact is made 180 times a minute. This contact opens and closes the circuit in place of the usual operating key, and in less than a minute bells are rung on all ships within range which are fitted with the apparatus.

A NEW HEATING DEVICE.

An objection urged against the old-fashioned type of gas-fire was that a large part of the heat supplied was not radiant heat, but convected heat—in other words, that, in proportion to the amount of heat furnished by the direct rays of the fire, too great a share was provided by the air in contact with the warm portions of the stove becoming heated, and by its circulation conveying the heat to the various parts of the room. The air of a room warmed by convected heat always feels less invigorating than that of a room warmed by radiant heat; hence the antipathy to the older type of gas-fire to which we have referred. In the more modern type of gas-fire, however, a much larger proportion of the heat supplied is radiant heat, and there has recently been placed on the market an invention by a medical man which tends not only to reduce still further the amount of convected heat, but also to increase the efficiency of the stove by projecting the heat where it is needed, and to lessen materially the consumption of gas. It is made throughout of polished brass, and consists of a horizontal tray eighteen inches square, bordered on each of two opposite edges by an upright, detachable, and adjustable side. It is supported on four telescopic legs, which permit of the tray being adjusted so that its height from the ground may be anything between four and eight inches; while the sides may be adjusted within a range of four inches so as to make the apparatus fit the width of any particular stove. The legs having been so manipulated that the tray is at the height of the lower margin of the flame in the stove, the 'heater' is placed close up to the fire in such a position that the two side-pieces are at right angles to the front of the stove. When the gas is lit, the heat rays, impinging upon the three brass surfaces, are reflected into the room with

such power that it becomes comfortably warm in a remarkably short time. So marked are the magnifying-powers, as it were, of the apparatus that the gas need never be turned on at full, thus effecting a distinct economy, and preventing the formation of convected heat by keeping the canopy and the framework of the stove from becoming hot. Another advantage accruing from the use of this invention is that ground draughts are prevented from reaching the incandescent surface of the stove and cooling it. The apparatus is said to be nearly as efficient with coal-fires and electric heaters as with gas-stoves, and the more up-to-date the stove or the fire the better the result. Food placed on the horizontal tray is kept perfectly hot; indeed, water can be boiled on it, and the apparatus is thus of special service in the sickroom. Not the least of its advantages is that it can be taken from room to room as needed.

AN INDELIBLE, NON-CLOGGING INK.

The general use of fountain-pens at the present day renders a form of ink which will not clog the pen an important desideratum. Several varieties of ink specially adapted for service in fountain-pens have been placed on the market during the last few years, and we have recently made trial of one which has proved eminently satisfactory in this respect, owing, we are informed, to the entire absence of gum-arabic from its composition. This ink also possesses other characteristics which appear to make it worthy of favourable consideration. It is made in various colours, does not fade, does not corrode the pen, and is not affected by acids except such as also damage the paper, thus giving indubitable evidence of their use. The employment of this writing-fluid, therefore, affords an additional guarantee against the unauthorised alteration of cheques and other documents without inevitable detection of the fact. It is put up in the form of a powder, to which it is only necessary to add a specified amount of water to produce instantaneously a writing-fluid which appears to meet every legitimate requirement.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE AWFUL MISS BROWN.

By WILLIAM CAIRNS.

CHAPTER I.

I.

HESTER BROWN was the most striking personality in Dredgefield. This was indicated in her being invariably spoken of as 'Miss Brown,' though the parish contained no fewer than four other single ladies of the same name. There was the oldest inhabitant, Bridget Brown, who was not only in the parish, but on it; there was Deborah Brown, who distributed various kinds of dry-goods (including the contents of a circulating library) at the village post-office, and who was usually mentioned in connection with her official position. Others were identified topographically, as 'Miss Brown o' Borehams' and 'Miss Brown down by Todd's Lane;' but when any one spoke simply of 'Miss Brown,' everybody knew who was meant.

Born in Dredgefield, she had lived there all her life, and, at forty-three, was a tall, slim woman, decidedly handsome in a rather forcible style. Her fine complexion was healthily tinged by a rustic outdoor life; she had keen gray eyes, firm clean-cut lips, and a somewhat square chin; while as for her nose, the fact that it was of a more patrician type than most of the Dredgefield noses inclined many people to a belief that it made her the woman she was; but, independently of this feature, she could not have failed to impress you as of commanding presence.

Dredgefield was proud of Miss Brown, as of a woman whose equal none of the adjacent parishes could show. At the same time, it occasionally remarked, behind her back, that she was 'a bit of a Tartar.' This had served to protect her from the importunities of certain bucolic admirers who were anxious to settle in life, but who, shunning the ordeal of a proposal, remained single or married elsewhere. In recent years only one had been hardy enough to approach her with matrimonial intentions, and he had done so to the astonishment of all concerned—that is to say, of the entire population; for when Dredgefield found anything very exciting to talk about it made the most of it, and everybody took a share.

Though Mr Giles Jobson, the individual
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referred to, said to himself, 'Hollybush Farm's a good bit o' land as 'ud let easy,' it is but fair to state that his chief motive was the love of distinction which had been engendered some months previously, when his bull took a first prize at the county show. Worldly-minded people would have considered him as eligible a suitor as ever dined at a farmers' ordinary, or took an extra glass on market-day; for he was a substantial freeholder, who paid his way and cared for no man. On the other hand, they would have thought no one less likely to make his appearance in the character of a wooer, or to plant the Myrtle of Venus in soil which would yield such a poor return. Stout and ruddy, with a prosperous, broadcloth air, and close on sixteen stone, he was too solid a man to give undue attention to the trivialities of mere outward display; and when he was suddenly transformed into a middle-aged rustic buck of the first head, with a nosegay in his button-hole, Dredgefield could scarcely believe its eyes.

'Why, Giles lad, be it you?' old Farmer Dobbs exclaimed, surveying him one evening when he entered the parlour of 'The Load of Hay.' 'Vine veathers make vine birds. What be you arter?'

'Well, if you *must* know,' Giles replied, overcoming a slight tendency to sheepishness, 'I be going to court Miss Brown.'

Mr Jobson had anticipated the effect of this announcement with a certain degree of pride; its reception fully justified his expectations. His hearers, taking their clay pipes from their mouths, stared at him and at one another for several minutes in amazement before they recovered themselves sufficiently to repeat, 'Going to court Miss Brown! He be going to court Miss Brown!' What was to be made of it? Had Giles Jobson suddenly gone crazy, or was there that in him which they had never supposed to be there? Was he a fool, or a hero? His reputation trembled in the balance, and then Farmer Dobbs (who was not only the oldest, but also the briskest, member of the company) settled the point.

'Well, Giles lad,' he cried, bringing his fist down upon the table, 'thou'rt the only man as

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I knows on who'd venter it. Going to court Miss Brown? Dang! Ye'll never beat that!'

'No, no,' chorused the rest; 'ye'll never beat that!' The balance had turned in his favour. He was a hero.

II.

This inspired Mr Jobson with a dangerous confidence, so that Miss Brown was 'woo'd and married and a' before he had spoken a word to her on the subject. He pictured himself saying (in reply to the congratulations of his friends), 'I just said to her, "Miss Brown, maybe you're not the popularist woman i' the parish, but you're the one I think most on;" and i' less nor half-an-hour it was settled quite comfortable.'

When he called on Miss Brown, the affair was settled in considerably less than half-an-hour, but by no means comfortably. Within ten minutes after entering her door, he emerged again with an agitated air, and as he hurried along the garden path he glanced over his shoulder, as if apprehensive that she might be following him, like a classical Fury, with a fire-brand in one hand and a whip in the other. Crestfallen as he was, Giles bore the sallies of his friends with Christian meekness. Only once did he turn upon his persecutors at 'The Load of Hay,' when old Farmer Dobbs jocosely inquired what Miss Brown had said to him. 'That ain't nobody's business,' he retorted. 'But,' he added impressively, looking round him almost with an air of triumph, 'I'll tell ye *one* thing. It worn't only o' *me* she said it. She said it o' *the whole lot on us*.'

In that last sentence you had Miss Brown; there she was in a nutshell. Her salient characteristic was a contempt for the male sex as represented in the human biped.

There are people who insist on a reason for everything, than which nothing can be more unreasonable. Some of these remembered Hester Brown's father as being addicted to liquor and loquacity, and as indulging in public oratory, at 'The Load of Hay,' to an extent incompatible with the diligent management of his private concerns; so that, but for Miss Brown and her mother, the little farm would have gone to rack and ruin. Thus, argued they, the seeds of homophobia had been sown early. Likewise they hinted at a 'disappointment' connected with a male cousin who came on a visit from a manufacturing district in the time of her girlhood—a cousin who, being a town-made article, interested her as something strange and new. This explanation, however, was rejected by others as an unworthy fiction. These would have 'liked to see the chap as 'ud make a fool o' Miss Brown, even when she was a young un.' Miss Brown *was* Miss Brown, and there was no need to investigate further in order to explain why she was not some one else and a different sort of person.

But none of us is invariably consistent. More

than once Miss Brown had been known to depart from the inexorable tenor of her way, though her manner of doing so was all her own. When one of her pigs disappeared, and was traced to Simon Grubb, Mrs Grubb came to her with tearful protestations that she was the mother of six; and though Miss Brown told her it was a greater crime to have six children than to steal pigs, Simon escaped punishment for the sake of his wife and family. Again, when Martha Gibbs, who had served her faithfully for seven years, was going to be married come next Easter, Miss Brown drew, for her benefit, a painful picture of married life among the peasantry: of wretched women slaving early and late to keep things together, while the husbands sat in the public-house over their beer and tobacco; but she did the handsome thing by Martha when the affair came off. Therefore many people asserted that Miss Brown 'had a heart somewheres, though it didn't seem to be where most folk's were, and took a deal o' getting at.'

For this reason, Dredgefield commiserated the person whose fate was most directly under her influence—the orphan child of the late Mrs Brown's youngest brother, about whom (like the majority of his sex) the least said the better. When Miss Brown heard of her being left, a mere waif, in a distant county, she sent instructions for her to be forwarded without delay to Hollybush Farm; and, since it seemed absurd in a woman of thirty to call a child of six her cousin, she decided to be her aunt instead.

In the mere fact of being a girl and not a boy, the forlorn little creature had the good fortune to gratify her aunt from the first; but things did not turn out so well afterwards, for at nineteen Bella Croft was an attractive damsel, disinclined to a belief that the world would be a better place if Man was known only as an antediluvian animal whose prehistoric remains were examined by scientific ladies, who reconstructed his skeleton for museums. Nevertheless, Bella was devoted to her aunt, and everybody agreed that Miss Brown had done her duty by her niece. In spite of this Bella was commonly spoken of as 'poor Bella Croft,' for, though it was quite understood she would inherit Hollybush Farm and all her aunt's savings, it was predicted that 'Miss Brown 'ud never let a man come nigh her, unless it was Parson Doubleday, or some un like him.' Certainly no great harm could have resulted from this, seeing that the vicar was a meek little old bachelor who read his Bible very literally, and gave away among his poorer neighbours things he wanted very badly for himself.

III.

The Reverend Theophilus Doubleday was indeed a worthy man, and, moreover, a good scholar. Dredgefield, taking his erudition for granted, esteemed him for his worthiness, and none of his parishioners had a greater regard for

him than a youthful connection of his own, Richard Merryweather. Richard was a nephew, by marriage, of the vicar's sister, who had given up housekeeping for her brother to marry Farmer Merryweather, who was a person of such consequence in the neighbourhood that he might almost have been a Justice of the Peace in days when a J.P. had to be somebody. His red brick house was one of the best in the parish, and, standing a good distance apart from the farm-buildings, had quite an air of being above its business. Dying childless, he left the house and land to his wife in trust for his nephew Richard, the second son of a brother who was a thriving veterinary surgeon in the county town, twenty miles off. So when Richard's aunt died also, and he came to reside on his property, he was rich according to Dredgefield standards—that is, for one of good old yeoman stock. In his way he was a remarkable young man, and though Dredgefield began by resenting the cut of his coat and thinking him a little too cosmopolitan, he was so cheery and good-humoured that it soon agreed to overlook his defects. After all, a man who owned two of the biggest farms in the district, and who, while he lived on one, held the dignified position of landlord towards the person who occupied the other, had a right to wear things which fitted him if he chose to do so. It was a weakness, perhaps, but you could not put old heads upon young shoulders, and he'd know better some day.

'Love laughs at locksmiths,' but even if he regarded them seriously, Miss Brown could not have kept her niece under lock and key whenever her eyes were off her. To immure single young women for fear of the consequences was not the custom of the age and country in which she lived. It was not often, however, that Bella went anywhere without her aunt, but this occurred sometimes; and upon one of these rare occasions she met Richard Merryweather, with the result that, after a few more meetings, they fell in love with one another. For some time Miss Brown remained ignorant of what had happened, for, keen and observant though she was, she had no experience either of the tender passion or of the little signs by which its presence is betrayed. Had she seen the young people together her suspicions might perhaps have been roused, but she did not see them together. Knowing something of Miss Brown's character, Richard took care of that. He told himself that the way to catch a bird was not to throw your hat at it; and until he had made sure of Bella, he had no wish to bring her aunt upon the scene.

However, this state of affairs did not last long. With Miss Brown as a rock ahead, some timorous persons might, in nautical phrase, have 'stood off and on' until they were middle-aged, or even worse; but when Richard made up his mind to do anything, he was one of those who take the bull by the horns. If he came to grief and was

tumbled over, that was one to the bull, and then he got up and tried again. In the present case he encountered little difficulty at first. When he told Bella that he loved her, in spite of all her aunt's teaching she believed him. This was probably due to the fact that in discoursing of such matters Miss Brown had dealt with Man in the abstract; and to Bella, Richard Merryweather did not represent an abstract idea. A stipulation that, so far as her aunt was concerned, there should be nothing clandestine in their proceedings was alarming; for that Miss Brown's consent could be obtained off-hand was incredible, and not to be expected. He would have preferred to get it over, and inform her of the event when the mischief was done; but when he found Bella's scruples insurmountable, a happy thought occurred to him, and he suggested that they should request the vicar to open the ball for them.

'We are related, you know,' he explained. 'He's a sort of an uncle of mine, and one of the best old fellows in the world. Besides, he's her pastor; so perhaps she'll listen to him, when she wouldn't listen to you or me.'

CHAPTER II.

I.

THE Reverend Theophilus Doubleday sat by the open window of his little parlour, the bowl of his churchwarden glowing within, while the shadows gathered without. A placid serenity pervaded him. To be satisfied with one's lot was a guiding principle in life with the vicar, and, as he occasionally indulged in a Latin quotation, he might, in his present tranquil mood, have recalled '*Fortē tua contentus abi*' ('Content yourself with what you have'). The stars were beginning to twinkle in the liquid depths of the clear summer sky; a nightingale preluded from an orchard close at hand; the soft breeze which 'gently kissed the trees' at once soothed and refreshed. How, at such a moment, could he dream that there was trouble in the air, and that a plot had just been hatched against his peace of mind?

Suddenly a step was heard on the garden walk, and a voice exclaimed, 'There you are, uncle! I thought I should find you at your evening pipe.'

'Is it you, my dear Richard?' responded the vicar. 'Come in. You know your way.'

'Rather!' answered Merryweather, who, indeed, seemed very much at home, for when he entered the room he walked straight to a cupboard, and returning with another churchwarden, seated himself near the vicar.

'Now, my dear uncle,' he said, 'I hope you are at leisure for a little conversation.'

'Surely, my dear boy. Let us season our indulgence in the narcotic herb with any discourse you please. It need not be without profit.'

continued the unsuspecting vicar, pointing his little moral, 'because it is an idle moment with us, for

When the smoke ascends on high,
Then we behold the vanity
Of worldly stuff,
Gone with a puff.
Thus think, and smoke tobacco.'

'Very true, uncle; but it isn't about that sort of thing I wish to talk just now. Though I certainly want to consult you about a rather serious matter.'

The phrase 'serious matter' sounded somewhat alarming.

'I hope, Richard,' said the vicar, 'that you have not been getting into any kind of trouble.'

'Not a bit of it,' answered Richard cheerfully. 'I'm only thinking of getting married.'

'Of getting married!' exclaimed the vicar, gazing at him in amazement. 'Only thinking of getting married!'

'Yes,' he replied. 'That's all.'

'But, my dear fellow, marriage is a very serious affair.'

'I know it is. I said so just now.'

Richard struck a match, lit his pipe, then, leaning back in his chair, went on: 'You see, uncle, my view is this. If a young fellow has the means of supporting a wife, he cannot do better than settle down into a quiet, respectable married man.'

'But, my dear boy,' responded Mr Doubleday, slightly alarmed for the second time, 'surely you are quiet and respectable already.'

'Certainly I am,' answered Richard, with a laugh, and a frank confidence in his own respectability which was distinctly reassuring; 'and I think a man who is respectable has as much right to a wife as a man who isn't.'

'You are perfectly right—that is, if a suitable partner can be found for him.'

'Or if he can find a suitable partner for himself.'

'Certainly—certainly! And now, my dear Richard,' said the vicar, his curiosity overcoming his surprise, 'who is she?'

'Suppose you make a guess, before I tell you.'

'How can I make a guess? It is probably some one in your own neighbourhood.'

'Quite right, if you mean Dredgefield. This is my neighbourhood now, you know.'

The vicar's mind roamed for a moment among the rustic maidens of his parish, and came back unsatisfied. 'Really, I am quite at a loss; and, to speak the truth, I am not sure but that a young man with your advantages might—might'—

'Might not do better elsewhere?'

'I confess (without intending to depreciate any of the young women I can think of) that such was my meaning.'

'Well, I have no wish to go farther and fare worse—which I might easily do. Bella Croft is a charming girl, and capable of making an excellent wife for any man as fond of her as I am.'

'Bella Croft!' cried the vicar. 'I never thought of her.'

'Well, now the murder's out, what do you say?'

'Really, I hardly know *what* to say. You have taken me so completely by surprise. She is a very good girl. Quite a superior young woman for her class. If you are satisfied, and have no wish to look higher, I see no reason—no,' reflected Mr Doubleday, 'I do *not* see *any* reason why you should not be very happy with her.'

'My dear uncle,' said Richard, smiling, 'her class is my class—I have no wish to look higher—and I *mean* to be very happy with her. So all that is settled.' Leaning back, he looked upwards to the stars, which were now showing more and more numerous every moment. The song of the nightingale came from the farther side of the tall hedge which separated the little orchard from the garden. Richard could not help pausing a while to contemplate the happiness of which he felt so confident; and the vicar (interested though he was in the subject they were discussing) was relapsing into silent enjoyment of his peaceful surroundings, when his nephew, returning from the stars, suddenly exclaimed, 'And now comes another question. Bella's aunt is a dragon.'

'Miss Brown is certainly a person of decided character,' admitted the vicar, as if decision of character was a dragon's strong point; 'but she is an excellent woman in her way, and has a good heart.'

'Though she wears an uncommonly tough pair of stays over it; eh, uncle?'

'Really, Richard,' cried the vicar, a little shocked, 'what can I possibly know about Miss Brown's stays?'

'I mean her metaphorical stays.'

'Oh,' said Mr Doubleday, recovering himself. 'Of course that is quite another matter.'

'You see,' Richard went on, 'Miss Brown is a deadly enemy to marriage. She thinks we should remain as we are until we all die off, and leave the world fit to live in because there isn't anybody left alive in it.'

'I think even Miss Brown would scarcely go so far as that,' replied the vicar, with a smile.

'Anyhow,' said Richard, 'she's always crying down matrimony, and crying up single blessedness—bless her!' (which meant just the same, and did not shock any one). 'I wished Bella to marry me first, and tell her aunt afterwards; but she wouldn't hear of it.'

'She was right—perfectly right!' said the vicar emphatically.

'Then I wanted to go straight off to Miss Brown, and have it out with her; but Bella thought that too risky. So we hit on a third plan—an excellent plan; and what do you think it was?'

'I am sure I cannot tell.'

'Well, it was about the best way out of the

difficulty any one could have imagined. We fell back on you !'

'Fell back on me !' cried the vicar.

'That's it. We want you to tackle Miss Brown.'

The vicar dropped his pipe, and broke it, but was too much agitated to heed the mishap. 'You want me to tackle Miss Brown !' he gasped. 'To—tackle—Miss—Brown !'

'Yes. *That's* the plan we hit on,' cried his breezy nephew.

'But, my dear boy—upon my word, I—Miss Brown is an awful woman ! I have lived in this parish five-and-thirty years,' protested the vicar, 'and never met her equal. A good woman—a thoroughly good woman, but of so unyielding a temper, she would not hesitate to put down the bishop himself.'

'And sweep the floor with him ?'

'No, no ; I'll not go so far as to say that. But she would suppress him—she would suppress him.'

'Well, you must not let yourself be suppressed. You must march boldly up at the head of your invincible arguments, as a soldier marches up to a battery.'

'But, my dear boy,' replied the old gentleman, with a nervous chuckle, 'I am a man of peace, not a man of war ; I cannot help thinking that a little patience on your part—a little judicious tarrying for some favourable opportunity'—

'Come, uncle, you are not going to desert me in my difficulty ? Don't say that.'

'Desert you ? Certainly not. But the course of true love never *did* run smooth. We have the authority of Shakespeare for that.'

'I know we have. A fellow in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* says it. Lots of things in this world are pretty rough ; but that's no reason why we should leave them to smooth themselves.'

Mr Doubleday considered it creditable in his nephew to know where the quotation came from, and he could not but agree with the latter part of his remark. For a brief instant it occurred to him that he might have suggested it was more the business of these two young persons to smooth out their own difficulties than to trouble him ; but he dismissed the thought as unworthy.

'Well, my dear Richard,' he said, 'I have little hope I can be of use ; but I'll do my best. I fear it is a task beyond my powers—a perfect labour of Hercules ; but you have appealed to my friendship, and I shall not be weighed in the balance and found wanting. As one of our old divines says, "friendship is the allay of our sorrows, the discharge of our oppressions, and the sanctuary of our calamities."'

'Well put ! He must have been a capital fellow. Who was he ?'

'The pious and learned Bishop Taylor, commonly known as Jeremy—his Christian name being Jeremiah, which, in the original Hebrew, signifies "Exalted of the Lord,"' explained Mr Doubleday, with gentle superiority. This time he was not altogether displeased that on his (the vicar's) own special ground his nephew was more of an ignoramus than in the matter of profane literature. These 'little things,' if not absolutely 'great to little man,' count for something.

(Continued on page 444.)

WHAT THE HOUSE IN JAPAN TELLS THE PASSER-BY.

By H. J. BLACK.

PASSING along a street in Europe or America you will not, in the vast majority of cases, be able to obtain the slightest information about the men or the women who reside in the houses. With the exception of a professional brass plate here and there, a number on the door is all.

But in Japan we do things differently. According to police regulations, the entrance to every residence must have a small wooden tablet affixed to it, bearing thereon the name of the street and the number of the house, and another tablet, called *shosatsu*, on which is written the name of the responsible householder.

The *shosatsu* is generally a board two and a half or three inches broad by six to seven inches in length. At better-class houses it is often of white china, the writing being burnt into the glaze. These tablets can be ordered at any shop where crockery is sold, and cost something under a yen (two shillings) according to size. Many people pay a high sum

to have the name inscribed by some specially expert penman, so that the beauty of the characters may attract attention and admiration. Another form which is considered very *chic* is a tablet made of some valuable wood, carved so as to leave the characters in relief.

On moving into a new house the first thing to do is to see that the law is complied with and that the *shosatsu* is fixed on the gate (if the house boasts one) or over the front-door. The name on the *shosatsu* is not always that of the actual head of the household. It is the name of the person in whose name the house is registered and who is responsible to the police or other authorities ; it is often that of an infant child, a younger brother, or other relative.

Marriage customs in Japan differ much from those of other countries. At a wedding, the ceremony of bride and bridegroom drinking the '*San-san-ku-do*'—three times three are nine—cups of *saké*, or, as has now become 'fashionable

of late years, the performance of a ceremony at some Shinto shrine, though considered binding among the people, is not demanded, or recognised, by law. A wedding is not necessary, and very often none takes place. A notification to the ward or district office with request that the bride's name be entered in the family register is all that is needed, and she at once assumes her husband's name; or, in the common case where the groom is married into the bride's family, *he* is notified as having become her husband, and takes his wife's name.

Though the marriage ceremony has taken place with all formality, and the man and the woman are regarded as husband and wife, the registration is sometimes neglected, and the wife continues to bear her maiden name (this because a wife cannot hold property or money, and there can be no marriage settlements). In such cases the marriage is not legal, but can be made so at any time by simply notifying that the marriage took place on the date on which it actually did. At the same time, an apology for remissness is in order. A small fine—seldom more than five yen (ten shillings)—will be inflicted, and the marriage becomes legal.

A man of the upper middle class, known to the writer, was married over forty years ago. He is a speculator with many irons in the fire. It was deemed safer that the house and the property should be in his wife's maiden name, so as to be out of reach of creditors should he come to grief. Children were born, and entered in his family register as love-children, which made them his legal issue. Time passed, until last year the wife fell sick and it was thought she would die. The husband thought it would not be right that she should be buried under her maiden name, so hastened to make the necessary notification, and she for the first time took his name.

Such cases seem strange to a Western mind, but here in Japan they are frequently met with, especially among the middle and lower classes. Therefore many houses bear women's names on the *shosatsu*.

Sometimes, though rarely, the names of other inmates are placed over the door, but there is no police regulation about this, except that boarding-houses have to place their boarders' names outside for all to see.

A person fortunate enough to possess a telephone always has the number proudly displayed over his entrance—generally a small black-lacquered metal tablet with the figures in white. Near this will often be observed a quaint, usually round-shaped, enamelled or painted tin disc, about three inches in diameter. This is the fire insurance mark. Every fire insurance company has its own special metal plate, which is at once nailed to the lintel when a house is insured.

There are always several small pieces of paper pasted over the door; these are placed there by the police. One is to certify that the periodical

Oshoji, or 'Great Cleaning,' has taken place; and perhaps another tells us that the sanitary conditions are satisfactory. What, however, others stand for is known only to the police themselves. That they give secret information about the inmates is certain.


Noticeable over the entrance of many houses are sacred papers bearing the name or the form of some deity. Among those most frequently seen is that of the wolf. These come from a temple situated on the summit of Mount Kumana in Joshu, and are supposed to be a protection against burglars. Another bears a rough picture of two *Nio* (kings), guardians of the gates of many a Buddhist temple. These are to prevent evil spirits from entering the house. A paper with the name of the fire-god, *Akiha-sama*, protects against fire. These and many other charms are to be procured for a small sum at this or that celebrated temple, but there are also home-made charms. A piece of red paper bearing the name of the ancient warrior *Tametome* will keep smallpox from the house. The story goes that when *Tametome* was exiled to an island he prevented the evil spirit *Hosokami*—smallpox god—from landing, and on that occasion so frightened him that the name alone of the doughty soldier is enough to make him keep his distance.

A *shamiji*—a flat wooden spoon used for serving rice—nailed to the door is a preventive of colds. During the late influenza epidemic a paper inscribed with the words 'Hisamatsu is out,' or 'Hisamatsu does not reside here,' was often to be seen pasted over the door. *Hisamatsu* and *O Somé* were lovers who lived many years ago. They were parted by cruel destiny, and ever since their spirits have been seeking for each other. It is believed that *O Somé* brings a cold wherever she enters in her search for the loved and lost one—hence the announcement that he is not within.

The impression of a child's hand, made by blacking the palm with Indian ink and pressing it upon white or red paper, will preserve the child from various kinds of sickness. A sprig of holly nailed to the lintel at the *Setsubun*—a movable festival falling generally in February, when every Japanese adds a year to his or her age, keeps away demons and all evil influences. Belief in charms differs greatly in different places, but the few mentioned will give some idea of their nature. Smile not at the superstition! Remember, even in the British Isles a horse-shoe is supposed to 'bring good luck.'

Formerly it was the rule that if there was a well upon the premises, the fact had to be proclaimed by a square board marked with the character for well—*ido*. This was to show where water could be obtained in the event of fire in the neighbourhood. This regulation may yet be in force in country places, but, owing to water now being laid on in pipes, it has fallen into desuetude in the cities.

Many people belong to some Buddhist or Shinto

koju—society or cult—and if so the fact is announced by a small sign. The most common is that of the 'Fujiko'—Children of Mount Fuji. It can easily be distinguished by the outline of the peerless mountain with the summit painted red. Another, with the mystic *Manji*, , in red, is the sign of the cult of the Buddhist saint Kobu Daishi, founder of the Shigon sect and inventor of the Katakana characters. A tablet bearing a sun-wheel, also in red, denotes the society of Kwannon, goddess of Mercy. It is not necessary to be able to read—a glance at any symbol will tell the passer-by to what cult, if any, the inmates belong. There are many other societies, too numerous to mention. Their chief object is to collect a small sum monthly from the votaries, so as to enable them to send one or

more members each year on a pilgrimage for the benefit of all. And sometimes, in case of necessity, a portion of the fund is used to help a brother in distress.

Conspicuous, also, may frequently be seen the Red Cross, proclaiming that the householder subscribes to that world-wide institution.

When a son is absent, serving in the army or navy, his name is often written up over the entrance; and when he returns, the information is added that he now belongs to such and such an association. A red mark, standing for *yama* or hills, and three wavy lines, representing waves, appropriately denote the navy.

The subject is by no means exhausted, but enough has been said to show that a stroll along a street in Japan may be full of interest and amusement to the most casual observer.

THE PARTS MEN' PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merric Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER XIX.—EN VOYAGE.

FROM a sheltered position on the hurricane-deck Austin Selwyn watched the curtain of night descending on England's coast. Portsmouth, with its thousand naval activities, was already lost to view off the ship's stern; and the Isle of Wight was but a dark margin on the water's edge.

Not a light was to be seen on shore. Like an uninhabited island, England lay in the mingled menace and protection of the sea, while unseen eyes kept their endless vigil.

The vibration from the ship's engines told him she was gathering speed. Impatient of the six days that must elapse before harbour could be reached, he walked to the front of the deck and watched the officers on the bridge peering into the darkness ahead.

When he retraced his steps he could no longer distinguish land. Two searchlights playing on the surface of the water revealed a cruiser steaming silently out to sea.

A feeble star appeared in the sky.

Mid-ocean.

A clear winter sunlight touching the green, swirling water with strands of yellow gold; a wind sweeping the ship's decks, blowing boisterously down companion-ways and along the corridors; a few shimmering snowflakes from an almost cloudless sky; everywhere the vastness of ocean.

And the ship buffeting its way towards the New World.

Mid-ocean.

The City of New York.

Anchored down the bay just after sunset,

Selwyn watched the great metropolis as her form was vitalised with a million lights. From the ship's side it seemed to the eyes watching the birth of New York's night that the buildings had come to the very water's edge to gaze into its depths and see their own reflection.

Here and there in the outline of great buildings a mammoth structure raised its head above all others, losing itself in the foam of light that floated mist-like over the city's towering majesty.

For more than two hours Selwyn remained motionless in the thrill of patriotism. The burst of light challenging the reign of darkness was a symbol to him. The Old World was crouching in darkness, fingering and fearing the assassin's knife. But America was the Spirit of Light.

How many times, he thought, emigrants must have looked on just as he was doing! How many times that sight must have brought hope to weary, discouraged souls that never thought to hope again!

To the idealist returning to his own country, New York was not a citadel guarding the entrance to a Nation, but a gateway opening to the Continent of Opportunity.

CHAPTER XX.—THE GREAT NEUTRAL.

I.

ONE afternoon a tall, heavily built young man entered his house on 128th Street, New York, and after divesting himself of his coat and hat, rubbed his hands in genial appreciation of his own hearth and the exclusion of the raw

outside air. He was dressed in a gray lounge suit, a clerical collar alone denoting his vocation.

'There's a gentleman in your room, Mr Forbes,' said his housekeeper, appearing from the kitchen. 'He said he was an old friend, and would wait.'

'What's his name?'

'Mr Selwyn, sir.'

'Austin Selwyn? By George!' Taking the stairs three at a time, the energetic clergyman burst into the library and advanced with both hands outstretched. 'For the love of Pete!' he ejaculated most unclerically. 'How are you, my boy? Let me have a look at you. Still the same old Sel, eh? A little thinner, I think, and not quite so much hair—humph! Sit down; have that easy-chair; tell me all about yourself. Well, well! This is an unexpected treat.'

The Rev. Edgerton Forbes, who had been looking Selwyn over after the custom of tailors about to offer sartorial advice, ceased his inspection, and shook hands all over again.

'Edge,' said Selwyn, speaking for the first time, 'you can't imagine what your welcome means to me.'

'My dear boy, you never doubted its warmth?'

'Yes I did, old man—after what I've been writing.'

The athletic clergyman laughed uproariously. 'I suppose you're a dyed-in-the-wool Englishman now, and want your cup of tea. Well, I'll join you.—Mrs Perkins.' Going to the door, he gave the necessary orders, and returned, rubbing his hands, and venting his surplus energy in a variety of hearty noises expressive of pleasure at seeing his old friend.

'Now, start at the beginning,' he said, 'and give me everything. The semaphore's up, and there's a clear track ahead.'

'But I want to know about things here first.'

'After you, my son. Put it over now. By the way, that's a nasty scar on your head. How did you get it?'

In a few words Selwyn traced the course of events which had led to his crusade against Ignorance, a crusade which had in an inexplicable way turned particularly against England. He spoke of Doug Watson's letter with its description of the slaughtered German boy, and he told of the air-raid in the moonlight, the climax to his long orgy of idealism. He touched lightly and humorously on his hospital experience, but not once did he mention the inner secret of his heart. To the whole recital Forbes listened with a genuineness and a bigness of sympathy which seemed to belong to his body as well as his mind.

'That is pretty well everything,' said Selwyn. 'I have come back here, humble and perplexed, to try to get my bearings. There have been two men financing my stuff, and they must account to me for the uses to which they have put it. Edge, I was sincere. Not one word was written but I put my very life-blood into it.'

The arrival of tea put a temporary stop to the author's self-revelation, and his host busied himself with his hospitable duties.

Selwyn passed his hand querulously over his face. The clergyman looked at him with a feeling of pervading compassion.

'I was going to ask about Gerard van Derwater,' said Selwyn. 'How is he?'

'Van's very well. He is in the Intelligence Division right here in New York.'

'I heard he was engaged to Marjory Shoreham.'

'Yes—he was. They broke it off a few weeks ago; or, rather, she did.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' said Selwyn earnestly. 'I always liked her immensely, and I was glad that poor old Van had been the lucky suitor. You remember how I used to say that he always carried a certain atmosphere of impending tragedy, although he was never gloomy or moody about it.'

'Well, Austin, I think the tragedy has come.'

'I must see him,' said Selwyn. 'In coming back here, you and he were the two I wanted most to meet. I knew that neither of you would withdraw your friendship without good reason; but also I knew you would tell me bluntly where I stood. Why did Marjory break off with Van?'

The clergyman told what he knew, and at the conclusion of the story Selwyn rose to his feet.

'I must see Van at once,' he said. 'There's more in this than appears on the surface. If you will give me his number, I'll find out when we can get together.'

Receiving the necessary information, Selwyn went downstairs to the telephone, returning in a couple of minutes to the den.

'I just caught him,' he said to his host, 'and I am going to his rooms at nine to-night.'

'Good work. Now sit down and tell me about the English. You'll find me the most attentive audience you ever had.'

II.

It was theatre-time when Selwyn left his hotel and walked over to Broadway. That diagonal, much-advertised avenue of Gotham was ablaze with light. From shop windows, from illuminated signs, from office buildings, street-cars, and motors, the carnival of theatre-hour was lit with glaring brilliancy. Women in all the semi-barbaric costliness with which their sex loves to adorn itself of a night stepped from limousines, with their tiny silvery feet twinkling beneath the load of gorgeous furs and vivid opera-cloaks; while well-groomed men, in the smart insignificance of their evening-clothes, guided the perilous passage of their fair consorts from the motor's step to the pavement.

Momentarily reduced to the democracy of pedestrianism, they would lose themselves in the

surging mob of passers-by—shop-girls on their way to a cinema; rural visitors shocked and thrilled with everything; keen-faced, black-haired Jews speculating on life's profits; sallow-faced, lustrous-eyed girls hungry for romance, imagining every begowned woman to be an adventuress, and every man a Prince Charming; here and there an Irish policeman proving that his people can control any country but their own. Of such threads is woven the pattern of New York's theatre-hour on Broadway.

From sheer inability to stem the traffic, Selwyn stepped into a doorway. On the opposite side of the street a theatrical sign announced that *Lulu* was 'the biggest, most stupendous comedy of the season.' He wondered what constituted largeness in a comedy. Surely not the author's wit? Before he could formulate a solution of the mystery, a great overhead sign suddenly ignited with the searching question,

DO YOU CHEW SWORDSAFE'S GUM?

Hastily detaching his mind from the biggest, most stupendous comedy of the season, he stared at the interrogation of the gum company. It suddenly disappeared, however, and then he saw that, like the goblins who chased the small boy who was lost, the business interests of New York had assumed a violent interest in his personal habits. What underwear did he buy? Did he know that Hotdoor's shaving-soap was used by 76 per cent. of the entire manhood of America? There was only one place humanly conceivable where lingerie could be purchased; to prove it, the illuminated signboard promptly showed a lady in a costume usually confined to boudoirs. To equalise the immodesty of the sexes, a near male neighbour, at a height of two hundred odd feet, did an electrified turn by putting on and taking off a pair of trouser-suspenders.

DO YOU CHEW SWORDSAFE'S GUM?

That was the question. What importance could a mere war have in comparison with that? Blinking in the glare, Selwyn left the doorway and made for Madison Avenue, where Van Derwater's rooms were.

The clocks were just striking nine when he reached the number he wanted, and a negro servant led him upstairs. As Selwyn entered Van Derwater rose from his chair and greeted him with a restrained courtliness that was gentlemanly to a degree, but had an instantly chilling effect on the visitor. It was the room the owner used for lounging or reading, and the only light was the shaded one on the table.

Van Derwater had just passed thirty, but the premature thinness of his hair in front, the listless droop of his heavy shoulders, and the bluish pallor about his firm jaw contrived to make him

appear older than he was. There was a kindliness in the wrinkles about his eyes, and his mouth, though solid, was not lacking in indications of intuitive understanding. It was perhaps the formality of his bearing, the stiffness of his body from the hips, that gave him the air of one who belonged by right to a past and more ceremonious age.

Although Van Derwater encouraged his guest, after the exchange of greetings, to talk of his voyage and its attendant experiences, Selwyn was aware that he was placing a cold impersonal wall between them. His old friend was interested, courteous, intellectually even cordial, but Selwyn knew he was being kept at a distance. He forced the talk to old intimacies—recalled the game when, together, they had crossed Yale's line in the closing moments of the great Rugby match—brought back a host of joint experiences, trivial in themselves, but hallowed by time.

Van Derwater remembered them all. For each one he had the slight smile of his mouth and the quizzical weariness of his eyes, but when the conversation would droop after each outburst of reminiscence, he would not make the least attempt to lift it up again. Finally, being convinced that nothing could come of so bloodless a meeting, Selwyn dropped the impersonal mask.

'I was mighty sorry,' he said, 'to hear that you and Marjory have broken off your engagement.'

'It was her wish: not mine.' His voice was deep and rich, but almost monotonous in its lack of inflection.

'I was talking to Forbes to-day,' went on Selwyn tenaciously. 'He had been to see Marjory.'

'Yes?'

'Marjory told him that you didn't care enough for her to go overseas. I should think she would realise that such a matter concerns you only.'

'Not a bit of it.' For the first time the other's manner showed signs of vitality. 'It means everything to her. She wants to feel that the man she marries is big enough to go and help France. I admire her for it. I wish there were more women with her character.'

Selwyn shifted his chair uneasily. 'But—I don't understand,' he stammered. 'You told her you wouldn't go.'

'Well, what of it?'

'Look here, Van,' said Selwyn vehemently, 'we have been friends for many years. I came to you to-night because my whole career is at a standstill. I want to tell you everything—I must do it—but I can't as long as you withhold your confidence. It isn't curiosity on my part—you know that. I want to bring back the old sense of understanding we once had.'

'You haven't changed,' said Van Derwater, an inscrutable smile playing about his mouth.

'You always had a habit of piercing people's moods, no matter what defence they put up. But if you want candour, I'll tell you frankly I am sorry you came here this evening. I knew that it would be difficult to keep from hurting you, and for old-times' sake I didn't want to do that. As you know, I have never made friends. You and Forbes were the nearest thing to it, and I suppose you two meant more than I would ever care to admit. You might ring the bell over your head. The fire needs more coal.'

As the negro obeyed his master's instructions and stoked the fire into vigour the two friends sat without speaking. Selwyn was mute with apprehension of what he was to hear; the older man was dreading the words he had to utter. To certain strong natures it is more painful to inflict than to receive a wound.

'If you want my story,' resumed the host after the servant had left the room—'and as you are concerned you have a right to hear it—this is how it goes. I went into the diplomatic service. Then I met Marjory. I needn't say what that meant to me. For the first time, I think, I knew what living was. Shortly after came the war. At first I thought that if America remained neutral as a country, it was not up to individuals to quarrel with that attitude. Then came the *Lusitania*. I wanted to go over at once, but hated to suggest it to Marjory. One night, though, to my delight, the plucky little girl mentioned it herself. I hurried back to Washington and offered my resignation, but the chief urged me to remain three months longer, saying that I was absolutely necessary in the reorganisation of a certain branch of the Intelligence Division in New York. To cut the story short, months and months went on, and they refused to release me. As a matter of fact I was directing an investigation into German foreign diplomacy that was of so delicate a nature I dared not mention it to Marjory. At its conclusion I went to Washington and demanded that they let me go. I gave my exact reason. The chief said he would give me a reply in a week, but I told him that no matter what he wrote I would go at the expiration of that time. It was while I was waiting for the answer that Marjory said it rested with me whether or not the engagement was to be broken. I told her that I should be able to state my position in a couple of days. Well, the letter came. Perhaps you had better see it. You can read it to yourself.'

He went to his desk, and searching among the papers, produced a correspondence-form bearing an official stamp. He handed it to Selwyn.

'WASHINGTON, November 2, 1916.

'Personal and Confidential.

'MY DEAR VAN DERWATER,—As a boyhood friend of your father's I have been most anxious

to accede to your request for release from your present duties. I may say that, in my desire to do the fairest thing by you, I went so far as to place the facts of the matter before the President himself. He agreed with me that your services entitled you to every possible consideration; but he also pointed out that the intimate knowledge of our secret diplomacy which you have gained marks you as too valuable a man to let go lightly. I finally secured his consent, but an hour later he sent for me again. It was to talk over a new enemy that has arisen in this fight of the present Administration to weld the conflicting elements of our nation into a single-thinking whole. I refer to the ultra-pacifist section which has grown so large recently.

'You told me once that you knew this fellow, Austin Selwyn. I am sorry to set friend against friend, but his influence over the cultured and pacifist elements has to be met sternly and at once. We cannot take personal action against him, because he is within his rights as a citizen of a neutral country, but nevertheless his writings are proving as strong a disrupting force—stronger, in fact, than many of the clumsier methods employed by subjects of belligerent nations.

'Word has reached us that in all probability this nation will be faced shortly with the most momentous decision of the war. Therefore I must insist that you take charge of the anti-disruptionist propaganda. I shall be in New York next Wednesday, and will discuss with you the methods by which we can stem the tide of disloyal pacifism as exemplified by this man Selwyn.

'We have no hold over you, my boy; but in the name of this great Republic which is struggling against such odds for unification of her national life, I bid you remain at your post. I know that the son of my old friend Colonel Van Derwater will not question an order.—Yours faithfully,
A. WALTER GALLEY.'

As Selwyn finished the letter a flush swept into his cheeks and his jaw stiffened with his old fighting mannerism.

'This is infamous!' he cried hotly. 'Do you accuse me of disloyalty to my own country?'

'I do,' said Van Derwater calmly.

Selwyn's fists clenched with fury. 'Van,' he said, his voice quivering with suppressed passion, 'I may have been blind—I can see where I have injured you and many others—but when you or Galley say that I have been trying to disrupt America, you lie. There is no one more passionately devoted to his country than I.'

'Which is your country?' said Van Derwater.

Through the dim light of the room the eyes of the two men met. Selwyn's were blazing like hot coals; Van Derwater's were cold and steely.

'What have I done,' said Selwyn, twice

checking himself before he could trust his voice, 'but tried to show that war is wrong—that men without quarrel are killing each other now—that every nation has contributed to this terrible thing by its ignorance? What is there in that which merits the name of traitor?'

Van Derwater shrugged his shoulders, and taking a book from the table, idly studied its cover. 'Since the war began,' he said, his tones calm and low, 'the United States has been trying to speak with one voice, the voice of a united people. It was the plain duty of every American to aid the Administration in that. Instead, what have we found? Pro-Germans plotting outrage, and pro-Britishers casting slurs; conspiracy, political blackmailing, financial pressure—everywhere she has looked, this country has found within her borders the factors of disruption. We have fought them all. We have refused to be bullied or cajoled into choosing a false national destiny. At the moment that we seem to have accomplished something—with Europe looking to us for the final decision that must come—you, and others of your kind, contrive to poison the great educated, decent-thinking class that we always thought secure. Your cry of "Peace—peace—at any price let us have peace," has done its work. Consciously or unconsciously, Austin, you have been a traitor.'

Selwyn rose furiously to his feet. 'This is the end of our friendship,' he said, with his voice almost choking, and his shoulders chafing under the passion which possessed him. 'Your chief has chosen to name me as a reason for keeping you in America, and so it is I who have come between you and Marjory. For that I am sorry. But when you question my loyalty to America—that is the finish.'

Van Derwater had also risen to his feet and with the utmost courtesy listened to Selwyn's

outburst. More than ever there was a mystic atmosphere of the Past in his bearing. He might have been a diplomat of the sixteenth century bidding adieu to a thwarted enemy plenipotentiary.

'Austin,' he said, with the merest inclination of his head, and his arms hanging wearily by his sides, 'we live—in difficult times.'

With an angry gesture, Selwyn left the room, and taking his coat and hat from the negro, went again into the street.

Closing his study door, Van Derwater moved slowly to his chair, and lifting his book, opened it. For a long time he gazed at the open page without reading a line. 'Difficult times,' he murmured.

III.

Still in the grip of uncontrollable fury, Selwyn stamped his way through the streets. Colliding heavily with a passer-by, he turned and cursed him for his clumsiness. He cherished a mad desire to return to Van Derwater's rooms and force an apology by violence. He had expected criticism, reproach, even abuse—but that any man should brand him treasonous!

He spat into the gutter, and a sound that was almost a snarl escaped from his throat. He stopped, irresolute, and the wound in his head burst into a violent pain. He leaned against a post until the agony had passed, and once more he made for Broadway. At the sight of his face glowing-red with passion, girls tittered and men drew aside.

Crossing the road, he stood to let a street-car pass, its covered wheels giving an odd resemblance to an armoured car, when an extra burst of light made him look up.

It was the gum advertisement again.

(Continued on page 438.)

NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

THE FEELINGS OF INSECTS.

ACCORDING to the sentiment put into the mouth of Isabella by Shakespeare in *Measure for Measure*,

The poor beetle, which we tread upon,
In corporal suffrance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies.

Your friend the beetle-collector, however, tells you a story of this sort. On one of his beetle-hunting expeditions he captured a remarkably large and fine specimen. He *killed* it in the usual way, and sticking a big pin through it, fixed it in his cabinet along with a few others. On the cabinet being opened a few days afterwards, the big beetle, with the pin still sticking through it, was walking about quite lively. And it had eaten up all the others!

Then there is the story of the wasp. It was feeding in a pot of jelly, when, either accidentally or on purpose, it was cut through at the waist. Unmoved by the loss, it went on calmly imbibing jelly, which, of course, it was now able to do *ad infinitum*.

The following story of a dragon-fly is told in the Transactions of a certain natural history society. Like the wasp above mentioned, it had been cut in two at the waist, and being unable to balance itself, could not fly. The naturalist supplied it with the missing part neatly made of paper, and it flew away as if nothing had happened.

Another naturalist witnessed this little transaction. A spider had caught a daddy-long-legs, and while it was devouring the front half of its capture the other half calmly pursued its occupation of laying eggs!

Crabs are not insects, but the following narrative of three crabs may perhaps not unsuitably be added here. It is related by the Rev. J. G. Wood. A crab was hard at work devouring a smaller crab, when a larger one came along and began to devour the devourer. Crab number one went calmly on with its meal until there was not sufficient of it left to continue the operation!

A WONDERFUL SLUG.

We are all familiar with a number of slugs, a big black one, a small gray one, and others. If we are gardeners we are too familiar with them. But there is another slug which probably not one person in a thousand has ever seen, and the reason of this is that it spends most of its time underground. It is busily engaged in hunting earthworms, which it pursues with great ferocity through their subterranean retreats. Having captured a worm, the slug draws it 'all alive' into its mouth by means of a series of curved and barbed teeth. After a heavy meal of earthworms it becomes lethargic, and remains quies-

cent for a while. Then it starts afresh in pursuit of more earthworms.

It seems a little strange, perhaps, at first sight that if we want to learn about slugs we should have to go to a book on shells—*Our Country Shells and How to Know Them*, or something of that sort. As a matter of fact, however, every slug has its shell. Only, it is very small, and concealed by that part of the animal known as the mantle.

The *Testacella*, as our wonderful slug is called, has a larger shell which is quite visible. It is ear-shaped and stuck on over the hinder part of the animal, which it serves to protect. In very cold weather this slug makes itself a sort of coat of particles of earth cemented together with its slime. In this it rests securely till conditions are more favourable.

The recent floods in the Thames valley seem to have interfered with the underground abode of some of these slugs. And not long ago about a hundred of them were taken by a gentleman in one garden where they had come to the surface.

There are two species of *Testacella* known in Britain.

THE AMAZING MANUSCRIPT.

By J. HURST HAYES.

I.

YOU will remember, of course, how magnificent was the success of the great International Publishers' Congress of 1968, held in the Megaladium Music Hall in London, as the only building big enough to contain the vast assembly of publishers. It was at a *soirée* given at the Hotel Splendide by Sir Bantam Bancock, the distinguished jam-manufacturer, that this most interesting incident occurred. The night was hot, the *soirée* was crowded, and a tired publisher, Dixon by name, made his way from the reception-room into a subsidiary refreshment-room and sank fatigued on to a couch. He lighted a cigarette and glanced at the only other two occupants of the room, who were fellow-rob-publishers, friends of his. 'This Congress will be the death of me,' said Dixon. 'I'm dead-beat.'

'It's absurd to laboriously turn night into day,' commented Musgrave, who barred split infinitives in MSS., but used them in conversation. 'Luckily, I'll soon be out of it all. I don't mind telling you two that in a month's time I am retiring.'

'Retiring?' Dixon looked up amazed.

The third publisher, who wore a small imperial gray beard, was half-French, and ran a thriving business in the Rue Tronchet in Paris, turned a quick head. 'But—that is curious. So am I!' he said.

'And—and I!' exclaimed Dixon.

'Most extraordinary!' remarked Musgrave. 'The heads of three of the oldest publishing-houses in Europe retiring at the same moment! There will be a convulsion in the trade. May I ask, Dixon, *why* you are giving up?'

Dixon went to the door, which was slightly ajar, and closed it. 'Well, you are both friends, and I don't see why you should not know. I speak to you in absolute confidence.'

'Of course.'

'I am not the wealthy man I dare say I am imagined to be,' Dixon began. 'I have deliberately published too many interesting failures for that. But in a very short time I expect, indeed I am certain, to have enormously increased the small fortune I have made. To-morrow morning my great *coup* is coming off—the greatest literary *coup* of the last hundred years.'

Bénier, the French publisher, looked at him suspiciously. '*Coup*? What *coup*? ' he asked.

'The publication of the most remarkable book that has ever appeared. No, don't look like that. I am stating a mere fact. Let me give you the history of the book, and you can judge.' Dixon looked contentedly up at the ceiling. 'One day in the year 1918 my father, then head of the firm, called me into his *sanctum sanctorum* and spoke as follows: "Ernest, I am about to entrust you with a secret. By the time it is possible to reveal it I shall be dead, but you or your son will be alive to profit by it." He pointed to the safe. "In that safe, in a green-coloured box, is a manuscript which I received

yesterday, and which I perused all last night. It is a world's masterpiece, absolutely epoch-making. It is the work of a common English soldier, an ignorant man, with the Belgian mud of the trenches still on him, but in self-revelation, frankness"—

Musgrave rose from his chair excitedly. 'I won't hear another word you're saying, Dixon,' he exclaimed. 'You're making a fool of me.'

'What do you mean? I am making no fool of you.—My father continued: "Yesterday this soldier came into my office. He was slightly wounded, his arm bound up, and he was on short sick-leave from the front. He threw the manuscript down on the desk there, saying, 'There's a book about fighting for you, and it tells you what war and fighting really are. I'm sick o' the trash you read in magazines. Publish this, and it'll make people think a bit before they start another war.' The only stipulation he has made—a curious enough one—is that the MS. shall not be published before 1968—that is, until he himself is dead. 'In fifty years' time men will have forgotten and want to start scrappin' again. Publish this and I'm damned if they will!' he said. Ernest, the manuscript is amazing—elemental, direct. Every sentence a clod of mire flung against a wall and sticking. It isn't like writing. It is just as though one were in the fight one's self, seeing the bestial sights, smelling the vile smells"—

Bénier had risen and was standing before Dixon. His voice was curiously strained.

'Dixon,' he said, 'I do not wish to lose my temper, but you know quite well that you are describing the very book I am bringing out next Friday. It came to my father in practically the circumstances you have described. It is called *La Guerre et un Poilu*, and is written in French. Who has given away my secret of course I don't know, but'—

Bénier felt a hand on his shoulder, and Musgrave addressed the two, an angry look on his face. 'Given away *your* secret?' he laughed. 'I don't know what the little scheme is between you two. Humorous, no doubt; but for the moment I don't appreciate the humour. In a fortnight I bring out on an astonished world *How Men Die Fighting: The Astounding Diary of a Lance-Corporal in the Great War of 1914-18*. The genesis of the book you have fairly accurately described. The writer of it was killed near St Quentin'—

'Near La Fère.'

'On the contrary, by a shell at Cambrai,' said Dixon. 'A sergeant in his regiment wrote to tell me.'

The three men were all on their feet, forming a voluble triangle in the centre of the room, when a quiet, gentlemanly voice from the doorway suddenly remarked, 'You are all three wrong, gentlemen. The author wasn't killed at all.'

The publishers, rather shamefacedly, drew apart and glanced at the doorway, to see their host, Sir Bantam Bancroft, standing there with a genial smile on his face.

'I'm sorry, Bancroft,' Musgrave remarked. 'We didn't notice you. We were discussing a point—of common interest.'

'Of uncommon interest,' said the jam-manufacturer. 'I've been in the room for the last three minutes, and you—discuss—so loudly.'

'Then you heard what we said?'

'I did; but as a matter of fact I didn't need to, because I knew all about it beforehand.'

'But that's impossible!' exclaimed Dixon.

'Let me show you that it isn't. I'll take the precaution to lock the door, and the wild rabble without can discuss copyright laws to their hearts' content. Do sit down, and do smoke.'

He passed across a box of cigars as they collapsed into chairs.

II.

'You won't mind my saying it, Bancroft,' said Bénier, a little brusquely, 'but I do not see that you have any *locus standi* in this matter.'

'I want to convince you that I have. Listen to me, please.' Sir Bantam rolled the end of his cigar comfortably in his mouth and began. 'I am seventy-one years of age now, but once I was only one-and-twenty. At that time I was a schoolmaster in a Gloucestershire village, with an intense hatred of the Great War and a fondness for a whole host of food commodities which were not to be had. In that year I was conscripted. I had flat feet and deplorable eyesight, but in those latter days of the war, to have feet and eyes at all was an asset of national value.'

'Won't your guests be expecting you?' Dixon asked, with a yawn.

'They must wait till I become interesting to a few of them here,' said Bancroft. 'I had another asset, invaluable to myself, if not to the army—a large stock of imagination and a capacity to spell and write ordinary simple English. At the base camp in France, where I was sent after various short sojourns in camps in Great Britain, I made use of that asset. My job in the army was to look after two Sowyer stoves and to appear busy when I wasn't. My spare time I passed in a Y.M.C.A. hut composing on their notepaper what I believe three experienced publishers have declared within the last ten minutes to be an epoch-making masterpiece.'

'In Heaven's name, what do you mean?' cried Musgrave.

'Precisely what I say,' answered his host, in a louder, more aggressive tone. 'I wanted money badly, and saw a way of making it. Local colour was at hand by the barrowful. Wounded Tommies who had been through hell in the trenches—all their chatter went down afterwards on Y.M.C.A. notepaper. touched up

a bit, but never toned down. Oh, the language was lurid and elemental enough.'

Dixon shuffled uneasily, and Bancroft went on: 'One copy I got put into French and touched up by a *poilu* who was convalescing near Havre, and who did me the kindness to die just when it was completed. Armed with the others, I stormed the offices of your fathers, Dixon and Musgrave, on a seven days' leave which I got at the end of six months.'

Bancroft laughed heartily, and Musgrave exclaimed, 'I don't believe a word of this!'

'I think you do,' said Bancroft, 'but you needn't if you don't want to.—The interviews were amusing, and I've often wondered if the stage wasn't really my *métier*. I was splendidly dressed for the part: arm in a sling, gas-helmet, London mud on me—which is as good as Belgian any day—and one or two odd German trophies. I don't wonder your fathers were deceived.'

'But if it was money you were after, why didn't you get it published then?' asked Dixon.

'How could I? The Censor wouldn't have allowed it; little slips I must have made would have been noticed. I'd have been spotted. Above all, I shouldn't have been able to bind to secrecy three publishers and get spot-cash money out of each of them.—I got a hundred pounds from your father, Dixon, didn't I?'

'I don't remember the amount.'

'You got a hundred and fifty from mine,' said Musgrave.

'And from Bénier père for the copy posted from Havre pretty nearly the equivalent in francs, addressed to me at the house of my French collaborator. Oh, it was great!'

At his merry chuckle Bénier went up to him and shook a rather melodramatic fist in his face. 'Host or no host of ours,' he said, 'you're a rogue, Sir Bantam Bancroft.'

'A scoundrel!' added Dixon.

'Harsh words,' commented Bancroft; 'yet from the proceeds of my little ruse I was enabled the following year to start my fruit-farm, and to become—well, what I am.'

'I suppose you see what this means to us—to me,' said Dixon. 'It means that to-morrow I put the firm's name to a colossal fraud. I cannot possibly stop publication, and I—I shall be the laughing-stock of the publishing world.'

'Let us consider if that is inevitable,' said Bancroft; 'and do please sit down again.'

III.

Bancroft paused a moment, and then went on: 'Supposing now the actual situation were as follows: A jam-manufacturer, knighted for his philanthropy in the past and reputed to be rich, is in reality, through foolish speculation, very hard put to it to find a few thousand pounds to tide him over a crisis in his affairs. In his youth he has perpetrated a mild literary fraud; and one night, when he is in his sere and yellow

leaf, he is the host of three eminent publishers, from whom he learns that the fraud is on the point of being consummated. He proposes the following course to them: that of the three manuscripts only one shall be published; that the profits—I venture to think enormous—shall be divided among the three; and that the jam-manufacturer, as a slight reward for keeping his mouth shut, shall receive the sum of five thousand pounds.'

'Do you really imagine we would do such a thing?' said Musgrave, turning a glance of contempt on the speaker.

'Can you stop the publication of your copy of the MS.?' Bancroft asked Dixon.

'It's too late. You know I can't.'

'So that you will net the whole profits, and poor Bénier and Musgrave, who cannot publish duplicates of it, will'—— He threw up an expressive hand.

Dixon will, of course, appreciate our position,' said Bénier, a little nervously. 'The book is as much ours as his. I quite see he can't stop publication—but'——

'He'll do the proper thing,' Musgrave added.

'And that is?' asked Bancroft.

'Share the profits,' said Musgrave sullenly.

The jam-manufacturer looked inexpressibly shocked. 'What! share the profits of a fraud?' he said.

'It's not my fault I am publishing it first,' said Dixon.

'Gentlemen, your morals are collapsing,' commented Bancroft. 'And let me tell you, if you do publish that book—except on my very moderate terms—I'll let the whole press know that the night before it came out you were perfectly well aware that it was a fake, and the work of a man who had never seen a cartridge fired in anger in his life.'

'Of all the scandalous tricks!' said Musgrave.

'And what can I possibly do—now?' exclaimed Dixon.

'Do! Go to the telephone here, ring up the Associated Press, and tell them to have inserted underneath the critique of the book in each paper a note to say that the book has just been discovered to be a fraud.'

'You know I can't do that. A pretty fool I'd look! In a fortnight perhaps'——

'When you'll have sold about twenty thousand copies and made a nice profit. You'll appear a nice honest publisher if I tell the public that in my letter. No; you can choose—the telephone or my silence and my terms. The book's worth anything. It's a gold-mine, and you know it.'

Bancroft walked across to the buffet at the end of the room, and the three publishers drew together. He heard them discussing in low, earnest terms, and he hummed a pleasant tune to himself, conscious of a certain aloofness from their proceedings. At the end of three or four minutes they came towards him, and Musgrave

remarked, 'We'd be fools to trust to your silence.'

Bancock laughed. 'At the same moment that you gentlemen hand me the cheque, I will hand you a signed statement declaring precisely for what services I have received the cheque,' he said. 'That should ensure my silence, I think.'

Again they drew aside and spoke together. Again they came forward. Dixon made himself their spokesman. His eyes were on fire. 'Bancock,' he said, 'you're just about the biggest rogue unhung. But you've got us in a corner, and know it. You—you shall have your cheque to-morrow morning.'

Bancock helped himself to some fruit salad made from fruit from his own farm. He laughed contentedly. The three marched to the door, and Bancock opened it for them. The sound of a band came from the corridor. 'Delightful musicians those Russians, aren't they?' he remarked.

Bancock went into the empty room again before rejoining the throng. Picking up a napkin from the table, he wiped his hands on it and looked up at the ceiling.

'Now, supposing I really *had* written that manuscript,' he murmured.

CUBA AND ITS MARKETS.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRITISH ENTERPRISE.

By C. N. BARHAM.

THE level lands of Cuba vary in altitude from 10 to 300 feet above sea-level. The island is traversed by a range of hills and mountains, the greatest altitude of which is attained by the Sierra Maestra Range, which commences at the eastern end of the island and extends to Cape Cruz, with an average elevation of 3500 feet.

The island lying just within the northern tropical zone, the climate of the low-lying coastlands is that of the torrid zone, but a temperate climate prevails in the interior. Rain falls, more or less, every month of the year; but the wet season proper is from the beginning of May to October. Winter, which prevails from November to April, is the dry season. The mean average temperature of January is 70.3° F., and that of July 80.4°. The mercury rarely falls below fifty in winter, or rises above ninety in summer. The average annual rainfall for the past thirty years has been fifty-four inches; the prevailing winds are the north-east trade winds, which blow with a velocity of eight miles an hour for about 300 days in the year. Tornadoes frequently originate in the Caribbean Sea and travel in a north-westerly direction through the Yucatan Channel. These tornadoes occasionally ravage the western end of the island, but are not experienced in the east.

Habana, the capital and principal city of the Republic of Cuba, is representative of the life and industrial conditions in the country. The city is the headquarters of banking, railways, and coast and transoceanic navigation; it is also the centre of the larger and more important commercial and industrial enterprises, although these extend their operations over the entire island. The city, which dates from 1515, is one of the earliest towns established by Europeans in the Western Hemisphere. The city proper—the old city—was founded on three coral-reefs, and its distinguishing features are the narrow streets,

which were evidently constructed for strategical defence.

Habana was formerly a centre of fever, owing to these narrow streets, crowded buildings, lack of drainage, disregard of the laws of sanitation, and an inadequate supply of water. Most of these drawbacks have now been overcome, largely in consequence of United States efforts and influence, with the result that Habana is one of the healthiest cities in the world, boasting of good paving, a satisfactory sewage system, and an abundant supply of good water.

The most important source of wealth in Cuba is the sugar industry, which has for many years furnished a considerable percentage of the exports. In 1915-16 the production of sugar on the island amounted to 3,006,624 tons, and as the Central Powers can no longer supply the world with this commodity, and our own West Indian supply is limited, the Cubans practically control the market. High prices have stimulated production, and provided owners with capital for the erection of mills and the installation of new machinery. These mills are constructed of steel frames and concrete, or of reinforced concrete, and are roofed with corrugated iron or asbestos lumber, thus defying the white ants, which were destructive to the old-fashioned wooden mills.

A general impression prevails among those who do not possess an intimate knowledge of Cuba or of the trade conditions obtaining there that the island is under the domination of the United States in commercial matters, and almost exclusively buys from and sells to that country. This is a mistake. Although United States influence is powerful, there are indications that it is to an extent on the wane. Cuban buyers, who during the war found it either advantageous or necessary to obtain supplies from their great neighbour, are now inviting competition from abroad, because of their inclination to use certain

types of machinery and material, and because, as a rule, credit is more generous and better organised.

The Cubans pay more attention to quality than they formerly did; hence better-class materials find a readier market than lower grades. In the recent extensive new installations of sugar machinery, and in the improvements now being made in the mills, purchasers act on the principle that quality counts for more than first cost. If, then, British suppliers will gain the confidence of importers by giving them exactly what they demand, a profitable market may be secured. The necessary steps must, however, be taken at once, or the United States will not be the only competitor in the field; for signs are not wanting to show that Germany will make strenuous efforts to regain its overseas trade. The works of Krupp are already turning out immense quantities of machinery, and awaiting opportunities for supplying it on favourable terms.

In the past British goods were beaten in Cuba and in Latin American markets generally by the Germans, not because German goods were preferred, but because British manufacturers too often attempted to impose their wares upon the market, instead of trying to meet the demands, as the Central Powers assiduously did; and the result was that Germans and Austrians undersold British goods, supplying inferior materials, which, however, met the immediate market. At the same time, Cubans preferred British goods, and while the rate of increase in the trade with the United States exceeded the rate of increase with Germany, it was lower than in the trade with the United Kingdom. For example, between 1912 and 1913 the trade with the United States in steel and iron goods increased roughly by 20 per cent.; the rate of increase in the trade with Great Britain was roughly 40 per cent. in the same commodities.

In 1914 there was a tremendous fall in the United States trade in steel goods with Cuba. In 1915 German trade had ceased, British trade had fallen one-half, while imports of French steel and iron dropped by over 66 per cent., and the United States had the market to itself, but showed little advance on the business done in pre-war days. It is unnecessary to labour the point; the figures for practically every trade indicate a strong but not an increasing United States influence, and a fairly ready market for the products of other countries.

The demand for new sugar-mills has accentuated the need for structural steel and iron. Investigations show that during 1915 fully 90 per cent. of the structural steel imported into Cuba was used in connection with sugar-mill construction. Now that conditions are becoming normal, there is likely to be an increase of trade in that direction, and the following figures, which have been collected privately, but which have received official approval, may be of interest.

During the period commencing 31st July 1914 and ending 31st August 1916 exactly 298 individual grinders for Cuban sugar were sold. Allowing five grinders to a group of the complete grinding unit, about sixty complete sets were installed. Each of these sets of five, complete with a crusher, cost over £5000. In new mill construction the crushing machinery and rolls usually represent from one-sixth to one-fourth of the cost of the plant when ready for operation, and it is estimated that one-fourth of the sixty complete grinding-sets were installed in new mills in which their cost represented one-sixth of the finished plant. The total new investment of these fifteen mills would, therefore, be about £460,000. Another fourth of the complete sets were installed in mills where the cost of the grinding-set would roughly represent one-fourth of the cost of work done on the plant, and the investment on these fifteen plants would amount to some £300,000, making a total for the thirty plants of at least £760,000. The value of the balance is not estimated. However, the mills with these thirty new grinding-sets, on a basis of 400 tons of steel per mill, used approximately 12,000 tons of steel. It is calculated that a similar amount was used in making extensions and necessary changes to house those machines which were installed in mills already established. This would show a total of 24,000 tons of structural steel-work in the period of twenty-five months for which the records were kept; and it must be remembered that this steel was principally imported. There is the market, but although Cuban buyers may be favourably disposed to consider the offers of British suppliers, they cannot afford to pay higher prices than those quoted by United States exporters.

SUMMER'S TRIUMPH.

COMES the radiant summer-time;
Sorrow's past, and pain;
Fairest things are in their prime;
Summer comes again!

Where the land lay numb with frost
Blossoms sweet we find;
Joy returns we thought was lost;
Hope awakes within the heart;
Friends have met that thought to part;
Soft the breeze that blows—O wind,
The distance beckons; hope's before;
Anguish lies behind!

See where gloomed the thunder-cloud
Throned the sun in might;
Vanquish'd terror; dread's dispelled;
Shades of storm and night.
Where the sunlit vapours crowd
On heav'n's loftiest parapet,
High the gracious bow is set.

Soft the wooing south winds blow;
Fair the flowers are springing;
And, oh, how does the heart o'erflow
At the voice of the children singing!

HILDA SKAE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE RIFLE-THIEVES.

By C. G. NURSE.

I.

THE stolen rifle is to the Pathan 'what the horns are to the buffalo, or what deceit is to the Bengali,' if one may be permitted to paraphrase a well-known passage in Macaulay's *Essays*. Across the border a good weapon will fetch at least its weight in rupees; and cartridges, or even their empty cases, are sold there at many times their original cost. The orders regarding the care of arms and ammunition in India are very strict, and any infringement of the regulations is severely dealt with. But the demand for modern rifles among the transfrontier Pathans is so constant that the military authorities and the police are kept continually on the alert to prevent their being smuggled across the border. A fine of five hundred rupees is exacted from the battalion or the company concerned in case of a rifle being lost, and if a rifle-thief is captured he usually receives a long term of imprisonment.

Rifle-thieves resort to all sorts of devices. One of the commonest of these is for a man to strip himself to his loin-cloth, grease his body well, and sneak into a tent or a guardroom during the night, in the hope of securing a much-coveted weapon. It is dangerous work, as, if the intruder is detected, he may pay for his temerity with his life; but such attempts are frequently made, and are occasionally successful. Various safety arm-racks have been devised, with the result that rifle-stealing has become more difficult of recent years; but as a successful night's work may bring in more than a year of honest labour, men are always to be found who are ready to take great risks in the hope of success. The chief hunting-grounds of rifle-thieves are, of course, the stations on or near the north-western frontier, but regiments quartered several miles inland are, especially if they contain a Pathan element in their ranks, by no means immune from their attention.

II.

Some years ago I was stationed at Jubbulpore, in the Central Provinces, in command of a native regiment, which consisted of Punjabi Mohammedans, Sikhs, and Pathans. Jubbulpore is some 800 miles from the frontier, and, as the Indian railway police are tolerably alert and efficient, it would be no easy matter to take a rifle such a distance without detection. I had, therefore,

no particular anxiety regarding the eight or nine hundred rifles for which I was officially responsible, more especially as I knew that the regulations for the care of arms were duly carried out. I was consequently somewhat taken aback when my adjutant came to my quarters early one morning and said, 'I am sorry to disturb you, colonel, but I have just received a report that a rifle has disappeared from the quarter guard.'

'What company is on guard?' I inquired.

'One of the Sikh companies.'

'All right. I'll come down to the lines with you as soon as I am dressed, and we will see what we can find out about it.'

The loss of a rifle necessitates a number of reports, chiefly by telegram, to various authorities, and I decided that before reporting the matter I would satisfy myself that the rifle had really been stolen, and not merely hidden away. The Indian native soldier has, with all his virtues, a few little weaknesses, and one of them is that, if he can get into trouble some one against whom he has a grudge, he will not hesitate to do so, even at some risk to himself. There had been a little ill-feeling among the Sikhs about some recent promotions, and I thought it quite possible that some one might have hidden the rifle in order to spite one of the N.C.O.'s of the guard. The Sikhs, like other folk, have their failings, but rifle-stealing is not one of them; they hold themselves aloof from the Mohammedans, and hate the Pathans especially. The Sikh is in many respects the Scotsman of the East; he fights well, has strong religious feelings, likes his 'wee drappie,' and is careful of his money. But he has all the Oriental love of intrigue, and often evinces considerable jealousy of a more fortunate comrade, even if he belongs to his own race.

When I reached the quarter guard, my suspicion that the rifle had been hidden away was strengthened when I found that the havildar of the guard was a recent promotion named Bhagwant Sing. He was a fine, black-bearded man about thirty years of age, and had received advancement over several of his seniors owing to his smartness and general capacity. An inspection of the quarter guard showed that the lock and the chain used to fasten into the arm-rack the rifles of the men not actually on sentry-duty were in good order. It was the part of the

havildar to keep the key in his possession, and either he or the naik should, at every relief of the sentries, unfasten the rifles of the new relief, and lock up those of the men coming off duty. When I questioned him, the havildar seemed a little nervous, and I thought that some of his replies were unsatisfactory.

The missing rifle belonged to a sepoy named Sakat Sing, and I consequently inquired, 'What were Sakat Sing's hours of duty?'

'He was on sentry from midnight till 2 A.M.'

'Then he would come on duty again at 6 A.M.?'

'Yes, *huzür*; it was at that time that he reported that his rifle had disappeared.'

Sepoy Sakat Sing was a young man of perhaps a couple of years' service, well set up, but a bit of a rustic. From his replies to my questions I felt convinced that he was concealing something, but whether he was trying to shield the havildar or himself I could not for the moment decide. The examination of native witnesses is always a tedious matter; but I was fully accustomed to weigh their evidence, and after examining and cross-examining the men of the guard, I came to the conclusion that there had been some neglect as regards locking up the rifles at the time of each relief, and that the men coming off duty had merely placed them in the arm-rack until they were again required.

One fact emerged—namely, that the rifle had certainly disappeared between the hours of 2 A.M. and 6 A.M. Whether it had been actually stolen remained to be proved, for none of the witnesses had seen any unauthorised person in the vicinity of the guardroom. I was still inclined to the theory that it had merely been hidden somewhere; but, in any case, if it had been stolen, the thief must have a very good knowledge of our regimental routine. I therefore decided to have a thorough search made of the lines and their environs, and ordered the 'Fall in' to be sounded, as by this time the ordinary hot-weather parade was over. When the men assembled on the parade-ground, I called up the native officers, explained matters to them, and gave the necessary instructions. There was no lack of energy in carrying out my orders, as the loss of a rifle concerned the whole regiment, and if it were not recovered every man would have to contribute, in proportion to his pay, to make up the Government fine. Moreover, the desire for advancement is very strong in the ranks of a native regiment, and every sepoy felt that if he were fortunate enough to discover the lost rifle, it might lead to the first step on the ladder of promotion. The lines were carefully searched, wells were dragged, and even the precincts of the regimental mosque and *dharma-sala* (Sikh temple) were examined by Mohammedan and Sikh native officers respectively. But the rifle was not discovered, and I felt compelled to discard my theory of its having been concealed in favour of the alternative one of theft.

III.

The regimental hospital was a substantial brick building, situated about a hundred yards from the nearest portion of the lines, and surrounded by a barbed-wire fence, consisting of three strands, rather wide apart. This fence, though sufficient to keep out wandering cattle, would not prevent the ingress or egress of a man, though any one attempting to pass through it would risk tearing his clothes. The N.C.O. detailed to search the hospital brought me a single native shoe, of the pattern worn in the Punjab, which he said he had found beside the fence, and also a piece of cotton material which had been impaled on the barbed wire close at hand. I examined the shoe, which, though slightly worn, was in too good a condition to have been thrown away intentionally, and placed it with the piece of material in the regimental office. I did not think that they could have any bearing on the case, but it did not seem advisable to neglect any possible clue.

It was the middle of the hot season, and after spending a long morning investigating the case, and getting through my ordinary routine work, I returned to my bungalow about 1 P.M. thoroughly tired. My orderly, a Punjabi Mohammedan sepoy named Mahomed Khan, while assisting me to divest myself of my sword-belt in the veranda, asked for leave to go for a few hours into the native town. I gave him the required permission, and he said he would be back in the evening. Mahomed Khan was a curious and interesting personality. Standing about six feet three, spare but muscular, he was, in spite of his thirty-eight years, one of the most active men in the regiment. He was among the most efficient of the regimental scouts, and his natural intelligence was of a high order, though lack of education had stood in the way of his promotion. In the evening he returned, and asked to speak to me in private.

'Well, Mahomed Khan, what is it?' I inquired.

'*Huzür, nit pukra*' ('Your honour, I have caught a thread'—that is, found a clue).

'What do you mean?' I asked.

'Sahib, I have found out something in connection with the rifle that disappeared. Have I your permission to tell the tale?'

'Without doubt. But a story is better told sitting than standing. Be seated.'

Mahomed Khan squatted on the floor close to my chair, and proceeded as follows: 'The sahib has had much trouble to-day about the case of the rifle, and I thought that I would try to help in the matter by doing some investigation on my own account. There is in the bazaar a small tea-house, which is kept by an old Punjabi woman. The heart of a man often hankers after the special food of his native country, and a good many men of the regiment, both Punjabis and Pathans, frequent the tea-shop from time to

time. I went there this afternoon, and, as I arrived early, there was no other customer in the shop, so I began talking to the old woman, whom I have known for a long time. When her tongue began to be loosened I mentioned the names of some of my acquaintances, and asked if they had been there lately. Then I asked her if there were many Pathans among her customers, and she replied that a few came, and I got her to name some of those that she knew. One of the men named by her was Mahomed Hâyat, who took his discharge before your honour got the command.

"But," I said, "he left the regiment some time ago. Is he still here?"

"The old woman replied, "Oh yes; he came in for some tea this morning, and I noticed that he had on only one shoe. He had, moreover, cut his wrist, and I bound it up for him. Those Pathans are always up to some mischief!"

"I did not say any more, fearing to rouse her suspicions, and as soon as I had drunk my tea I came here to report to your honour."

"That may be of some importance," I said. "I suppose you have heard of a shoe having been found near the hospital this morning?"

"Yes, sahib; and that is why I hastened back, so that your honour might give an order for the arrest of Mahomed Hâyat, who was always a bit of a scoundrel."

"Not so fast," I said; "we have no proof against him, and, moreover, the shoe found near the hospital was a Punjabi shoe, and not of the shape usually worn by Pathans."

"Huzur, many Pathans wear Punjabi shoes when they are away from their own country, as shoes of the Pathan pattern are difficult to obtain in India."

Mahomed Khan seemed to be proving himself a regular Sherlock Holmes; but natives love gossiping, so I cautioned him to say nothing to any one about what he had found out. I then went down to the lines to see if I could ascertain why Mahomed Hâyat, if he were really concerned in the theft, should visit the hospital. I determined to take into full confidence the subadar major, a fine specimen of the best type of native officer, who was thoroughly able and trustworthy. I told him what Mahomed Khan had reported, and he confirmed the statement that Pathans often wear Punjabi shoes when away from their own country. He remembered a man named Mahomed Hâyat, who had formerly served in the regiment, but admitted that he knew nothing against him. As regards the question why he should visit the hospital, he reminded me that the N.C.O. in charge of the hospital stores for that month was a Pathan named Zaidulla.

Although, so far, we had no actual proof against any one, the facts already ascertained gave us a fairly satisfactory framework on which to base our plans. The only train for the north left about 7 P.M., and we at once sent down

to the station a couple of sepoy, who knew Mahomed Hâyat by sight, with orders that if he appeared on the platform they were to inform the railway police, with a view to having his baggage searched. But the subadar major inclined to the opinion that the rifle was still secreted somewhere, and if so I deemed it probable that the thief would make no attempt to remove it until the hubbub caused by its disappearance had subsided. It seemed quite likely that if Havildar Zaidulla had had any hand in the matter, it might be secreted somewhere in the hospital, where he had a separate room. To make a special search then would certainly have the effect of putting him on his guard, and we therefore decided to have the hospital compound watched for the next few nights. I gave the subadar major a free hand to select men for the purpose, and next morning paid a visit to the district superintendent of police, and arranged for a detective to shadow Mahomed Hâyat.

IV.

Meanwhile the regiment was engaged in scouring every likely place in the country surrounding the lines, in the hope of discovering the lost rifle. When I returned to the regimental office, Major K., the second in command, greeted me with the news that it had been found. His genial face beamed with satisfaction as he imparted the welcome information, for he had served twenty years in the corps, and its honour was as his own. It appeared that some of the sepoy engaged in the search had noticed a spot in the dry bed of a watercourse where the surface showed signs of having recently been disturbed, and, pushing sticks into the sand, came across something hard, which turned out to be the lost rifle. This they brought to Major K., who, with great good sense, caused the sand and gravel to be replaced carefully over the spot where the rifle had been found, and left a couple of men to watch the place from a distance, with a view to arresting the thief should he come to remove his booty.

An additional fact had come to light which helped to account for the shoe found near the hospital fence. On the day when the theft of the rifle was discovered, two men of the regiment came to the subadar major and stated that, after having answered to their names at the evening roll-call on the previous night, they had gone to visit some friends in the cavalry lines (they had probably been gambling), about half a mile distant. When returning in the early hours of the morning, in order to be present at reveille, on passing the hospital compound they had noticed a man getting through the fence. As soon as he saw them he took to his heels, and disappeared in the direction of the bazaar. They had said nothing about it at the time, as they did not wish to call attention to the fact that they had absented themselves without leave

during the night; but when they heard of the discovery of the shoe, they came forward voluntarily, in the hope that their disregard of orders might be overlooked in return for the information they could give.

I sent for my most trustworthy Pathan native officer, and questioned him regarding Mahomed Hāyat, who, I learned, when he was in the regiment, had been a friend of Zaidulla. The native officer seemed much surprised to hear that Mahomed Hāyat was now living in the bazaar, as he felt certain that, on taking his discharge, he had returned to his own country.

During the course of the day I had a visit from the detective whose services had been placed at my disposal by the district superintendent of police. He informed me that Mahomed Hāyat was still in the native town; that he was not, so far as could be ascertained, doing any work; and, further, that he was wearing a new pair of shoes, and had his wrist bound up. Although I was now convinced that he had been concerned in the theft of the rifle, the evidence at my disposal would have been quite insufficient to secure his conviction, and the exercise of patience was, therefore, necessary. The watch on the hospital and the place where the rifle had been discovered was consequently continued for the next few nights, all details being left to the subadar major. I carefully avoided mentioning the matter of the rifle to the other native officers and men, hoping to give them the idea that I was quite satisfied with the recovery of the weapon, and thus conceal the net that was being spread. A few days later, when I arrived at the lines, the subadar major reported as follows: '*Huzūr*, Mahomed Hāyat is a prisoner in the guardroom, and I have placed Havildar Zaidulla under arrest.'

I inquired what had happened, and he called up the N.C.O. who had been placed in charge of the men detailed to keep the hospital under observation. The N.C.O.'s story was as follows.

'Last night, at about midnight, I was sitting under the banyan-tree outside the regimental office, watching the hospital, according to orders. It was bright moonlight, and I saw a man coming towards the hospital from the direction of the bazaar. He entered the hospital compound, and went to the door of Havildar Zaidulla's quarters. The door was opened, and he went inside, and remained there for nearly an hour. Meanwhile, with two of the men under me, I had taken up a position nearer the hospital, and when the man came out we followed him.'

'Did he come out alone?' I inquired.

'Yes, *sahib*, he came out alone, and proceeded along the road towards the cavalry lines. We kept him within sight, and followed him to the dry watercourse where the rifle was found a few days ago. He commenced to dig in the sand, and we closed upon him and captured him.'

'Did he make any resistance?' I asked.

'He struggled a bit, but we were three strong

men, and the men watching the spot also came up, so he had no chance to get away. We lodged him in the guardroom, and reported to the subadar major.'

The evidence against Mahomed Hāyat seemed now pretty conclusive, but as he was no longer serving as a soldier he was not subject to my jurisdiction. I consequently handed him over to the civil police, and consulted the native barrister who acted as Government prosecutor as to whether there was sufficient evidence to connect Havildar Zaidulla with the case. He informed me that the evidence was quite insufficient for this, and I was reluctantly obliged to concur in his opinion.

The police search of the room in the bazaar occupied by Mahomed Hāyat resulted in the discovery of a shoe, the fellow of the one which had been found near the hospital fence, and a *pairan* (native shirt), the sleeve of which was torn, and corresponded with the piece of material which had been found on the barbed wire.

Mahomed Hāyat was duly placed on trial before the civil judge, convicted, and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

As regards Zaidulla, there was not a shadow of doubt in my mind that he had played a leading part in the business, but, in the absence of sufficient evidence against him, I feared that I should be obliged to retain him in the regiment. The discovery, however, of a Government ball-cartridge in his kit when it was examined gave me the opportunity of trying him under military law for a breach of the regulations. He was convicted, and duly sentenced to a term of imprisonment, which sentence involved his dismissal from the army.

V.

Three or four weeks later I attended a garden-party at the house of the commissioner, where I met the officer in charge of the jail. He asked for a few words in private, and said, 'I have in jail here the man who was sentenced for rifle-stealing, and also Zaidulla, your late havildar. When I went my rounds the other morning, the latter asked permission to speak to me, and after recounting his grievances, threatened that as soon as his sentence expired he would have his revenge on you.'

'He certainly got a heavy sentence,' I said; 'but it must be remembered that a cartridge may mean a man's life.'

'Of course; but he evidently bears you a grudge in the matter, and I thought I should give you warning. If he remains in jail here, he will, while employed on gang work, have frequent opportunities of seeing the other man, and, as they are both Pathans, it is quite likely that they may concoct some plot. I propose to transfer him to the jail at Nagpur, and should advise you to be on your guard when his term of imprisonment expires.'

I thanked him for his warning; but both prisoners were safe in jail for some months, and there was no necessity for immediate action. Later on I wrote to the police-officer at Nagpur, informing him of the circumstances and the date on which Zaidulla's sentence would expire, and asked him to have Zaidulla watched when released, and let me know his movements. My regiment shortly afterwards took part in some manoeuvres, and before we returned to headquarters I received a telegram to the following effect: 'Zaidulla has been released from jail, and left this morning, having taken a ticket for Jubbulpore.'

At the end of the manoeuvres we returned to our station, and I at once set about making inquiries, through one of my native officers, as to whether anything had been seen or heard of Zaidulla. I was informed that he was living in the native town, but that he had not appeared near the regimental lines, and probably had an idea that his presence in the neighbourhood was not suspected. I knew that, owing to the Arms Act, he might have a difficulty in obtaining a weapon, but nevertheless the next two or three weeks was by no means a comfortable time for me. My house was situated about a mile from the Mess, and the road passed through some disused barracks, which would easily afford concealment to evil-doers. I took the precaution of carrying a loaded revolver when out alone at night, and always slept with it under my pillow.

At last I got tired of the situation, and deter-

mined to take the bull by the horns, so I sent a trustworthy sepoy into the bazaar, with orders to find Zaidulla, and invite him to come and see me. Whether my messenger used any wiles, or whether the habit of discipline was too strong for Zaidulla, I never ascertained; but he duly presented himself at the regimental office, stood at attention, and saluted me as if he were still under my command. I sent for the native officer of the company to which he had formerly belonged, and told him to bring before me all the N.C.O.'s and men who had been on friendly terms with Zaidulla. When they were assembled I addressed him as follows: 'You scoundrel, you are here for no good purpose. I know the reason of your return here, and have been aware of your movements ever since you left jail. If you kill me, what does it matter? There are fifty others to take my place. But you have about 800 miles to travel to reach your home, and if you commit a crime, and are not captured *en route*, the arm of the British Government is longer than you think. Your own brother would probably sell you for a hundred rupees. The game is up, and the sooner you realise it the better. The best thing you can do is to return to your own country and cultivate your bit of land.'

Zaidulla took my advice. I had him shadowed till he left Jubbulpore, a day or two later, with a ticket for Peshawar, and I never heard anything more about him. Mahomed Hayat was still serving his sentence when I left India on retirement.

THE VICISSITUDES OF SURNAMES.

ANY one whose name does not fall within the common rut of the 'Smith, Jones, and Robinson' type is only too well aware of the fact that there seems to be hardly any limit to the variations of spelling to which a name may be subjected by those to whom it is unfamiliar. It is, perhaps, one of the weaknesses of human nature that such tampering is usually resented, as if unfamiliarity with the name implies, somehow, lack of knowledge or appreciation of the personality of the owner.

Errors of this kind, however, are made in good company. The signatures to the plays of Shakespeare read 'Shakspe,' a fact which the supporters of the claims of Bacon have not omitted to use as an argument in favour of their contention that Shakespeare was too illiterate to have been capable of their authorship; whilst even the great Sam Weller was slightly ambiguous in his preference for spelling his name 'with a "wee."'

As a matter of fact, the present-day form of most names is purely accidental. Before the nineteenth century inflicted the three R's upon all of us the man who could write his own name was very much the exception, and even then he

was prone to spell it phonetically, rather than according to rule. Thus, when we consider the influence of local dialect upon pronunciation, it is evident that names were susceptible of great distortions, both in form and in meaning.

A good example of this is found in the name 'Black,' which one naturally presumes to have been applied to, or adopted by, a family of marked swarthy complexion. As a rule this presumption is correct, but in some cases the derivation is from the Anglo-Saxon word *blæc* or *blād*, which meant 'white' or 'pale,' the original meaning being still retained in the words 'bleach' and 'bleak.'

Hardly any name has been immune from change at one time or another, but saints' names seem to have been especially liable to maltreatment, particularly when the prefix is followed by a vowel. The well-known Tooley Street, in London, was originally St Olave's Street, and it is not difficult to imagine the stages through which it must have passed in the slurring speech of the Metropolis before it crystallised into its present form. In the same way the dignity of 'St Aubin' has been lost in the comparatively

commonplace 'Tobin;' whilst 'St Audrey' has degenerated into the word 'tawdry,' applied to a class of cheap and pretentious goods which were the feature of the old St Audrey Fairs.

One cannot but regret the constant tendency to sacrifice the original forms of names for the sake of ease, for nearly every name has a meaning

and associations which are worthy of preservation. There is many a fine old name effectively buried beneath the commonplace of modern spelling, and to be told that the prosaic name 'Codlin' is all that remains of the romance and vigour of 'Cœur de Lion' convinces us that such a tendency may be little short of criminal.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXI.—A NIGHT IN JANUARY.

I.

NEXT morning, when Selwyn left his hotel, a few desultory snowflakes were falling through the air, and moistly expiring on the asphalt pavements. It lacked a few minutes of nine, and the thousands who man the machinery of New York's business were hurrying to their appointed places. People who had to catch trains were hurrying to stations, and people who had nowhere to go were hurrying still faster. Taxi-cabs were rushing people across the city, and other taxi-cabs were rushing them back again. The overhead railway was rattling and roaring its noisy way, the surface cars were clattering and clanging through the traffic, and every half-minute the subways were belching up cargoes of toilers into the open air.

New York was in a hurry.

All night the great engine of a million parts had lain idle, but morning was the signal that every wheel must leap into action again, driven by the inexhaustible army of human souls. Hurry, noise, clamour, greed, fever, progress. . . . Another day had dawned!

Crossing Broadway to reach Fourth Avenue, Selwyn could not repress a smile at the stricken glory of the great Midway. The illuminated signs that had searched the secret crevices of the mind, and had aided the iridescent foam seen from the harbour, looked tawdry and vulgar, like a circus on a rainy morning. Even the theatres, with their sign-borne superlatives, were garish and illusion-shattering. There was almost an apologetic air about the bill-boards proclaiming their nightly offering to be the 'biggest ever.'

Selwyn began to resent that word 'biggest.' One of the sad things about America is that she started out to make language her slave—only to find that it is becoming her master.

Entering a great office-building, he consulted the directory-board, and was swooped up to the twenty-fourth floor in a non-stop elevator. Finding the room of his literary agent, he went in, but a young lady told him Mr Lyons was in Chicago.

'It doesn't matter,' said Selwyn. 'I shall see him when he returns. But I want a couple of addresses. Have you the file of letters to me? Austin Selwyn is my name.'

The young lady was gratifyingly flustered at

the announcement, and by her haste to produce the required letters indicated the esteem in which her employer held the author.

'It was early last September,' said she. 'Mr Lyons mentioned two names—a Mr Schneider, who purchased foreign rights of my stuff; and some one who wanted me to lecture—yes, that is the letter. Could you give me the addresses of these gentlemen?'

She wrote them on a card and gave it to him. 'Mr J. V. Schneider,' she said, 'is in the Standard Exchange Building, just one block below here; and Mr C. V. Benjamin is on 28th Street, in the United Manufacturing Corporation.'

Thanking her for her courtesy, Selwyn left the office, and going directly to Mr Schneider's place of business, sent in his card. He was ushered through a large room where a dozen typewriters were clicking noisily, and reaching the private office of Mr Schneider, found himself in the presence of a small, crafty-faced man, whose oily smile and air of deference did not harmonise with his eyes, which were as shifty and gleaming as those of a rat. He shook hands with his visitor, and then clawed at the papers on his desk with moist fingers that were abnormally long.

'Vell, Mister Selwyn,' said Mr Schneider gutturally, 'to vot do I attribute dis honour! Have a cigar—sit down.'

'May I break the rule of your office?' said the author, indicating a sign on the wall which read: 'NIX ON THE WAR.' 'If you will be so kind, I want to speak of matters not far removed from that subject.'

Mr Schneider shifted his cigar to the corner of his mouth, and laughed immoderately.

'Ha, ha, ha!' he roared, leaning forward, and thrusting a long, dirty finger into Selwyn's chest. 'That is vot I call mine adjustable creed. For most peoples vot gom' here—Nix. But for fine fellers like you'—

With a greasy chuckle, he mounted his chair and turned the sign about. On the reverse side there was a coat-of-arms, and the words: 'DEUTSCHLAND ÜBER ALLES.'

'Vot you tink?' grinned Mr Schneider, speaking from the altitude of the chair. 'Goot, ugh!' He turned the thing about and stepped down again, wringing his hands in huge enjoyment of

the whole thing. 'You can spik blainly, Mister Selwyn,' he went on amiably. 'Ve unnerstan' each odder, *hein?* Von't you smoke one of dem cigars?'

'No,' said Selwyn. He looked at the little man for about ten seconds, then, crossing to the wall, wrenched the sign away, nail and all.

'Here, here,' protested Mr Schneider, backing warily to the door, 'vot for you do dis? Vot you mean, you great big fourflusher?'

The young man eyed the sign and then the German's head, apparently with the idea of bringing them together. Mr Schneider further developed his plan of retreat by taking a grasp of the door-handle.

'That's for people who say, "Nix on the War,"' said Selwyn, breaking the sign in his hands as if it were made of matchwood. 'And this is for your damned Deutschland!'

He broke the remainder over his knee, and threw the pieces on the flat desk, upsetting an ink-bottle, the contents of which dripped juicily to the floor.

'But ain't you,' said Mr Schneider, in a voice that was almost a squeal—'don't you got no respect for Chermany? Only yesterday der ambassador, he tole me that after the var, for all you wrote to help der Faderland, der Kaiser, himself, vill on you bestow'—

Before the speaker could acquaint the author with the exact nature of the honour in store for him, Selwyn had seized him by the coat-lapels, and was shaking him so violently that Mr Schneider's natural talent for double-facedness was developed to a pitch where an observant looker-on might have counted at least five of him vibrating at once.

'You dirty little hound,' said Selwyn, without relaxing in the least the shaking process, 'if you ever use my name again, or send out anything written, or supposed to be written, by me, I'll'—

For once words failed him, and lifting the little man almost off the floor, he deposited him violently on his own desk, in the midst of the pool formed by the ink.

'Nix on the war!' snorted Selwyn defiantly, putting on his hat. He was going to add a few more crushing remarks, but, altering his mind, went out, slamming the door so violently that all the typewriters engaged in sending out German propaganda were startled into an instant of silence.

As for Mr Schneider, he sat still amidst the wreck of his desk, pondering over a famous definition of war given by an American general named Sherman.

II.

Without waiting to catch the driver's eye, the impetuous idealist overtook an empty taxi-cab, and jumped into it.

'United Manufacturing, 28th Street,' he called. 'Make it fast.'

On arrival at his destination he found that Mr C. B. Benjamin was the president of the United Manufacturing Company, which—so a large calendar stated—was the biggest business of its kind in the universe. It had more branches, more output, more character, more push than any other three enterprises in America.

Mr Benjamin was in, but could be seen only by appointment, said a sleek-haired young man of immaculate dress.

'Give him that card, and tell him I want to see him *at once*,' said Selwyn, with a forcefulness that caused a look of pain to cross the young man's countenance.

'Please sit down,' he said, 'and I'll see what I can do.'

As a result of his efforts, Selwyn received a summons to go right in—which he did, going past a number of people who had various big propositions to put before the big man when they could gain his ear.

'Good-morning, Mr Selwyn,' said the president, a smartly dressed Jew, with a shrewd face and an unquestionable dignity of manner. 'You have returned to America, I see.'

'Yes, Mr Benjamin. Do you mind if I come right down to business?'

'Mind? How else could I have built up the United Manufacturing Company? Have a cigar?'

'No, thanks. Mr Benjamin, you wrote my agent that you wanted me to lecture on the fallacy of war.'

'Sure,' said the president.

'May I ask why?'

Mr Benjamin removed his spectacles and wiped them carefully. Putting them on, he surveyed his visitor through them. After that he took them off again, and winked confidentially. 'Mr Selwyn,' he chuckled, 'you ain't a child, and I see that I can't put over any sob stuff with you. I told your agent I would pay him real money for you to lecture. Well, take it from me, when the president of the United Manufacturing Company pays out any of his greenbacks he don't expect nothing for something, eh?'

'I don't understand you—yet,' said Selwyn quietly.

Mr Benjamin leaned back in his swivel-chair and cut the end of a cigar with a little silver knife. 'Business,' he said, 'is business, eh?'

'Agreed,' was the terse response. 'I am still waiting to know why you offered your money to me.'

Mr Benjamin leaned forward, and taking up his glasses, waved them hypnotically at the young man. 'Simply business,' he said. 'Same with you—same with me. You write all this dope against war—why? Because you know there's big money in it. I pay you to lecture because you can help to keep America out of the war. In 1913 I was worth two hundred thousand dollars. To-day I have ten million.

We are wise men, Mr Selwyn, both of us. While all the rest of the peoples fight, you and I make money.'

As if his bones were aching with fatigue, Austin Selwyn rose wearily to his feet, and, without comment, walked slowly out of the office. But the clerks noticed that his face was ashy-pale, like that of a prisoner who has received the maximum sentence of the law.

III.

The days that followed were the bitterest Austin Selwyn had ever known.

It is not in the plan of the Great Dramatist that men shall look on life and not play a part. It is true that there are a few who escape the call-boy's summons, and gaze on human existence much as a passing pageant, but even for them is the knowledge that there is a moment called Death when every man must take the stage.

For years Austin Selwyn had stood apart, mingling with those who were enduring the sword-thrusts of fate, as an author chats with the players on the stage between the acts. Even the great tragedy of war had served only to enrich the processes of his mind. It is true he had known compassion, sorrow, and anger through it, but they were only counterfeit emotions, born of the grip of war on his imagination.

But at last life had reached out its talons and grasped him. Every human experience he had avoided, he was now to know, multiplied. Stripped of his last hope of justifying his idealism, he saw remorse, discouragement, a sense of utter futility, the scorn of friends, the applause of traitors—he saw them all as shadows closing into blackness ahead of him.

He tried to return to England, but passport difficulties were made insurmountable. He went to Boston, only to find that those he valued turned against him, and those he detested wel-

comed him as comrade. He returned to New York, but every avenue of activity was closed to him, save the one he had chosen for himself—that of world-pacifism.

He had always been a man of strong, underlying passions, and in his veins there was the hot undissipated blood of youth; but his brain had been the controlling force in every action of his life. Hitherto he had never questioned its complete mastery; but as he pondered over his fall he knew that it was his brain that had ridden him to it. He no longer trusted its workings. It had proved rebel and brought him to disaster.

And with that inner challenge came the supreme ordeal of his life.

As rivers, held imprisoned by winter, will burst their confines in the spring and overrun the land, all the passions which had been cooled and tempered by his intellectual discipline swarmed through his arteries in revolt. No longer was the brain dominating the body; instead, he was on fire with a hundred mad flames of desire, springing from sources he knew nothing of. They clung to him by day and haunted him at night. They sang to him that vice had its own heaven, as well as hell—that licentiousness held forgetfulness. He heard whispers in the air that there were drugs which opened perfumed caves of delight, and secret places where sin was made beautiful with mystic music and incense of flowers.

When conscience—or whatever it is in us that combats desire—urged him to close his ears to the voices, he cursed it for a meddlesome thing. Since Life had thrown down the gauntlet, he would take it up! If he had to travel the chambers of disgrace and discouragement, he would go on to the halls of sensual abandonment. Life had torn aside the curtain—it was for him to search the recesses of experience.

(Continued on page 452.)

PETROLEUM.

I.

PETROLEUM is a mixture of mineral oils, spirits, and hydrocarbons, generally found in limestones, sands, and shales. Its origin is doubtful, and has given rise to much experiment and not a little controversy. Many theories have been advanced to account for the presence of this substance in the earth's crust. They naturally follow two distinct lines of thought. The chemical theory presumes the oil to be formed through the interaction of water and carbon compounds of the alkali metals, these compounds being a direct result of the intense heat of the centre of the earth. In support of this contention, chemists, by

making use of means similar to those they presume to act in nature, have succeeded in producing many petroleum derivatives in their own laboratories. On the other hand, from considerations on the character and the occurrence of oil-bearing localities, geologists have come to the conclusion that the presence of the oil is due to natural forces analogous to those forming coal—that is, to the decay of animal and vegetable matter, under great pressure and over long periods of time. The heavy demand for both the crude material and its refined products has given great importance to the question of synthetic manufacture, but so far no production on a commercial scale has been attempted.

Although distributed all over the world,

petroleum is not found everywhere in abundance. Africa and Australia produce but little; South America, whilst of great potentialities, is only in process of development. Numerous wells are worked, but the bulk of the world's supply is drawn from several large fields, of which the United States, Russia, Mexico, and the East Indies are at present the chief. In 1901 the Russian output exceeded that of the United States; but during the present century American production has gone ahead at a remarkable rate, while that of Russia has gone back. Whereas Russia accounted for 50 per cent. of the world's total petroleum production in 1901, her share in 1913—that is, before the war—was only 18 per cent., the United States having advanced meanwhile from 41 per cent. to 63 per cent. The Rumanian fields, whose yield in 1913 exceeded that of the Dutch East Indies, were, of course, temporarily put out of the reckoning by the war. The following figures show the 1917 production of the leading oilfields:

United States . . .	14,060 million gallons.
Russia	2,898 " "
Mexico	2,310 " "
Dutch East Indies . .	540 " "

Of the total yield for that year, the United States contributed 67 per cent., Russia 14 per cent., and Mexico 11 per cent. The position of the British Empire is quite good. In 1917 342 million gallons, or 2.5 per cent. of the total production, were taken from wells within the Empire. The chief British districts are (1917):

India	232 million gallons.
Trinidad	67 " "
Egypt	42 " "
Canada	900,000 gallons.

There are, moreover, large undeveloped areas in northern India, and in Canada, Egypt, Australia, and New Zealand. There is little doubt that when these localities are opened up the British Empire will be able to supply from within its own limits a large proportion of the oil it requires.

II.

That the ancients were acquainted with petroleum is borne out by the numerous references to it in early works. The Bible mentions it as a valuable means of producing fire for burnt offerings; and the Persians and the Russians well understood its medicinal properties, especially as a cure for ulcers, sores, and other external ailments. In the thirteenth century Marco Polo refers in his Travels to the popularity of the Batum oil; and later the great English voyager, Sir Walter Raleigh, described the Trinidad sources.

As would naturally be expected from its great mineral resources, the development of the oil industry has taken place chiefly in America. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the only method of collecting petroleum was by skimming it from the surface

of the numerous pools throughout the country, but in 1806 the brothers Ruffner bored the first well at Oil Creek, in Pennsylvania. Their example was not universally followed; fifty years elapsed before the first oil company—the Pennsylvania Rock Oil Company—was floated. Its operations were not successful. A year later certain of its members broke away from the parent company, and formed the Seneca Oil Company, a concern attended with a much greater measure of success. A boom set in; townships rapidly sprang up, and large areas were drilled (often indiscriminately). For several years the output rose, but the absence of a market caused a rapid fall. About 1865 Young introduced the 'cracking' process of refining, which, with the invention of the oil-engine, re-established the market. From that time to the present day America has consolidated her premier position. The following figures indicate her vast increase of production from 1859 to 1918:

1859	2,000 barrels (42-gallon barrels).
1869	19,900,000 "
1889	35,162,000 "
1899	57,000,000 "
1906	126,000,000 "
1918	350,000,000 "

The steady advance of American development led to a corresponding advance all over the world. Between 1880 and 1890 Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and Burma were opened. Rumania, Galicia, and Baku were extended; Mexico commenced operations on a huge scale. By 1917 the world's yield had reached the figure of 22,000 million gallons. The gradually widening application of the oil has caused explorations to be made in countries hitherto considered unworthy of development. In the early part of last year drillings were made in the Midlands of England, one bore giving some 400 gallons daily, and wells are being sunk in various parts of Scotland.

III.

There are problems of great difficulty and complexity which confront the technical chemist, but few equal those of oil-refining. Processes vary greatly on the different fields; each is primarily suited to the particular grade of substance with which it is called upon to deal. Of the numerous qualities of oil, American is perhaps the most representative; it contains spirits, oils, and solids. The crude product, as delivered from the common stock tanks of the pipe-line companies, is often mixed with suspended mineral matter, and to free it from this impurity the petroleum is sometimes filtered through successive layers of animal charcoal. From the filters it passes to the stills, generally worked in batteries of three or four, and each capable of taking a charge of 24,000 gallons.

In the stills the temperature of the charge is gradually raised through a series of stages.

The first is from 100° F. to 125° F., when the lighter constituents, chiefly consisting of impure naphtha, are driven off and collected in underground tanks. The second stage consists in heating from 215° F. to 230° F. Between these temperatures the light oils, known commercially as kerosene or paraffin, volatilise, and are condensed. Further heating from 420° F. to 600° F. causes the heavy oils to evaporate. The residue remaining in the stills is then treated in one of two ways. It is either removed for conversion into vaseline, paraffin-wax, oil-fuel, and other commodities, or redistilled under a pressure of 250 pounds per square inch. This is known as the 'cracking' process; its effect is greatly to increase the yield of paraffins and heavy oils, these being formed as a result of chemical actions induced by the pressure. The products of the first distillation are very impure; they are each submitted to another purification of a similar nature, the heating being very carefully controlled. The naphtha gives rise to petrol and the various motor spirits, the kerosenes to the numerous lighting-oils, while the heavier types form lubricating, gas, and fuel oils. In spite of this further treatment, the derivatives are contaminated with water—a substance which greatly lowers their utility and value. To eliminate this undesirable fluid, they are agitated with caustic soda and vitriol, drawn off, and, after passing chemical and physical tests to ensure a standard of quality, are stored in tanks.

The first general use of petroleum was in medicine. This has long since disappeared, the only remaining derivative now employed in pharmacy being vaseline, chiefly to form ointments and emulsions. As an illuminating agent paraffin is still used in outlying districts, but in all large towns it has been superseded by gas and electricity. The quality of coal-gas is often enriched by means of gaseous kerosene, and in the United States gas-oil is evaporated to act as an illuminating agent on a very large scale. In modern times the most important applications of petroleum to industry are as liquid fuel and as a power agent. For fuel a heavy oil is used, and to effect combustion it is heated and forced under pressure through a series of nozzles. On emerging from the nozzles it is met by a blast of compressed air, and converted into a fine spray. In this condition it is burned. With proper burners oil will give almost twice the heat of a similar weight of coal—one of the many advantages of this type of heating. A great economy of space is secured; in comparison with the old method of coaling, the filling of oil-tanks results in a saving of time and labour; heating can be accurately adjusted; there is no smoke, and constant attention is more or less unnecessary. Commercial men have not been slow to recognise this. Recently the Cunard Company issued instructions for the conversion of their fleet to oil-burners; and liquid fuel is now used

in the world's navies. Yet by far the greatest demand for oil is as fuel for internal-combustion engines. These are built to work on every grade of oil, from the delicate, high-speed aero engine using pure petrol, the lightest of the petroleum derivatives, to the heavy Diesel engine, operating on the unrefined material. As power generators these engines have many points to recommend them. They are lighter and more compact than steam plant, and cheaper to install, maintain, and run; at the same time, they are more efficient, being the nearest approach to perfection yet obtained in engine design. The influence exerted by the internal-combustion engine has been widespread; it made possible the aeroplane and the tank, and has gone a long way to solve the question of transport by road.

IV.

For many years the transport of oil in bulk was a difficult proposition, but under modern conditions the difficulties have largely disappeared. The earliest carriers were the Burmese natives, who used earthenware pots for this purpose. Incidentally, these same natives constructed the first pipe-line. Unfortunately, being of bamboo, it leaked badly, and was abandoned almost immediately after completion. About 1850 the Americans introduced the barrel system. The barrels were built of oak staves, bound with iron hoops, and coated internally with glue to minimise leakage. The weight of the barrels was almost as great as that of their contents (although they were capable of carrying forty gallons); the cost for initial construction and repairs was heavy; losses by leakage were great; consequently transport charges became excessive, and engineers were forced to look for a cheaper and more efficient mode of carriage. In 1865 the first effective pipe-line, of about a mile in length, was laid, to be followed, ten years later, by one sixty miles long from Pittsburg to the wells. By 1900 Pennsylvania alone possessed 3000 miles of line, and some twenty companies were in operation. The lines, which are really oil-railways, are divided into three classes: main trunk routes of six-inch-diameter pipe, supplied with pumps of from 600 to 800 horse-power; secondary routes of four-inch-diameter pipe, with from 150 to 300 horse-power pumps; and local lines of from 15 to 30 horse-power. Under the present system each owner delivers his oil to one or other of the companies, receiving a receipt for the amount delivered. The company in turn pumps it along its lines, through a series of stations, to the refineries, passing all into a common stock tank, from which each consigner draws the amount shown on his receipt. The distribution of the purified derivative is carried out chiefly by railway and road tank-cars, except in the case of oil intended for shipment, which is forced through pipes to the seaboard towns, and thence loaded into tank-steamers. It

is interesting to note that this system is employed in Great Britain. The oil for the navy is landed from steamers into tanks situated at Bowling, on the lower reaches of the Clyde. From here it is pumped through a pipe-line laid along the banks of the Forth and Clyde Canal to the naval base at Rosyth, from whose reserves the oil-burning British warships draw their supplies.

Similar, but greater, difficulties were encountered in shipment over long distances. The records of oil companies bear evidence of the number of ships and lives that have been lost, and the damage to property resulting from accidents to tank-steamers. Researches carried out by Sir Beverton Redwood and other eminent experts have shown that there are several essentials of construction to be observed in ships of this class. These are provision for expansion and contraction of the oil with temperature variations, for keeping the tanks full, allowing the gases to escape, and for the prevention of leakage into the boiler and bunker spaces. Experience has borne out that the great majority of dangers may be avoided by a careful observance of these conditions, and accidents are now fortunately rare. A further precaution has been taken of late years by the installation of Diesel engines as propulsive agents. Boilers and bunkers are thus rendered unnecessary, and one of the chief sources of fire is removed. In this direction, modern practice has progressed a step by the construction of tank-barges. These are ships completely fitted up as oil-steamers, but without engines. Space usually devoted to engines is occupied by tanks. The weight of the cargo which these barges may carry is greatly increased, the largest being able to hold about 8000 tons of oil. Dynamos for lighting, crew accommodation, and other necessities are fitted on board. The work of towing this type of vessel across the Atlantic is generally undertaken by a tanker. Special arrangements must be made to prevent the tow breaking in heavy weather. Should such a catastrophe happen, barge, crew, and cargo are left helpless, entirely at the mercy of the waves.

v.

The adequacy of the world's supplies of oil to meet the ever-increasing demand is a subject on which experts, though not unanimous, are fairly well agreed, the general consensus of opinion being that the outlook is disquieting. Figures for many fields are unavailable, but in 1917 the United States Geological Survey computed that there were still some 6740 million barrels in the wells of that country. The production of the United States is practically two-thirds of the world's output, and in 1917 was 335 million barrels, a quantity which is increasing annually by about fifteen million barrels. It is quite obvious that America cannot continue

to hold her present position for more than a couple of decades unless further fields be opened. In order to maintain the supply, either new fields must be exploited or a means discovered of manufacturing synthetic petroleum on a commercial scale—an achievement not yet in sight. A rigorous search for oil is being carried on throughout the world, particularly, as already mentioned, in Britain, where the results have not been very encouraging. A greater measure of success has attended the operations in Mexico, China, and Japan, and these countries are now producing large quantities.

There are many known areas which are geologically petroliferous—that is, containing formations somewhere below the surface which act, or have acted, as storehouses of petroleum; and some of these areas have been prospected time and again by geologists in the hope of discovering a spot where indications are such that a drilling test is warranted. To begin with, a geologist engaged at a high salary can only report on the 'probable' positive or negative nature of the results to be expected from drilling for oil in a given locality. He can say that petroleum exists, and he can even state the approximate depth at which it will be found; but, unless he is a good 'guesser,' that is his limit. Though there are some indications which are regarded as extremely favourable, they seem to be met with quite as often in areas which eventually prove to be not worth boring, as in those which are found to contain great stores of the valuable liquid.

The operator thus starts out on what is not far removed from a gamble. At great expense the derrick is erected, tools are purchased, and expert drillers engaged to drill a hole into the ground to a depth estimated beforehand, and through formations of which the class only is known. It is a veritable voyage of discovery, and while he may be rewarded by a strike of enormous quantities of oil at a few hundred feet from the surface, he may, on the other hand, reach the limit of his resources after drilling several thousands of feet, and have found only negligible quantities.

Of these extremes the latter is the more common, but, of course, the possibilities between them are unbounded. A great oil magnate in America has publicly stated that his estimate of the chances of success of finding oil in paying quantities in the test wells drilled in the States is one in one hundred; and if this be the case in the country where petroleum is regarded as being most widely distributed, what are the chances in less-favoured countries?

Supposing, however, that our operator has so far met with success, and has found oil in sufficient quantity to warrant him in expecting good returns on the capital invested, he can be sure of such returns only if the production is sufficiently large to discount the quality; but if

this is not the case, he may find that the quality is so poor that the petroleum is useful only for fuel, and though he has 'struck oil' he has suffered financially.

The great variation of quality in petroleum is sufficiently indicated by the values of the oils from different parts of the United States. The market quotation for Pennsylvania oils in November 1918, for instance, was four dollars, while that for the Healdton grade of crude was only one dollar forty-five cents, all other districts being quoted between these figures. (Prices are for one barrel of forty American gallons.)

Again, a well sunk in one district, and producing, say, ten barrels of oil daily, may be a very profitable property, while a well in another district, which may be of the same depth and producing the same quantity of oil at the same valuation, may barely pay expenses, because of the great differences in the cost of drilling in the two areas. The formations may even be of a similar class, but though in one case the well gives no trouble, and yields a clear hole to the drill, in the other case it proves most refractory, the walls of the hole failing to stand up, and requiring constant and ever-extending support during the progress of the work.

This support has to be provided by linings formed of steel pipes. Each lining is capable of giving protection as far as it can be carried in the hole, and when its limit of depth is reached another liner must be placed within it and carried in its turn through the succeeding formations. Every string of pipe thus used naturally reduces the size of the hole, and necessitates a complete set of tools of the right size to work within it. Pipe is also used to exclude water from the bore-hole, the foot of the string of pipe selected for this function being cemented into the wall of the hole at a suitable depth. Thus the amount of pipe, and the number of strings of different sizes required for a well, have a great bearing on the capital cost of drilling operations.

In some territories, like Oklahoma, for instance, wells can be quickly and cheaply drilled without pipe until the water horizon is reached; then the whole string of pipe required to exclude the water can be inserted in one operation, and consists of light cheap-grade pipe. But in California, where drilling has reached the highest

stage of perfection, pipe must be carried with the tools. Oklahoma wells can be completed with one or two strings, while California conditions necessitate the use of as many as six in some cases.

VI.

After proving the existence of oil in paying quantities, the next step is to provide means to raise it to the surface; for, contrary to popular supposition, all oil-wells do not yield their product of their own volition. Those that do so flow only for a comparatively short period of their producing-life, and mechanical means eventually become necessary. These are of two kinds—pumping and bailing. The former is used wherever possible, because it is cheap and efficient. The plant consists of an internally operated pump attached to the bottom of a string of tubing, generally about two inches in diameter, which is inserted into the well, extending from the bottom to the surface. The plunger and valves of the pump are raised and lowered by means of a string of rods screwed together, or by a wire rope, which works within the tubing. Wells so worked can often be left without attention, excepting that needed by the engine and the bearings; but most require periodical renewals of packing and valves in the pump, as these parts become worn and useless through the friction of grit suspended in the oil. The writer has seen wells in Burma which have run without any renewals to the pumping outfit for a year at a time, while wells close by needed fresh packing or some such renewal, involving pulling out the rods, line, or tubing, several times weekly, and in some cases every day.

Bailing is adopted in wells only where the quantity of grit and mud in the oil is too great to be handled by a pump. The bailer is a long steel cylinder, fitted with a trip valve. This is lowered on a wire rope to the bottom of the well, where the valve trips and admits the oil, which is then hauled to the surface in the cylinder. As will readily be seen, an operation of this kind carried out continuously requires a certain amount of skilled labour, and also uses more power than pumping does, consequently more fuel. Rumania and Trinidad are places where the bailer is commonly used.

THE AWFUL MISS BROWN.

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

II.

THEOPHILUS DOUBLEDAY slept badly that night. The pledge his nephew had extracted from him (almost as painfully as if it had been a tooth) haunted him throughout the dark hours. Before departing, Richard had induced

him to believe that the happiness of his (Richard Merryweather's) life depended on him, and responsibility for the young man's future weighed upon the vicar like a nightmare. If he turned from the picture of Richard as a moody, discontented man (perhaps taking to drink, and finally, as a last resource, to suicide), he was not the less

troubled by visions of Bella Croft wandering round the village with flowers in her hair, talking incoherently, and occasionally bursting into song without the formality of being requested to favour the company. He fell asleep just as the gray dawn came creeping in, and, when he woke again, rose quite unrefreshed, with a very poor appetite for breakfast.

When the Reverend Theophilus started to accomplish his mission, the clear morning air freshened him up, and partly dispelled the terrors of the night. He stepped out briskly enough, until he came within sight of Miss Brown's house, when he was assailed by a treacherous hope that she might not be at home, and paused to exorcise it and induce a better frame of mind. The lane into which he had turned led past her flower-garden, beyond which could be seen the barns and outhouses of the little homestead.

'Really,' said the vicar to himself, 'I would rather not. I would *much* rather not. But my word is pledged; so there is no help for it.'

There *was* no help for it, unless at the expense of his conscience; and, in this respect, he had all his life kept too strict an account with himself to fail now.

The first person he saw as he drew near was Bella Croft, who was standing by the door of the house tending a rose-tree that grew up one side of the porch. Hearing the click of the garden gate, she turned. As she did so the vicar, even in his agitated condition, thought Richard might, as he himself had said, have gone farther and fared worse. Indeed, however far you travelled, it would have been difficult to find a more attractive specimen of a young English countrywoman. This fact had not previously struck the vicar so forcibly as it did now that a personal interest in her had been awakened by his last night's conversation. Like her aunt, she was tall and slim; but her figure had none of that severity of outline which, without giving Miss Brown an appearance of spareness, warned you there would be no use in trying to get on her soft side, because she hadn't got one. The look in Bella's violet eyes was straightforward and intelligent; the rays of the sun tinted her hair with gold where here and there a bright streak mingled with softer and darker shades—'shot with gold,' not 'with golden tresses' (*chrysopastos*, not *chrysoplokamos*, as the vicar would probably have explained to you in a more tranquil moment). If her nose was a trifle shorter than it might have been, that, after all, was a matter of taste. Possibly some people preferred it so, and Richard Merryweather may have been one of these. Anyway, to make up for this, her chin was neither too short nor too long, but just right. Miss Brown had a fine set of teeth, though you seldom saw them except when she spoke, for at other times she kept her lips firmly closed; Bella's lips, which were rather fuller than her aunt's, had a habit of

parting slightly—not in order that you might see her teeth were perfect and as white as ivory, but to show how ready they were to smile at the least provocation. She did not smile, however, when she saw the vicar; she flushed, and looked troubled and uneasy. Observing this, and the start she gave, he guessed she knew his business, and that her dread of the result was even greater than his own. The idea that at the moment there was somebody more afraid of Miss Brown than he was gave him courage.

'Good-morning,' he said, almost cheerfully. 'Is your aunt within?'

'Yes, sir; she is,' answered Bella. 'Will you please to step this way?'

The vicar stepped that way, and followed her into the parlour, a comfortless apartment which, like most reception-rooms in its walk of life, was rarely entered. Left alone, he listened nervously for Miss Brown's footsteps, which were soon heard: a resolute 'right—left; right—left,' in the passage without. Then the door opened, and she appeared.

'Good-morning, good-morning, Miss Brown!' cried Mr Doubleday, with the effusiveness of extreme agitation. 'What delightful weather we are having! We are really looking—I mean the country is looking—quite charming.'

Miss Brown saw he was excited, and by no means master of himself. But for the earliness of the hour, and the fact that the vicar was known to be an abstemious person, a cruel suspicion might have crossed her mind, as she returned his greeting and awaited developments.

'You will hardly guess, Miss Brown,' said Mr Doubleday—'now I am *sure* you will hardly guess why I have called on you this morning.'

'Perhaps, sir,' replied Miss Brown, with civil austerity, 'it would be better to explain without waiting for me to guess.'

This was not a snub—it was only *manner*; but Miss Brown's manner often made timid people feel that a snub was intended.

The vicar fidgeted for a moment, then rallied, and came to the point. 'I am here, Miss Brown,' he began—'eh! eh! eh!—you will think it very odd—it *is* very odd—for really, you know, I am the last person in the world any one would suspect of such an errand—but I am here as a messenger of love.'

'As a what?' exclaimed Miss Brown.

'As a messenger of love,' repeated the vicar meekly. 'Though,' he added, with another feeble giggle, 'I do not look much like Cupid.'

'No, you do not,' said Miss Brown curtly.

The vicar simply meant he was neither youthful nor blooming, but it was quite evident Miss Brown construed his remark as meaning he was not lightly attired in a pair of wings and a quiver, and that she considered such a jest unbecoming between a clergyman and a single lady. Being so painfully misunderstood, he blushed more violently than ever.

'I mean,' he endeavoured to explain, 'that as a man in the decline of life, and being unfortunately a bachelor'—

'Why unfortunately?' interposed Miss Brown.

'Well, really, Miss Brown,' said the vicar (who might or might not have had his own little romance in his own little spring-tide), 'that is—if you will allow me to say so—neither here nor there.'

'Oh, very good,' she answered; as if, in that case, he need not have said anything about it.

'I mean,' he resumed, 'that the heart—the heart, my dear Miss Brown—need not grow old. No, no; it can still sympathise and feel.'

Here the vicar paused, thinking he had made a good point; though what he had really done was to create an impression that he had suddenly become insane, and that his madness was taking the form of making proposals. His next words, however, dispelled this idea.

'My nephew, Richard Merryweather, is, I assure you, a most excellent young man. Really'—closing his eyes and raising his hands, as if he must absolutely insist upon it—'a most excellent young man.'

'I know very little about him,' she said shortly.

'I am aware of that, Miss Brown, though he has met you more than once. But, upon better acquaintance, you will find what I have said of him fully justified. I know of no young man better qualified to make a most suitable husband.'

At this Miss Brown looked slightly bewildered. It could hardly mean that this debonair young man was in reality a mercenary fellow, ready to marry a woman older than himself for the sake of her property. If any suspicion of such a nature was beginning to take possession of her, it was quickly nipped in the bud.

'Your niece is a most charming girl, Miss Brown. I know of no young woman'—feeling he could not do better than paraphrase what he had said of Richard—'I know of no young woman better suited to make the most admirable of wives.'

'Oh, that's it, is it?' said Miss Brown grimly.

'That is it, Miss Brown. To put the matter quite plainly, he has—ahem!—he has fallen in love with her.'

'Nonsense!' cried Miss Brown.

The vicar winced, like a little boy who has had his ears boxed for saying something he ought not to have said on a forbidden subject. Still, he could not allow this contemptuous exclamation to pass altogether unchallenged. 'For shame, Miss Brown! Love all nonsense! Oh, fie! fie!'

'I mean, when men talk of marrying women because they love them, *that* is nonsense. When they are young and foolish, they may think they do; and when girls are young and foolish, they may believe them. For my part, Mr Doubleday, I am an elderly woman'—

'No, no!' protested the vicar. 'Oh dear, no!'

'I am a woman advanced in life' (she was forty-three, and looked remarkably well for her age, as slim, well-featured women are apt to do), 'and,' continued Miss Brown, who had passed the whole of her womanhood in the management of her little farm, 'I know the world.'

'And I, Miss Brown,' replied Mr Doubleday, who for over thirty years had never been more than a few miles outside his own parish, 'I also know the world. In fact,' he added pleasantly, 'I am an old stager—quite an old stager.'

'I love my niece. *That* kind of love is not all nonsense.'

'I am sure it is not,' responded the vicar heartily. 'I am indeed sure of that.'

'I have striven to do my duty by her.'

'And you have done it, Miss Brown—you have done it.'

'I have always regarded it as a most important *part* of my duty to warn her against the evils of married life.'

'The evils of married life!' exclaimed the vicar. 'Come, come, Miss Brown. You don't mean that. You *can't* mean it.'

Miss Brown waved the protest aside. 'The single woman'—repeating to the vicar what she had said to her niece some hundreds of times—'is the mistress of her own fate. The married woman is the mere plaything of a man.'

'Nay, nay! Oh, dear me, Miss Brown! Really! Such a view of married life is a sadly perverted one. It really is, you know. And, after all,' the vicar continued, warming to the discussion in spite of himself, 'the single woman's existence is a poor, incomplete affair. She herself is an isolated, melancholy object; a'—Remembering where he was, Mr Doubleday stopped in confusion. Miss Brown, standing in front of him, suddenly appeared to be growing remarkably tall, while her eyes flashed down upon him with a dangerous light. 'I—I beg your pardon!' he stammered. 'Of course, in exceptional cases—ahem!—when we find a woman endowed with great force of character—of an unusually self-reliant nature—but in most instances, I think, Miss Brown—I *really* think' (after his crude blunder, he made this statement apologetically) 'the married woman's lot is the happier one.'

Miss Brown shook her head, with a contemptuous smile. She knew better, though she had never tried it; but she did not feel disposed to argue the point further or to humiliate by defeat a worthy little gentleman who had never made any woman wretched by persuading her to marry him. Moreover, at this stage of the conversation he shifted his ground, believing Miss Brown to be thoroughly practical, if she was anything.

'And then, from a worldly point of view,' said this most unworldly person, 'my nephew would be an excellent match. He would be able to maintain a wife in every comfort.'

'My niece will be provided with every comfort suitable to her station, without being beholden to any man.'

'Still, within reasonable limits, and if well employed, my dear Miss Brown, the good things of this world are not to be despised. No, no; they are not to be despised.'

'What do you mean by the good things of this world?' demanded Miss Brown. 'The flesh-pots of Egypt?'

The vicar turned red, and felt quite angry. To have it intimated by an overbearing female that he took this view of good things, merely because he said there was no harm in a worthy young couple's starting married life in fairly good circumstances, was too much. He was not one to hanker after flesh-pots of any nationality whatsoever; and a woman who had been a parishioner of his for so many years ought to have known better than to address such a remark to him. He would have liked to give her a piece of his mind; but indignation (and a modest doubt as to his being a match for her) held him speechless.

There was silence for a few moments, and then she gave him a chance to plant a little arrow in her breast—a chance of which he promptly availed himself; for revenge, if not too deadly, is sweet to the mildest of us.

'Besides,' she resumed, 'there is no need to discuss this any further; for even if Mr Merryweather cares for my niece, she does not care for him; so *that* makes an end of the matter.'

'But she *does* care for him!' cried the vicar. 'She is as much in love with him as he is with her.'

'What!'

This monosyllable was uttered in a way that made the vicar almost jump out of his chair; but, the flesh-pots of Egypt still rankling in his mind, he found courage to reply, 'Miss Brown, I have said it.'

Miss Brown went to the door. Her clear, strong voice rang through the place, startling the pigeons on the roof, and causing the lazy old house-dog to prick up his ears in the yard.

'Bella! Bella! Come here!'

III.

Bella was prepared for this summons; but she came very slowly, and presented a very shamefaced appearance.

'Bella, do you know why Mr Doubleday has called here this morning?'

Bella *was* in possession of this guilty knowledge, being an accessory before the fact; but she remained silent, and did not commit herself.

'He has come to tell me that his nephew is in—in—in—something stuck in Miss Brown's throat, but she got it out—'is in love with you.'

'Mr Richard Merryweather?' faltered Bella.

'Has he more than one nephew?' demanded Miss Brown.

'I—I don't know,' answered Bella.

Miss Brown herself did not know, so she said, 'I mean, has he more than one nephew *here*—in Dredgefield? Of course I mean Mr Richard Merryweather. Whom else *could* I mean? Have you ever suspected anything of this kind? Speak, child!' She referred to it as to a foul plot come to light.

'Yes, aunt dear,' said Bella meekly; 'he—he—'

'Don't say he has dared to tell you!'

'Yes, aunt; he has told me.'

Miss Brown glanced at the vicar in bitter triumph, as who should say, 'You see the kind of person you have been commending—the viper you have cherished at your hearth! What is your opinion of him *now*?'

Then she turned to her niece again. 'And you have been accused (wrongfully, I trust) of being in love with him.'

'I think I am, aunt.'

'You *think* you are! Good heavens, girl! don't you know your own mind?'

'Yes, aunt; I am. We are in love with each other.'

Mr Doubleday was a true Christian—one, mark you, who strove conscientiously to act up to the character; but, nevertheless, he said, 'I told you so, Miss Brown.'

Miss Brown turned upon him. A terrible outburst seemed imminent, and he began to wish himself at the farther end of his parish, or even in the next one. However, after a strong effort of self-control, she spoke with calmness—with a fearful calmness.

'Mr Doubleday,' she said, 'your nephew is a wolf in sheep's clothing, and would be a disgrace to any sex but his own; but all men are wolves in sheep's clothing, and a disgrace to their sex.'

'My dear madam,' interposed the vicar, 'think better of us. Let me entreat you to think better of us.'

'I make *no* exceptions,' she proceeded, giving the Reverend Theophilus one for himself. 'As vicar of this parish, you have sought to sow discord where it has never existed since men ceased to live beneath this roof. I compliment you on your morning's work.'

The vicar took this remark as meaning that, having perpetrated the villainy referred to, he might withdraw to gloat over it.

'My child,' he said, not without a touch of dignity, as he took Bella's hand, 'I am glad to hear you avow your sentiments without shame or disguise. You owe all duty to her who has been as a mother to you, but you have done nothing to be ashamed of or to regret. I know Richard well, and you may take my word for that.—Miss Brown, I wish you a good-morning, and a grain or two more of charity. I have no doubt my nephew will call on you himself.'

'Mr Doubleday, I forbid your nephew this

house. If he attempts to force his way in, I will not be answerable for the consequences.'

Miss Brown looked very terrible at the thought of her premises being invaded in spite of her teeth.

'You will not insult him, I trust,' remonstrated the vicar.

'I will protect my niece,' she retorted; and, with this assurance, the vicar departed.

CHAPTER III.

I.

AFTER the vicar's departure there had been a 'scene,' and Bella's eyes were red. Miss Brown had uttered some severe reproaches, but it was not until she began to apply opprobrious names to Richard that Bella ventured to speak up on behalf of her lover. Then Miss Brown said, 'Very good!' (meaning the reverse). 'Choose between him and me!'

It was at this point Bella broke down. Life at Hollybush Farm had hitherto been a modest pastoral, though the shepherds piped not as of old; for, if they *had*, Miss Brown would have been down on them like a hammer, and have hustled them round to quite a different tune. To one who had never so much as heard of Melpomene, the advent of the Tragic Muse was naturally rather distressing. Even Miss Brown herself was a little alarmed by the effect of her own eloquence; but she steeled herself, and went on.

'And *this* is my reward! I never had a daughter of my own'—here she paused, conscious of having said something slightly indecorous—'but,' she resumed, recovering herself, 'I have tended you from infancy—I mean, from childhood' (Miss Brown was as exact, to the merest trifle, as the dullest and most unimaginative of persons). 'I looked forward to your comforting my old age, and the first young man who runs after you'—

'He didn't run after me, aunt,' protested Bella.

'What! dare you tell me, to my face, that you ran after *him*?'

'No, aunt,' sobbed Bella. 'I met him at Mrs Dale's.'

'You met him at Mrs Dale's!' exclaimed Miss Brown scornfully. 'Do you mean to tell me all this has come of your meeting him there? Bella, I am not a fool. To tell me I *am* a fool is an insult.'

'Oh, aunt Hester, I never said so!'

'You said as good' (again Miss Brown meant 'as bad'). 'To tell me that what has happened this morning is the result of your meeting Richard Merryweather at Mrs Dale's is to presume I am an idiot. Yes, Bella, you met him at Mrs Dale's. I do not doubt your word so far—but,' concluded Miss Brown, with awful conjunc-

tive emphasis, 'how often have you met him since—and *where*?'

Now this was an awkward question; there could be no doubt about that. To reply to it by stating particulars would simply have roused Miss Brown to a dangerous pitch of exasperation. The best policy was one of evasion. It was emotion, not diplomacy, which caused Bella to burst into tears once more; but, upon the whole, it was the wisest thing she could have done.

Miss Brown did not like to see Bella crying. Notwithstanding the righteousness of her indignation, it made her feel very uncomfortable. She took a few turns round the room, with bent head and hands clasped behind her; and there was silence, except for Bella's sobs. At last she stopped in front of her niece, and said, in a more gentle voice, 'Look round upon the lives of the married women you know. Look at Mrs Burrows, whose husband gets drunk four or five times a week. Look at Mrs Gosling, tied to a brute of whom she goes in mortal terror. Look at Mrs Dibbs, whose husband has spent all he married her for.'

'Yes, aunt,' answered Bella, timidly venturing to hoist Miss Brown on the horns of a dilemma; 'but look at Mrs Stiles, who says that getting married was the best day's work she ever did; at Mrs Gates, whose husband is so fond of her that he'll do anything she wants; and at Mr Bullford, who has never been the same man since his wife died.'

'She *did* die!' cried Miss Brown triumphantly. 'Well, Bella,' she resumed, 'I've said all I have to say. You must choose between this young man and me. You know my opinion of marriage, and I won't see you fall into the pit while I can stretch forth an arm to save you from destruction in spite of yourself.'

With these words, she left the room; while Bella remained, to have her cry out alone.

(Continued on page 469.)

EVENING.

WHEN, silently, the dim white vale below

Twilight enshrouds,
Behind the larches' waving crests there glow
Red clouds.

From out my garden trembles on the breeze
Faint scent of musk;
There roses blush beneath the whisp'ring trees
At dusk.

The western light falls like a golden dream
Of sunset bars,
Then fades, till in the blue above out gleam
The stars.

Night comes, and now uprises a thin wisp
Of wind like breath,
While down the valley running waters lisp
Of death.

LORNA KEELING COLLARD.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

AMENITIES OF WAR.

By F. J. HUDLESTON.

THE amenities of war were unknown to the ancients, who conducted their military operations on the principle of *ex victis*. It is true that the Romans, instead of killing their prisoners, spared their lives, but the ominous etymology of *servus*, a slave, which according to Justinian comes from *servare*, to keep unharmed, shows that they were actuated not so much by benevolence as by a desire for profit. (Even Grotius, the first authority on, if not the founder of, International Law, allowed that prisoners of war, and, moreover, their descendants, became the property of the conqueror.) The age of chivalry softened this harsh rule to a certain extent by the system of ransoms—for those who could afford to pay them. Prisoners the amount of whose ransom was known—Bertrand du Guesclin valued himself at 100,000 livres—were transferred like current coin from one owner to another. In the Black Prince's Letter Book there is a pleasant anecdote of a French knight, Charles, Count of Dampmartin, who at Poitiers was called on to pledge his faith to three 'captors' in succession, such was the anxiety in those days to take an opponent prisoner rather than kill him. This method of ransom, however, once led to an unhappy *contretemps*. It is related of a certain seneschal of St Dié, who at the battle of Nancy killed Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, not knowing who he was, that he died of grief at the thought of the great ransom he had lost by his foolish impulsiveness.

German writers claim that it was Frederick the Great and Franklin who first, in the treaty of 1785 between Prussia and the United States, laid down rules for the humane treatment of prisoners of war. The article (No. 24) of the treaty in question begins: '*Afin d'adoucir le sort des prisonniers de guerre et de ne les point exposer à être envoyés dans des climats éloignés et rigoureux ou resserrés dans des habitations étroites et mal-saines, les deux Parties Contractantes s'engagent solennellement l'une envers l'autre,*' &c., &c. A fine and humane decision, but, to make no mention of the recent war, in 1870, before Germany had been Prussianised, there was, not far from Sedan, a '*camp de la misère,*' which was indeed cramped and unhealthy. All credit to Frederick the Great and Franklin; but

it should be added that a French authority, M. Armand du Payrat, has pointed out that they borrowed their ideas from the writings of Montesquieu and Rousseau.

But, after all, what is International Law? Have not treaties been torn up before now by signatories strong enough, and cynical enough, to do so? Kindness and courtesy on the battlefield will always be due not so much to the rules laid down by Peace Conferences and the teachings of international jurists, as to a more powerful factor—human nature.

The classic instance which will at once occur to many is the invitation of 'My Lord Charles Hai' to the 'Gentlemen of the French Guards' to fire first, as described by that picturesque reporter, Voltaire. This, it is rather to be regretted, has been proved to be a myth. What actually happened at Fontenoy was that Lord Charles Hay, of the First Regiment of Guards, stepped to the front, and raising his glass, drank from his flask to the French, saying, 'He hoped that they would stand until the English came quite up to them, and not swim the Scheldt, as they did the Mayne at Dettingen.' As Mr Charteris, the biographer of the Duke of Cumberland, admirably puts it, 'Lord Charles, with his flask, with his gesture of politeness and hat in hand before the menace of death, conjures up a vision which flutters like a plume on the pages of history.' History repeated itself in the Peninsular War, when on one occasion during a bayonet-charge, according to the engaging Captain Marcel, the French soldiers cried as they advanced, '*Hé! les Goddem, attendez-nous un instant pour le déjeuner à la fourchette.*'

But though the 'gentlemen, fire first,' story is unfounded, there are other well-authenticated cases equally interesting. For example, one would like to know the name of that gallant Frenchman who, in a charge in the Peninsula, encountering the one-armed Felton Harvey of the 14th Light Dragoons, perceived that his opponent was defenceless, and in an instant 'the *coup de sabre* was exchanged for a graceful salute.' As a contemporary writer who describes the incident says, 'Nothing on military record more manly or more beautiful than this.'

It is very pleasant to read that in 1794, after the celebrated 'No Quarter Decree' of

the French Convention directed against 'the slaves of George, the soldiers of the most atrocious of tyrants' (to quote Barère's amiable words), the men of Pichegru's army received their blood-thirsty instructions with universal disgust. According to the anonymous Officer of the Guards who wrote, in the form of epistles to 'Dearest Lucy' and other friends at home, a most entertaining account in verse (with valuable notes in prose) of this campaign, the French soldiers 'would frequently hold forth for hours, with that garrulity peculiar to their country, winding up their remarks with this good and wholesome advice: "Englishmen, go home; you have no business here; you are too honest to be leagued with Austrians and Prussians. They will soon leave you in the lurch; and as to the Hessians, the Landgrave will turn them all over to us to-morrow if the Convention offers him a *placate* a day more than you now pay him." These conversations usually concluded with our men striking up "God Save the King," and theirs "*Ça ira*" or the "*Carmagnol*." According to another contemporary historian (also anonymous) of this war, in an action on the Waal in October 1794 the French frequently called out, 'Good English! brave English!' and gave liberty to several men after they had made them prisoners, telling them it was for their bravery. The sentries were posted upon the ice, which (it was the December of a bitter winter) extended a considerable way across the Waal. The soldiers would chaff each other across the river, the French calling our men 'Jean Taureau,' 'Jack-roast-beef,' and ours calling them in plain English 'damned, king-killing, paper-money scoundrels,' and other opprobrious epithets. On another occasion a French and an English sentry had been airing their views on politics, the Englishman remarking that he would not care to be in the service of the Convention, most of their soldiers being barefooted and obliged to march without shoes. 'Ay,' said the Frenchman, 'that is very true; but how can we possibly keep shoes on our feet when we wear out so many running after you, Mr Englishman?'—a palpable hit to the 'paper-money scoundrel.'

There are many instances of amenities to be found on both sides in the Peninsular War. The Duke of Wellington himself bore witness to this. Lord Ellesmere, in his *Personal Reminiscences*, quotes the duke's account of the 'forbearance and even courtesy and kindness which regular and protracted war generates. The French vedettes, when their people were going to advance, would cry, "*Courez, courez vite! Sacré Nom de Dieu! On va vous attaquer!*"'

There are numerous references to sport in the Peninsula. The duke, as is well known, kept his pack, and there is a pleasant story of a British officer riding across country to join his regiment diverting himself on the way by shooting quail.

According to the Rev. G. R. Gleig, who, before he took orders, served with the 85th Foot in the Peninsula, the French soldiers would show him when fishing in the Bidassoa ('a capital trout-stream') the most likely pools—'genuine magnanimity' he calls this, and all anglers will agree with the phrase. So long as he wore his red coat he was perfectly safe, though within a few yards of the French sentries. He also tells us how on one occasion a British staff officer found a picket commanded by a sergeant fraternising in a little cottage with the soldiers of a French detachment, all laughing and joking together. In the *Journal du Lieutenant Woodberry* (published some years ago in French), we are told that the writer, in January 1814, at Bunloc, exchanged newspapers with an officer of the French outposts, who, hearing in the course of a friendly chat that Sir Stapleton Cotton was giving a ball that same evening, expressed his great regret that he could not be present at it, '*à cause d'une belle dame, son amie, qui doit s'y trouver.*' Dr W. H. Fitchett, in his *Great Duke*, draws a pretty picture of the outlying sentries helping each other to fasten their knapsacks and picnicking together at the outposts—'so well,' says Napier, 'did these veterans understand war and its proprieties.' General Bell, in his *Rough Notes by an Old Soldier*, tells us that British and French officers on the Nive would roll newspapers up round a stone and throw them to each other across the river. The men went further, and would subscribe coppers, which they placed in a mess-tin on a stone in the middle of the stream, the tin being returned later on by the '*bono Frances*' full of cognac. On one occasion, when the coppers had gone, but there was no cognac, a soldier named Paddy Muldoon rushed across the stream, took the French sentry unawares, gave him a clout on the head, and seizing his firelock, brought it back to the British side. For this poor Paddy was, rather hardly, court-martialled, and sentenced to corporal punishment—which, however, we are glad to read, was remitted. His defence was the very sound one that he 'didn't want to be done by any of them frog-eating fellows.'

Carter records in his *Curiosities of War* how the brigade of Foot Guards in May 1811 gave up a ration of biscuit then in their haversacks to the Gordon Highlanders, who had arrived at Fuentes de Oñoro much distressed from want of food; but a finer example of self-denial was the well-known incident of the Sepoys at Arcot in 1751, who, when famine threatened the garrison of which they formed so gallant a part, came to young Captain Clive and offered to take as their share of food the water in which the rice was boiled, saying that 'it was sufficient for their support, but the Europeans required the grain, which was more nourishing.' There was a parallel case to this nearly a hundred

years afterwards. At the siege of Jalalabad, in 1842, when Sir Robert Sale was distributing amongst the hungry garrison 500 sheep captured by a sallying-party, the 35th Native Infantry 'sent a deputation to the general, which respectfully acquainted him that animal food was less necessary for them than for Europeans, and besought him to give their portion of the booty to their gallant comrades of the 13th (Somerset Light Infantry).' There was a charming sequel to this. When the garrison later in the year made a triumphant entry into Ferozepur, the native commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the 35th invited the non-commissioned officers and men of the 13th to 'partake of a dinner which it is our wish to provide, to evince an appreciation of the kindness and cordial goodwill all of you have shown towards us throughout the dangers and difficulties we have together encountered during the campaign. We trust that the mutual good feeling will ever remain undiminished in our future intercourse, and we pray that you may be happy and live many years.' Before leaving India we must quote an anecdote, told by General Neill in his *First Madras European Regiment*, of General Sir Thomas Dallas, who, when the British were fighting the French and the Mysore forces round Pondicherry in 1781, accepted the challenge of a swordsman of Mysore, and, neither getting the better of it, 'each feeling a respect for the other, saluted and retired.' 'Dallas,' he adds, 'and his jet-black charger are yet (1842) spoken of by the old Sepoys and their sons and relations in relating the events of those stirring times—of the latter, like the charger of the great Claverhouse, as something supernatural.'

In more modern times there are instances of kindness and good nature equally pleasant to be found in the by-paths of military history. In the China War of 1840-42 it is related that a kind-hearted, if artful, mandarin in command of one of the Canton forts sent a friendly message before an attack to Captain Dundas of H.M.S. *Melville*: 'If you no put plum in, we no put plum in.' M. Bapst, in his very excellent life of Marshal Canrobert, tells us how, in the Sevastopol trenches, the French and the Russian soldiers would, at a given signal, crawl out of their shelters and stamp their feet to warm themselves during a temporary non-official truce; the Russians would put up a bottle, at which the French would fire, a hit being hailed with roars of laughter and applause from both sides. Even in the Franco-German War of 1870-71, which gave rise to many unhappy mutual recriminations and charges of barbarity and ill-treatment, there are instances of kindness to be found. General Devaureix, in his *Souvenirs*, tells the familiar story how the French soldiers, driven by hunger from Metz (like the *bouches inutiles* of *The*

Green Curve), would go beyond the outposts in search of potatoes and roots quite unmolested by the German sentinels. General Fay, in his *Journal d'un Officier de l'Armée du Rhin*, writes that on one occasion a Prussian patrol, coming across a body of these unhappy marauders, not only allowed them to continue their search for food, but generously gave them all the salt they had—there was none in Metz—and even soup and drink. He quotes a letter found on the dead body of a German soldier to his wife: '*Les Français nous font pitié, ils meurent de faim et ils viennent gratter la terre devant nous pour avoir des pommes de terre et des racines; nous les laissons faire.*' This is corroborated by Baron von der Goltz, who, writing on Metz in *The Franco-German War* (translated by the late General Sir F. Maurice), says: 'For some time a peaceable and forbearing attitude had prevailed in the front; hosts of French soldiers came out daily on the fields between the outposts to dig for potatoes, and our good-natured fellows could not bring themselves to fire at these unarmed men. "Hunger is painful," the sentries were often heard to say, as they looked on quietly at these excursions, which became even more frequent. At last the Prince [Frederick Charles] had to interfere with strict orders.'

Rivers would appear to have a softening influence. Scenes similar to those enacted on the Bidassoa and the Waal were repeated on the banks of the Potomac (presumably when 'all was quiet' along that historic stream), where the soldiers of the North and the South would exchange rude witticisms, calling each other 'ragged and shoeless secesh' and 'blue-bellied Yankees.' But the best instance in the American Civil War is that recorded in the life of that fine character, J. S. Wadsworth of Genesee—it is worth quoting in full. In the fighting on the Rappahannock in April 1863, 'one of our sergeants came to the general (Wadsworth) with a letter which he had taken from the body of a Georgia soldier. This letter was directed to the soldier's wife, and contained a ten-dollar bill of Northern money. The letter said: "My dear wife, I am going into battle very soon. I send all of the money that I have for you and the children. God knows that I wish I had more." Here the letter stopped in a way showing that the writer intended adding to it. The general took the letter, turned his horse as if to hide his action, placed two additional ten-dollar bills in the letter, and sealed it. Then he said, "Poor woman, she has done no harm, and will feel badly enough." The letter was handed to our provost-marshal with instructions to see that it was sent across the line by the first flag of truce.' And yet some say that the chivalry was all on the side of the South.

A somewhat similar anecdote is related of

Grant, who, after sending Buckner, an old friend of his, a stern message insisting on the unconditional surrender of Fort Donelson, as soon as the surrender was carried out, took him on one side with the words, 'Look here, Buckner; I fear you may be short of money before you can communicate with your friends; if so, let me be your banker, and repay me at your convenience.'

And it is not only amongst civilised or semi-civilised nations that cases of kindly feeling to an enemy are to be found, as is evident from a story told some years ago in the *Otago Daily Times* of 'The Hickety-Pip Regiment.' The 'Hickety-Pip' (which is as near as the natives of New Zealand could get to Sixty-Fifth) would appear to have been particularly popular with the Maoris during the war in that country. These amiable warriors carried their friendly feeling so far that when leading an attack upon a *pa* they would greet the 65th with cries of, 'Lie down, Hickety-Pip; we're going to fire.' The same authority goes on to

relate that the Maoris on outpost duty would occasionally suggest to the 'Hickety-Pip' pickets that it was 'too wet and cold for fighting; we'd better all go to sleep. Good-night, Hickety-Pip!'

Some years ago, in a popular melodrama of a quasi-military nature, there was put in the mouth of the heroine a beautiful, if somewhat involved, sentiment: 'A court-martial can control an army of soldiers, but it *cannot control the beatings of a woman's heart*,' a truism which never failed of its round of hearty applause—applause loud enough to drown the sniggers of the sophisticated and the loud guffaws of the ribald. Similarly it may be said that the *Manual of Military Law* provides for most contingencies, but not for the workings of a Maori-like mind.

You may search carefully all your law-books, military and international, under the heading 'Armistice—Power to Conclude; Period of Operation; Rules for Interpreting; Expiration and Operation of,' and nowhere will you find so pleasing a precedent as that of the 'Hickety-Pip.'

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXI.—*continued.*

IV.

ONE night towards the end of January Selwyn had tried to sleep, but the furies of unrest called to him in the dark. He got up and dressed. He did not know where he was going, but he knew that his steps would be guided to adventure, to oblivion.

There was a drizzling rain falling, and, with his coat buttoned close about his throat, he walked from street to street, his breath quickening with the ecstasy of self-abandonment which had at last come to him. Men spoke to him from dark corners; women called at him as he passed; he caught faint glimmers down murky alleys, where opium was opening the gates to bliss and perdition; but, with a step that was agile and graceful, he went on, his arteries tingling in anticipation of the senses' gratification. Once a mongrel slunk out of a lane, and he called to it. It crawled up to him, and he stooped down to stroke its head, when, with a yelp of terror, it leaped out of his reach and ran back into the lane. As if it was the best of jests, he laughed aloud, and picking up a stone, sent it hurtling after the cur. Then he was suddenly afraid. The loneliness of the spot—the horrors lurking in the dark—the dog's howl and his own meaningless laughter. He felt a fear of night—of himself. He hurried on, but it was not until he reached a lighted street of shops that his courage returned, and, with the courage, his fever greater than before.

An extra burst of rain warned him to seek

shelter, and hurrying down the street, he paused under the canopy of a shabby theatre. There was one other person there—a woman. She came over to speak to him; but when she saw the mad gleam of his eyes she drew back, and, with a frightened exclamation, pressed her hand against her breast.

He made an ironic bow, then, with a smile, looked up at her, and she heard him utter an ejaculation of amazement.

For a moment he had fancied that it might be true. The likeness was uncanny! The burnished-copper hair, the silk-fringed eyes, the poise of her head, the tapering fingers—even in the scarlet of her rouged cheeks, there was a similarity to the high colouring of the English girl. What a jest of the Fates—that they should cast this poor creature of New York's streets in the same mould with her who was the very spirit of chastity!

'What a mockery!' he muttered aloud. 'What a hideous mockery!'

He was touched with sudden pity. Perhaps this woman had been born with the same spirit of rebellion as Elise. Perhaps her poor mind had never been developed, and so she had succumbed to the current of circumstance. She might have been the plaything of environment. The wound in his head was hurting again, and he covered the scar with his moist hand. Horrible as it seemed, this creature had brought Elise to him once more—Elise, and everything she meant. He wanted to cry out her name. His hands were stretched

forward as if they could bridge the sea between them.

Like a man emerging from a trance, he looked dreamily about him—at the street running with streams of water—at the silent theatre—at the woman. A weakness came over him, and his pulses were fluttering and unsteady.

A peddler of umbrellas passed, and Selwyn purchased one for a dollar.

'Won't you take this?' he asked, stepping over to the woman, who cringed nervously. 'It is raining hard, and you will need it.'

She took the thing, and looked up at him wonderingly, like a child that has received a caress where it expected a blow.

'Say,' she said, in a queer nasal whine, 'I thought you was a devil when I seen you a minute ago. Honest—you frightened me.'

He said nothing.

'Why'—there was a weak quaver in her whine, and she caught his wrist with her hand—'why, you're kind—and I thought you was a devil. Gee! ain't it funny?'

With a shrill laugh that set his teeth on edge, she put up the umbrella and walked out into the rain. And only a passing policeman saw, by the light of a lamp, that her eyes were glistening.

Selwyn remained where he was, blinking stupidly into the rain-soaked night, as one who has been walking in his sleep and has waked at the edge of an abyss.

CHAPTER XXII.—THE CHALLENGE.

I.

IT was nearly noon next day before Selwyn woke from a heavy, dreamless sleep. Both in mind and in body there was the listlessness which follows the passing of a crisis, but for the first time in many days he felt the impulse to face life again, to accept its bludgeonings, unflinching.

He was almost fully dressed when a messenger arrived with a letter. It was from Edgerton Forbes.

'MY DEAR AUSTIN,—I have been trying to get hold of you for the past week, but you are as elusive as a hundred-dollar bill. Douglas Watson has returned from the front, minus an arm, and he has asked as many ex-Harvard men as possible to meet him at the University Club. We are having dinner there to-night in one of the smaller rooms, and I want you to come with me. I'll pick you up at your hotel at seven, and we can walk over. If it is all right, send word by the messenger.—As ever, FORBES.'

Selwyn's first instinct was to refuse. He had no desire to meet Watson again just yet, nor did he want to face men with whom he had lived at Harvard. But the thought of another

lonely night arose—night, with its germs of madness.

'Tell Mr Forbes,' he said, 'that I shall expect him at seven.'

A few minutes before the time arranged the clergyman called, and they started for the club. The air was raw and chilling, and people were hurrying through the streets, taking no heed of the illuminated shop-windows, tempting the eye of woman and the purse of man. In almost every towering building the lights of offices were gleaming, as tired, routine-chained staffs worked on into the night tabulating and recording the ever-increasing prosperity of the times.

The times!

Ordinary forms of greeting had changed to mutual congratulations on affluence. Anecdotes of business men were no longer of struggle and privation, but of record outputs and maximum prices. Theatres, cafés, cinema palaces, churches, hotels—they had never seen such times. Success was in the very dampness of the air as thousands of people looked at it from the cosy interior of limousines, people who had never aspired higher than an occasional taxi-cab. The times! Dollars multiplied, and begat great families of dollars—and Broadway glittered as never before.

It is difficult to state what trend of thought made conversation between the friends difficult, but after two or three desultory attempts they walked on without speaking. As they were entering the majestic portals of the club, Selwyn was reminded of a question he had intended all day to ask.

'Edge,' he said, 'have you heard anything of Marjory Shoreham?'

'She sailed two weeks ago for France,' answered the clergyman.

They were directed to an upper floor, where they found a hundred or so guests who claimed Harvard as their *alma mater*. Although most of his old acquaintances were quite cordial, Selwyn felt oddly self-conscious. He caught sight of Gerard Van Derwater with his impassive courtliness dominating a group of active but less impressive men; and behind them he saw Douglas Watson of Cambridge surrounded by a dozen guests; but he pleaded a headache to Forbes, and sought a secluded corner, where he remained until dinner was announced.

Like all affairs where men are alone and the charming artifices of femininity are missing, there was a severity and a formality which did not disappear until the ministrations of wine and food had engendered a glow which did away with shyness. The table was arranged in the form of the letter U, with Watson beside the chairman at the head.

Towards the end of the dinner conversation and hilarity were growing apace. Men were forgetting the scramble of existence in the recollection of old college days, when their blood was like wine and the world a thing of

adventure. Mellowed by retrospect, they laughed over incidents that had caused heart-burnings at the time; and as they laughed, more than one felt a swelling of the throat. It was, perhaps, just an odd streak of sentiment (and the man who is without such is a sorry spectacle); or it may have been the memory of ideals, aspirations, dreams—left behind the college gates.

'Gentlemen.' The chairman had risen to his feet. Cigars were lit; and he was greeted with the usual applause. 'Gentlemen, we have gathered here at short notice to welcome an old boy of Harvard—Douglas Watson. He has a message which he wants to deliver to us, and not only because he is one with us in tradition would we listen, but his empty sleeve is a mute testimony that he has fought in a cause which—though not our own—is one which I know has the sympathy of every man in this room. I shall not detain you, gentlemen, but ask your most attentive hearing for Mr Watson.'

As the guest of the evening rose to speak he was greeted with prolonged applause, which broke into 'For he's a jolly good fellow,' and ended in a college football yell. During it Selwyn sat motionless, his alert mind trying to decipher the difference between Watson's face and the others. It was not only that they were, almost without exception, clean-shaven, and that Watson wore a small military moustache; the dissimilarity went beyond that. Although he was obviously nervous, Watson's eyes looked steadily ahead as those of a man who has faced death and looked on things that never were intended for human vision. It had left him aged—not aged as with years, but by an experience which made all the keen-faced men about him seem clever precocities whose mentalities had outstripped the growth of their souls.

And studying this phenomenon, Selwyn became conscious of the American business face.

Although differing in colouring and shape, practically every face showed lips thin and straight, eyes narrowing and restlessly on the *qui vive*, the nervous, muscular tension from the battle for supremacy in feverish competition, the dull, leaden complexion of those who disregard the sunshine—these combined in a clear impression of extraordinary abilities and capacities with which to meet the affairs of the day. What one missed in all their faces was a sense of the centuries.

No—not in all. At the table opposite to Selwyn was Gerard Van Derwater, whose self-composure and air of formal courtliness made him, as always, a man of distinctive, almost lonely personality.

'Thank you very much,' said Watson, as the applause and singing died away. His fingers pressed nervously on the table, and his first words were uneven and jerky. 'I needn't tell you I am not a speaker. I have a great message for you chaps, but I may not be able to express

it. That was my reason for desiring to speak to ex-Harvard men. I did it because I knew I should have men who thought like I did—men who looked on things the same way as myself. I knew you would be patient with me, and I was certain you would give an answer to the question which I bring from France.'

He paused momentarily, and shifted his position, but his face had gained in determination. A few of his listeners encouraged him audibly, but the remainder waited to see what lay behind the intensity of his manner.

'I don't want pity for my wound,' he resumed. 'The soldier who comes out of this war with only the loss of an arm is lucky. Put that aside. I want you to listen to me as an American who loves his country just as you do, and who once was proud to be an American.'

He raised his head defiantly, and when he spoke again the indecision and the faltering had vanished.

'Gentlemen, the question I bring is from France to America. It is more than a question; it is a challenge. It is not sent from one Government to another Government, but from the heart of France to the conscience of America. They don't understand. Month after month the women there are seeing their sons and their husbands killed, their homes destroyed, and no end in sight. And every day they are asking, "Will America never come?" My God! I've seen that question on a thousand faces of women who have lost everything but their hope in this country. I used to tell them to wait—it would come. I said it had to come. When the Hun sank the *Lusitania* I was glad, for at last, I told them, America would act. Do you know what the British Tommies were saying about you as we took our turn in the line and read in the papers how Wilson was *conversing* with Germany about that outrage? I could have killed some of them for what they said, for I was still proud of my nationality—but time went on and the French people asked "When?" and the British Tommy laughed.

'If I'm hurting any of you chaps, think of what I felt. One night behind the lines a soldiers' concert-party gave a show. Two of the comedians were gagging, and one asked the other if he knew what the French flag stood for, and he said, "Yes—liberty." He asked him again if he knew what the British flag stood for, and he said, "Yes—freedom." "Then," he said, "what does the American flag stand for?" "I can't just say," said the other, "but I know that it has stood a hell of a lot for two years." The crowd roared—officers and men alike. I wanted to get up and fight the whole outfit; but what could I have said in defence of this nation? America—our country here—has become a vulgar joke in men's mouths.'

He stopped abruptly, and poured himself a glass of water. No one made a sound. There

was hot resentment on nearly every face, but they would hear him out without interruption.

'The educated classes of England,' he went on, 'are different in their methods, but they mean the same thing. They say it is America's business to decide for herself, but the Englishman conveys what he means in his voice, not in his words. When I was hit I swore I would come back here and find out what had changed the nation I knew in the old days into a thing too yellow to hit back. Mr Chairman, you said I had fought in a cause that is not yours. I beg to differ. There are hundreds of Americans fighting to-night in France. They're with the Canadians—they're with the French—they're with the British. Ask them if this cause isn't ours. I lay beside a Princeton grad. in hospital. He had been hit, serving with the Durhams. "I'm never going back to America," he said. "I couldn't stand it." As a matter of fact, he died—but I don't think you like that picture any more than I do.'

Bringing his fist down on the table with a crash, Watson leaned forward, and with flashing eyes poured out a stream of words in which reproach, taunts, accusations, and pleading were weirdly mixed. He told them they should remove the statue of Liberty and substitute one of Pontius Pilate. In a voice choking with emotion, he asked what they had done with the

soul left them by the Fathers of the Republic. He pictured the British troops holding on with nothing but their indomitable cheeriness, and dying as if it were the greatest of jokes. In one sentence he visualised Arras with refugees fleeing from it, and New York glittering with prosperity. With no relevancy other than that born of his tempestuous sincerity, he thrust his words at them with a ring and an incision as though he were in the midst of an engagement.

'That is all,' he said when he had spoken for twenty minutes. 'In the name of those Americans who have died with the Allies, in the name of the *Lusitania's* murdered, in the name of civilisation, I ask, *What have you done with America's soul?*'

He sat down amidst a strained silence. Everywhere men's faces were twitching with repressed fury. Some were livid, and others bit their lips to keep back the hot words that clamoured for utterance. The chairman made no attempt to rise, but by a subconscious unanimity of thought every eye was turned to the one man whose appearance had undergone no change. As if he had been listening to the legal presentation of an impersonal case, Gerard Van Derwater leaned back in his chair with the same courtly detachment he had shown from the beginning of the affair.

(Continued on page 469.)

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

III.—THE WATER-RAT OR WATER-VOLE.*

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

THE water-rat or water-vole is quite a different creature from the house-rat, for whose sins this pretty and interesting little animal is often made to suffer. The water-vole belongs exclusively to the river pastures and the bank-burrows. It is often plentiful in towns where the gardens border a river, but it never under any circumstances trespasses upon the odorous runways of the odious house-rats. Living in earth-burrows around which vegetation is green, it seldom, if ever, penetrates the drains, but is a clean-living animal whose habits resemble those of the beaver.

The water-vole is very much smaller than the house-rat. Its fur is denser and deeper, its head short and blunt, somewhat like that of a guinea-pig. In fact, the animal is as blunt at one end as the other. The fur varies in shade from mole-blue to hare-brown. Occasional specimens

are quite russet. The under coat consists of fine, blue fur, so close and silken that water does not penetrate it, and the brown shades belong to the outer coat of *hair*, which is tipped with this pigment. I am inclined to think that as the animal grows older the outer coat—the hair, that is, as distinct from the under-fur—increases in length, so that the colour with which it is tipped predominates more and more as the seasons pass. Black varieties are known in parts of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Scotland.

The forefeet have only four complete toes, the thumb being marked merely by a claw. The hind-feet have five complete slender toes, between which there exists the first indication of a webbing. The tail is thickly haired. The ears are very short, and almost hidden in the deep, soft fur surrounding them. The water-vole's eyes are small and black, and regard one with a pathetic expression. Its sight is not good.

The weight of adult specimens is usually about 6 oz., and may occasionally attain 8 oz. The length of head and body seldom exceeds 8 inches. The tail varies considerably in length, but rarely

*The first and second articles in this series, dealing respectively with the Badger and the Pine-Marten, appeared in the May and June parts of *Chambers's Journal*.

reaches $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches; from $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 4 inches is probably about the average.

The water-voles are creatures of daylight habits, lovers of the sunshine and of the bright scenes of life. They are fond of crossing and recrossing the water by which they live, and many times, from high up in the hills, I have looked down into the valley, where the river wound like a silver ribbon across the green landscape, to see one of these little creatures, visible from an immense distance, gamely swimming across, the arrowhead of ripples clearly marking its course.

Owing to its water habits, this species has managed to survive many of its near kindred which, though sharing its habitat and being more productive, were exclusively creatures of the land. The water-vole is essentially a beast of the water, and though it does not possess fully developed webbed feet, it is, at any rate, like the beaver, clothed for a watery habitat. The young take naturally to the water almost as soon as they are born—before, indeed, their eyes are open to the light. This is evidently nature's safeguard against the effect of floods, which are the chief among the water-vole's foes. In hilly country rivers and burns are apt to rise with surprising suddenness at any season of the year, flooding out the bank-burrows, and though, as a rule, the nursery-dens are placed above normal flood-level, a spate of exceptional violence may reach the young ere their mother has time to carry them away.

It is a curious fact that though swimming comes naturally to the water-vole, while with the otter it amounts purely to an accomplishment, yet the water-vole never attains the complete mastery of the water attained by the otter. At the best it is but a poor swimmer, and compared with the otter it is a weakling and a land-lubber. When an otter is under water it swims with its whole body, like a leech, propelling itself belly upwards or in any other position convenience dictates; but the water-vole, on the other hand, swims like any other rodent. When diving, it propels itself entirely by its hind-paws, using its forepaws for groping its way, grasping here a pebble, there a twig, and so turning and steering its course with its forepaws, while its hind-paws are used solely as paddles. Some authorities state that the animal propels itself with all four paws when diving in alarm, but though I have repeatedly watched water-voles most closely I have never seen the forepaws used as paddles. Their use appears to be limited exclusively to influencing the direction of travel.

How long can a water-vole live under water? Probably no longer than a trained human swimmer. If flustered and hurried, it is unable to remain totally submerged for more than forty seconds, and, unlike the chicks of moor-hens and other water-fowl, it never hides *completely* beneath the surface. Its diving abilities are

developed just so far as to enable it to achieve concealment by diving till it has reached some point of safe harbourage, such as a bank-burrow, the roots of willows, or dense rushes. Like the otter, it will lie submerged when hunted, only its nose above the surface, taking advantage of any drifting cover, and almost invisible as its body swings with the current.

II.

The water-vole appears to be much prized as a food item by all predatory birds and animals, and for this reason it cannot be doubted that in its natural environment lies the secret of its survival. If the voles had been purely dry-land animals, they would not exist to-day; but as things stand the weasel or the stoat entering a water-vole's burrow is apt to find it empty, the occupants having escaped in the ace of time by the back exit, and so into the water, which retains no lasting scent. Similarly the hawk, striking from above, is foiled by the vole's lightning plunge, and its eyes not being trained to look below the surface, the hawk is unable to follow the course of its intended victim.

The water-vole's natural foes are many, though it may suffer little by their activities except in winter. Since it is nocturnal in its habits as well as diurnal, owls probably stand foremost among its wild enemies. An owl will spend much of its time patrolling a river or a stream where these voles exist, or in waiting silently for their appearance, perched with alert watchfulness on a boulder or in the branches. The heron also is supposed to take water-voles, and there is no doubt that this bird would very readily snap up a young vole that it could easily swallow. The adult voles, however, appear to possess no fear of the gray-coated angler, swimming boldly within reach of his bayonet bill; and as regards any extensive damage, the heron can be written off as a winter foe only. The same applies to the otter, for, though living on apparently friendly terms with the voles during the summer, an otter will make terrible inroads into their numbers in winter, when trout are so poorly conditioned as to afford little nourishment.

Next to the owl, large trout and pike probably rank as chief among this little creature's blood enemies. A seventeen-pound pike caught in the river Ken, in Kirkcudbrightshire, within a mile of Loch Ken, contained a whole family of half-grown water-voles, together with a full-grown wild duck! It almost reminds one of Harry Tate's pike, which enclosed a motor-cycle, a sewing-machine, and part of a tree, and I would put it down as belonging to the same category of pike story if I had not been personally active in the downfall of this particular fresh-water shark.

Salmon, on their up-stream journey, do not interfere very much with the regular residents of the stream; but in winter, when on the redds,

they become ugly in character as well as in looks, and doubtless many a vole, crossing the sheet of water which he considers his, and which the salmon consider theirs, is savagely dragged down by them to be torn to ribbons in the gloomy depths.

In summer the water-voles flourish and multiply; in winter their numbers are reduced to the minimum which suffices to produce next year's normal stock. Thus, while autumn may see the water-vole population of a given stretch numbering five hundred, next spring may find only twenty mated pairs spared to maintain thereon the footing of the species; and so on season after season. In flat country they probably fare no worse than in our northern hills, for, though the floods spread over a wider area, the flood-waters are less turbulent, food is more plentiful, and, generally speaking, the cold snaps are of shorter duration.

The water-vole is seldom found at an altitude exceeding 800 feet. It belongs to the lush low-land valleys, where the growth along the water's edge is rich in seed-producing herbs and many varieties of green-stuff. Sometimes, but not often, specimens are found by mountain lochs and tarns; but, so far as I know, the animal is never resident there, and the occasional specimens seen are probably ambitious wanderers that have loved and lost, and finally lost their way.

The water-vole does not exist in Ireland.

III.

Water-voles are clannish little creatures. They live in families, and appear to be much devoted to each other. The families do not intermingle. Each little clan has its own strictly observed range, and does not trespass on the preserves of its neighbours. A boulder of rock in mid-stream may be the common property of all; but even here the clans do not associate, though all may use the boulder in passing. If a member of one clan is already on the rock and a member of another clan swims up to rest there, the first tenant immediately makes off, as though anxious to avoid a *tête-à-tête*. This I have noticed many times. Similarly, if one vole is compelled to cross the water-front of another, it does so, as far as is possible, by keeping to the water. Should it, while crossing, see the owner of the property, it at once quickens its pace almost to a stampede.

Water-voles adopt the same system as beavers of spreading the alarm by diving noisily when danger threatens. They do not, apparently, strike the water with their tails as the beavers do, but dive with such suddenness that the water closes behind them with a sudden 'plop,' which can be heard at a considerable distance. This action is instantly copied by other voles, startled by the noise, and so the alarm is spread up and down the river-bank ahead of the approaching danger. When diving ordinarily, water-voles do so in perfect silence; it is only when they are alarmed

that the suddenness of their immersion automatically creates the alarm-signal.

The water-vole's powers of multiplication during spring, summer, and autumn are not nearly so great as those of the gray rat, and naturally their rate of mortality is very much higher. The voles are strictly monogamous, and both parents are to be found with the young. The male, indeed, would appear to be an ideal parent, since he certainly helps his mate in her nesting activities and seems to possess a sense of kindly solicitude for his offspring. Probably not more than two litters, numbering from seven to nine per litter, are produced during the spring and the summer.

Whether water-voles remain mated during the winter would appear to depend on circumstances. If their home be well sheltered and secure, it is probable that the union holds good; but during winter the water-voles of our rapidly flowing brooks and rivers in the north generally live solitary lives. It would seem that when the mating bond no longer exists they very easily drift apart, and the flooding-out of their burrow may cause each to seek new quarters quite independently of the other. In winter the struggle to keep alive is so unrelenting that, whatever their intentions may be, the mated couples are liable to be mercilessly separated; though it is probable that, where circumstances favour it, a once mated couple remain mated for life.

So far as I have observed, the nest is usually situated twelve or twenty yards from the water's edge, out in an open pasture or in a wood. Generally it is underground, but so shallow that cattle are apt to tread through the roof, bringing destruction upon the family. When the young are growing, they appear to obtain a good deal of their exercise by extending the burrow in every direction, till eventually it becomes a warren, resembling a maze of mole-runs.

Not infrequently the nest is above ground, concealed by the shelter of overhanging grasses. It is a large nest, consisting of reeds cut into suitable lengths, or of any other material that comes handy. In this case the young are conveyed to the bank-burrow, soon after they are born, by their mother, who carries them in her mouth by the loose skin between their forelegs.

The bank-burrow often contains a cosy nest of which the newly born are found to be making use, but so far there is no definite proof that they are actually born there. I should say it occurs seldom, if ever. More probably they are born quite near at hand, possibly in the hollow trunk of a willow, possibly in an open nest, and are conveyed to the bank-burrow as soon as they are old enough to be carried. The dread of flood-waters is probably at the back of this guarding instinct.

Like the mole and the badger, water-voles are expert diggers. They will even construct underground subways rather than risk exposing

themselves in the open. One of these tunnels may run for a considerable distance from the water's edge up into a wood, for example, or even to a river-side garden; and, like the mouse-creeps in the grass, it is tapped by intercommunicating subways till a veritable maze is formed. What the beaver-canals are to the beavers, these subways are to the water-voles. They exist purely for the transportation of food, and their chief value is that, the animals being of daylight habits, they can venture far afield without exposing themselves to the attacks of birds of prey, foxes, &c.

The water-vole observes no rules or customs in its manner of architecture. It loves to construct its tunnels among the roots of river-side trees, so that its home is braced not only against the assaults of flood-waters, but against burrowing animals larger than itself. Generally there are one or more bolt-holes below the surface of the water, so that the occupants of the burrow can escape from it unseen, to take cover in the reeds or the bushes near. Well above the water-line the burrow is extended here and there, forming chambers sufficiently spacious for dining-rooms and bedrooms. The burrows very often become considerably enlarged by the action of water, and may finally be taken possession of by otters.

In addition to its water entrances and exits, the bank-burrow invariably has at least one exit on the land side, perhaps seven or eight feet from the water's edge. This, however, may be very little used, as it exists chiefly as a ventilator. Old burrows are often very extensive, representing, as they do, the activities of family after family of youngsters who have worked off superfluous energy by enlarging their quarters, while at the same time procuring a good deal of food by prospecting among the roots.

It will be seen from all that has been said that the water-vole stands well up in the scale of intelligence. It possesses the gift of profiting by previous experience, which is the true measure of wisdom in the wild. It has learnt by sad experience that flood-water is the most potent of its foes, and accordingly it guards against this inevitable peril in the best way it knows. It places its nest and its winter store, if such it should happen to possess, well above high-water mark. It constructs its bank-burrow in such a way that it cannot be drowned, or be frozen in during winter frosts. Realising the peril that lurks in the skies, it digs subways to its distant feeding-grounds so that it can come and go unseen. When its young are very small, surprise floods are their greatest danger, and so they are nursed above flood-line. Immediately they are old enough to move about a little the danger of surprise attacks from weasels or gray rats outweighs the danger of the flood, and so they are taken to the bank-burrow, where the water that might have drowned them is at hand

to save them. Should a flood now occur, the young are old enough to contend with it, and unless it be one of exceptional violence, the peril it presents is less than that which exists from the murderous beasts without.

IV.

The water-vole is almost entirely a vegetarian, and one can study its habits closely for some considerable time without finding a single exception to its vegetarian tastes. It lives chiefly on the shoots of willows during the spring, sitting upright and stripping off the bitter bark with its forepaws, then nibbling the soft pith within. It eats also a variety of water-plants and tender shoots of almost any kind. In autumn it eats seeds of practically any variety that comes handy, and in winter may gnaw the bark of any species of hardwood, as rabbits do—gnawing generally at the roots just where they enter the ground. Grass, daisy-roots, clover, bulbs of all kinds, and beech-mast lying on the ground appear to be appreciated items of diet, while it is very fond of potatoes and sweet chestnuts.

I have never known this creature to eat carrion. On one occasion we threw a dead hedgehog into a back-wash about which water-voles were daily seen, but there it remained, untouched by them, till the next spate bore it away. On another occasion a dead sheep, carried by the current, lodged near a water-vole burrow, and a day or two later a portion of the sheep was seen to be gnawed. Here, we felt sure, was the expected evidence; but subsequent observations proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the gnawing was the work of a gray rat. The water-vole, therefore, is of no value as a scavenger, and will even ignore the water-logged stem of a cabbage washed up near its home.

Nor is this animal guilty of raiding the redds of trout and salmon, as is so often thought. Such depredations are limited to its interesting little congener, the water-shrew.

One or two naturalists refer to the water-vole's partiality for fresh-water mussels, which it is said to eat by gnawing a hole through the shell at one side near the hinge; but there seems insufficient evidence to prove that this is the work of voles and not of shrews, which, while very carnivorous in their habits, are, moreover, very secretive. Water-voles are regularly seen close to a place where the empty mussel-shells lie about; and since the shrews are never seen there, their activities being nocturnal, the natural conclusion is that the voles are responsible. Further information bearing on the water-vole's alleged carnivorous habits would be greatly valued. Up to the present we are probably fully justified in regarding it as no more carnivorous than is the beaver.

So far as one can judge, the storage habit is less strongly developed in the water-vole than in most of its congeners—certainly less strongly

developed than in the gray rat. The muskrat and the beaver both have their stores, and it is probable that in a country of long, severe winters the water-vole would fall in line with the rest.

When winter comes many of the water-voles leave the river-banks for more sheltered quarters. They are particularly fond of small ponds nestling in woods, and overgrown with a dense entanglement of briar and berry, and here, having their creeps deep in the undergrowth, they may spend the winter unseen and unsuspected. During exceptionally cold snaps they often remain underground for days on end, and this fact would seem to suggest some kind of a store within the dwelling. In all probability water-voles, like many other creatures, hoard their stores unsystematically in various places, a little here and a little there, instead of placing all their eggs in one basket; and though we have on sundry occasions found *caches* at the water's edge, among the undermined roots of river-trees, or in the hollow trunks of the trees themselves, and though the work looked like that of water-voles, no decisive proof was forthcoming.

It is, however, very difficult to understand

how this little animal could survive a winter of exceptional severity if it had no store of some kind on which to fall back. Its diving-powers, as already stated, are not great, and it is almost inconceivable that it could keep itself alive for any length of time by procuring its food from the bed of the pond or stream beside which it lived. In some cases this might be done, but the gravel-beds of most of our northern streams must be particularly unfruitful, though many water-voles manage to winter by them. Assuredly these individuals do not keep themselves alive by diving for their food. Similarly, I have known several voles to winter by a little woodland pond, the bed of which consisted of unfertile clay thickly covered with decaying leaves. In such cases the vole that had no store would, when the earth was frost-bound, be compelled to obtain all its food from above the ground, thereby exposing itself to such perils that it would undoubtedly fall ere the coming of the spring. It is only reasonable to suppose, then, that this creature, so highly intelligent in other ways, counts among its gifts the ability to lay aside for a wintry day with a forethought more liberal than is generally imagined.

THE AWFUL MISS BROWN.

CHAPTER III.—continued.

II.

WHILE these things were occurring at Hollybush Farm, the vicar found Dick Merryweather awaiting his return at the little parsonage. 'Here you are!' cried Dick. 'Well, what's the news?'

The vicar shook his head as he sank into a chair.

'Dear me!' said his sympathetic nephew. 'I'm afraid you've had rather a rough time. Please tell me all about it;' and the vicar gave an account of his interview with Miss Brown.

'Ah!' said Richard when he had finished. 'So she's dead against me? I thought she would be. Well, Uncle Theophilus, I'm greatly obliged to you. I know you did your best, and I shall never forget it. And now,' he continued, straightening his shoulders and expanding his chest, 'I must attack Miss Brown myself.'

'I hinted that, as I had failed, you might possibly call on her yourself; and I regret to say she almost threatened you with personal violence.'

'Did she?' cried Dick. 'Well done, Miss Brown!'

The vicar glanced at him admiringly, but seemed doubtful as to the result of such desperate resolution. 'I wish you success with all my heart, Richard; but I most earnestly hope there will be no disturbance in the parish.'

'No fear of that, uncle. If Miss Brown chooses to box my ears for running after her niece, she's as welcome as the day. I sha'n't mind, so long as she doesn't box Bella's—or yours.'

When Richard said 'or yours,' he felt he might have gone a little too far, so he added, 'But, of course, she would not think of that.'

Mr Doubleday glanced round, as if to make quite sure nobody was within hearing. Then, lowering his voice, he said, in an awe-struck whisper, 'My dear Richard, it's my belief she *did* think of it.'

III.

The very next day it happened that Hester Brown and Richard Merryweather met on the road just outside the village.

'Miss Brown,' began Richard, with his usual directness, 'I understand you are strongly opposed to me as a suitor to your niece.'

Very much annoyed at being stopped by this young man, and compelled to return to a subject so distasteful, she set her lips tightly, and inclined her head without speaking.

'May I ask what is your objection to me?'

'I have no *personal* objection to you—simply because I know nothing much about you.'

'Then,' said Richard, 'may I beg you will do me the honour to know more of me, in the hope that I shall improve upon better

acquaintance? May I ask this as a great favour, Miss Brown?'

'I don't wish to know more of you,' replied that plain-spoken lady. 'You would probably not improve on acquaintance. Men don't.'

'Will you give me a chance of doing so? Really I am not a bad sort of fellow, though I say it who should not.'

'You have said a great many things you should not.'

'You mean to your niece? I am sorry I cannot agree with you.'

'It's all the same to me whether you agree with me or whether you don't.'

'I admit that I am a man,' he went on apologetically; 'but can I help it?'

'I do not say it is your fault.'

'Nor is it my misfortune in the present case; for if I were not a man, how could I hope to become Bella's husband? She could hardly marry a haystack.'

'It would be better if she could, if she *must* marry something.'

'Really, Miss Brown, I feel sure she would be happier with me, especially as she prefers me. And as for yourself, I assure you you would find me a most affectionate nephew.'

Richard must have lost his head when he made *this* remark. It filled Miss Brown's cup of bitterness to overflowing.

'Mr Merryweather,' she flashed out, 'I forbid you to speak to my niece! I shall forbid my niece to speak to you; and—and—good-morning!'

Having thrown this valediction at him like a stone from a sling (or as if it began with an 'm' instead of a 'v'), she strode past him, completely disregarding the final effort he made to detain her.

IV.

On her part, Miss Brown recognised it was war to the knife, and she was not long in deciding on her plan of campaign. Her first idea was suggested, a day or two after her encounter with Merryweather, by a drowsy yawn from her dog, who was blinking in the sunshine of the garden. He was an easy-going, portly old fellow, of no particular breed, and was called Rover because he disliked too much exercise, and seldom went far from home. When Miss Brown walked over to where he lay, he rapped his tail once or twice on the ground, and closed his eyes.

She left him to repose, and went straight off to the village carpenter, who, on the following day, sent a man to fix a notice-board beside her gate with 'Beware of the Dog' in bold black letters on a white ground. When the man had gone, Miss Brown stepped into the lane and surveyed his handiwork with so much satisfaction that Rover trotted out and had a look also. If he felt dubious as to whether he could act up to

the warning, he was not the only person who entertained doubts on the point, for at that moment Richard Merryweather came down the lane.

'Good-day, Miss Brown,' he said, raising his hat and bowing with great respect (he was really a very polite young man, and it was rather hard Miss Brown should put it down to mere impudence). 'I hope you are well this morning?'

'Thank you,' she replied coldly. 'I have nothing to complain of so far as my *health* is concerned.'

Meanwhile Richard was flattering himself in the thought that it was a good omen she did not 'make a bolt of it,' and leave him standing there alone, as she had done a few days before. It did not occur to him that she was merely tarrying to observe the effect of the newly erected notice-board.

Bending down to pat Rover, he asked, 'Is this the dog I am to beware of, Miss Brown?'

'*You?*' she answered, looking down upon him as he looked up at her. 'Who said anything about you?'

Instead of replying to this question, he patted Rover once more, and called him a 'fine old fellow.'

'He is *not* old,' said Miss Brown.

'Forgive me if I suggest he is not so young as he was.'

'We are none of us so young as we were.'

Richard inclined his head, with a gravity highly becoming a light-hearted young fellow suddenly recalled to the contemplation of serious things. Of course, he might have assured Miss Brown that *she* at least looked as young as ever; but, with a person of her temperament, this would have been a mistake.

'But, Miss Brown,' he resumed, 'if you really want a dog to protect the premises, I know of a splendid bulldog which the owner would be willing to part with. He is a capital watch-dog. You might leave your doors unbolted all night with him about the place.'

'I have no intention of leaving my doors unbolted at night.'

'At the same time, if you want a good house-dog, I can strongly recommend the one I speak of.'

'I have no doubt you know the dog.'

'Oh yes; I know him very well.'

'And the dog knows you?'

'Yes, he knows me.'

'Quite so! Thank you! I prefer my own dog,' retorted Miss Brown.

She re-entered the garden, walked into the house, and shut the door. She was not very indignant at this sample of masculine treachery, for she felt that she had had the best of the engagement, and had shown how readily she could unmask the machinations of a villain.

Nevertheless, it had not escaped her notice that Rover wagged his tail when Richard

Merryweather patted him, whereas he ought to have bitten a piece out of him. Possibly it might be as well to get an additional guardian of less amiable disposition; but, then, there were drawbacks to the presence about the place of a strange dog of uncertain temper. She thought the matter over; and when Miss Brown thought anything over, something usually came of it.

What came of it in the present instance was another notice-board, the erection of which cost her a slight twinge of conscience. In regard to the first board, there had been nothing she could not reconcile with her homely, straightforward code of ethics; for she did really possess a dog that, some years before, had pursued a boy who came to rob the orchard, and had not abandoned the chase until the culprit turned, in desperation, and picked up a stone. Still, this second notice merely said, 'Man-Traps and Spring-Guns,' which, in itself, was vague and meant nothing, when you came to think of it; unless people chose to infer that any person prowling about at unlawful hours ran the risk of being caught by the leg in a powerful gin, or complimented with a few slugs of a kind more injurious to human beings than to cabbages. What a convenient thing it would be, she thought, if her house were an old-fashioned grange with a moat and a drawbridge! For, even had she heard of Hero and Leander, she would have considered Richard too much of a dandy to try *that* experiment.

Whether he was a dandy or not, it was a pity he could not mind his own business. Naturally, Miss Brown preferred to be taken seriously; but he need not have arrived one fine morning on the other side of her garden fence, when she was giving an eye to her flowers. It looked as if any excuse would serve him for hanging about the place.

'Miss Brown!' he cried. 'I *must* speak to you! I must appeal to your humanity. Suppose, through my fault (or what you are pleased to consider my fault), some perfectly innocent person should be caught in these things which you have placed about your house?'

'Innocent persons don't come where they have no right,' replied Miss Brown.

'But, by some accident, even you or your niece might'—

'They are *man* traps,' interposed Miss Brown.

'But the spring-guns, Miss Brown! The spring-guns!'

'They are never loaded until night.'

In for a penny, in for a pound. Even when a child, Miss Brown never told fibs; and she was more angry than ever with Richard for making her feel how easily she *could* tell them when once she began. Nevertheless, it was very distasteful; so she determined to put an end to the conversation, especially as she detected a twinkle—a most impudent twinkle—in Richard's eye.

She regarded him severely across the fence. 'Young man,' she said, addressing him in a way

she considered at once hurtful to his dignity and consistent with her own, 'I believe you think there are not any guns about the place at all.'

'How *can* I think so, Miss Brown, when I have your assurance to the contrary?' motioning with his hand towards the notice-board.

'If you *did* suppose so, you would be greatly mistaken.—Robin Redyeard, come here.'

These last words were addressed to a youth of strikingly bucolic appearance, who just then emerged from an outhouse, and who was armed with an antiquated fowling-piece. He was on his way to the cornfield, his present duty being to scare birds by pretending to be a sportsman.

'Yes, missus?' he replied, as he came slowly towards her.

'Do you know this person?'

'Ay, I knows 'un. He be Measter Merryweather, *he* be.'

'Well, if you ever see Mr Merryweather on any part of *my* premises, you have my orders to shoot at him.'

'But if so be as I was to hit 'un bad, what 'ud they do to I?'

'Whatever you do will be done by *my* orders, and I will answer for it.'

'If so be as that be so, missus,' said Robin, pulling his forelock to Richard, as if promising to do him a service for which he hoped to be remembered, 'I'll shoot at 'un, if I sees 'un anywheres hereabouts.'

So saying, he departed slowly with heavy tread, an ordinary country clod. But as the townsman frequently looks less stupid than he is, the countryman is often not quite so stupid as he looks.

While Robin was passing a bush near a corner of the house a fair eavesdropper stopped him, and said, 'Oh, Robin, you won't really do it! Will you?'

After glancing cautiously round, he whispered, 'There bean't no shot in it, Miss Bella. It won't hurt nobody, if so be as they don't come close up agen it.'

Nor was this the sole proof given by this unlettered swain that he grasped the situation. Soon after, when Richard was passing a hedge-corner where one might crouch concealed from observation, a voice called to him, 'Measter Merryweather! I zay, zur!'

'Well, Robin, my lad, what is it?' said Richard, approaching him.

'Miss Brown, zur! She do give it them as don't do what she tells 'un. Ah, that she do! I don't know as I wouldn't sooner be had up at 'Sizes, rayther nor not do what Miss Brown telled me.'

'Well, Robin?'

Robin tapped his gun. 'There ain't no shot in it, but I *could* put in some old nails just to oblige.'

'Yes, Robin, if you happened to think of it.'

'Ay,' responded Robin, with a grin; 'that's just how it be. If I happened to think on it.'

'Well, here's five shillings *not* to think of it.' 'Thank 'ee, zur,' said Robin.

'And I have no doubt, Robin,' continued Richard, in persuasive tones, 'that if I gave you *another* five shillings one of these fine days, you could deliver a letter to Miss Croft for me?'

'To the young missus?' said Robin. 'Well, I bean't no schollard; but if I *knowed* it was for she, I won't zay but what I might. You see, zur, I be just the sort o' chap as nobody 'ud think it on.'

Having thus hinted at superior opportunities resulting from his well-known stupidity, the honest fellow went his way.

CHAPTER IV.

I.

BEFORE the week had gone, a thing happened which absolutely astounded Dredgefield, so that it could hardly find words to express its feelings.

One morning Miss Brown missed Bella, but was too much occupied to notice the fact particularly, and supposed her to be 'somewhere about.' Moreover, the precautions she had used seemed to have been effective, Richard Merryweather not having been seen near the place for some time. As for her own people, he was not likely to find an instrument among *them*. It was not until dinner-time, when there was still no sign of Bella, that Miss Brown began to wonder where she could be.

Just then Robin Redyeard came up to her, saying, 'Missus, I see'd Measter Merryweather a while since; but he worn't on *our* land, and I hadn't got no gun wi' me.'

'Oh, very well, Robin,' said Miss Brown. 'That doesn't matter. I only meant if he came trespassing.'

'That's what I'd somehow sort o' got into my yead. So I says to myself (says I), "You ain't got no call to meddle wi' 'un if you don't see him somewheres by the Blasted Ellum, or by the Wiggles Brook, or on our side o' the hedge by the lane-end; or if you don't come agen him round by the corner o' the old barn, or sticking of his yead in at the dairy door, as if he was arter running off wi' the milk-pails, or among the ricks i' the yard, or"'—

'Yes, yes,' said Miss Brown a little impatiently. 'There's no need to do anything if you don't see him somewheres about the place.'

'Yes, missus. It wor down by Beech Lane I see'd him this time. I were coming back from Joe Sledge's wi' the mare, as I'd took to be shod. He were standing there (Measter Merryweather were) by a coach and pair o' hosses; and he says to I (Measter Merryweather du), "Robin Redyeard," says he, "be you going back to Holly-

bush Varm?"—"Ay, sure," says I. "Where else 'ud I be going?"—"Then," says he, "you give that there letter to Miss Brown."

'What letter? Where is it?' cried Miss Brown.

'It be here,' answered Robin, producing it with great deliberation.

'Why didn't you bring it to me at once?'

'Well, missus, as I were putting the mare back i' the stable the colt got out, and it took I a rare while to catch 'un. And I'd to look arter that there mook as was i' the yard, and had to be teaken down to the fower-acre. And I says to myself, "Who be Measter Merryweather?" says I. "He bean't nobody to speak on. His business ain't got to come afore missus's wi' Robin Redyeard. Hern's got to come afore hisn's."

Miss Brown tore the letter open, and, after reading the first few words, turned the full torrent of her wrath upon the innocent bearer.

'Robin Redyeard,' she exclaimed, 'you're a fool!'

'Yes, missus,' replied Robin. 'I knows I be.'

'You ought to have brought this letter to me *at once—instantly!*'

'Ought I to ha' done *that*,' said Robin in amazement. 'Well I *du* be sorry as I didn't.'

'There! Get away with you!' cried Miss Brown. 'Go back to your work!'

Was Robin really as innocent as he appeared? Was he entirely ignorant of the fact that he had done wrong in retaining the letter for a good four hours after he had received it? On his way to his work, after leaving his mistress, he took a golden sovereign from his pocket, and, regarding it with an expression of genuine perplexity, said, 'Now I 'se got it, danged if I know what to do wi' it. I never can't spend it.'

Miss Brown went to her own room and re-read the letter.

'MY DEAR MISS BROWN,' it ran, 'I fear I shall offend you more than I have already done by the step I am taking; but you have left me no alternative. I will really and truly do my best to make Bella happy; so I cannot understand why you object to her marrying me. We hope you will forgive us both when we return.—Your affectionate nephew,

'RICHARD MERRYWEATHER.

'P.S.—I have ventured to call myself your nephew because when you read this we shall be man and wife.'

In his hurried postscript Richard completely gave Robin Redyeard away, but Miss Brown was too enraged to notice this; and, as she tore the letter into fragments (upon which she deliberately trampled), she had no opportunity of referring to it afterwards. For an hour she sat alone, with firmly set lips, knitted brows, and a face paler than usual. Then she descended to her household duties, the woman she had been, only rather more so.

II.

After an absence of three weeks Richard reappeared in Dredgefield with his bride. The first thing Bella did was to send a letter of humble entreaty, begging for her aunt's forgiveness. Miss Brown replied that, of all human faults, ingratitude and deceit were the basest and the most hateful; and that, after Bella's conduct, she threw her off for ever. 'I said,' the letter concluded, 'you must choose between him and me. You have made your choice, and must abide by it.' She refused to speak to Bella in the public street. The poor girl returned to her new home in tears, and her husband had great difficulty in comforting her with the assurance that Miss Brown would come round in her own good time if she were left alone.

During the months which followed these momentous events the expression of Miss Brown's features became grimmer, and the outlines of her person looked more rigid and uncompromising than ever. Nobody at Hollybush Farm was absolutely forbidden to speak of Bella, but every one knew her name was not to be mentioned.

Prohibited from entering beneath the roof which had sheltered her for so long, the tender-hearted girl, full of gratitude to the woman who had befriended and protected her, could not help feeling she had committed a crime in the deception of which she had been guilty. The beginning of Bella's married life was made thoroughly unhappy by the shadow thus cast upon it. Dredgefield became aware of this, as little places become aware of things which escape notice in bigger places. It knew that Bella had met her aunt more than once; that, upon approaching her with appealing eyes and gestures, she had been cruelly ignored. According to some people's notions Dredgefield might be slow, not to say dull; but it had its feelings. It sympathised with Bella, and, with all its respect for Miss Brown, considered she was overdoing it. It began to think much better of Richard Merryweather than it had ever done since he came to reside in its midst; for, feeling his wife's sorrow keenly, he looked downcast, and was not so lightsome as he had been.

But whatever the parish, the county, the British Empire, its protectorates and dependencies, might think of her, Miss Brown went her own way, unyielding, and defiant of public opinion. The gentle little vicar was outraged by her obduracy, and by her refusal to relax it when he ventured to approach her on the subject. He even went so far as to preach a sermon at her on Christian forgiveness, and Miss Brown sat it through without moving a muscle.

When the anniversary of Bella's elopement came round, however, an extraordinary thing happened. Miss Brown fell ill. Dredgefield was utterly dumbfounded, and knew not what to make of it. Several of the older inhabitants

remembered her having measles, whooping-cough, and one or two infantile odds and ends; but as a woman she had never given in to any ailment whatsoever. Dredgefield was naturally anxious to know what was the matter with her, but the doctor himself seemed unable to give it a local habitation or a name, and, when questioned, said something vague about nervous debility. At this Dredgefield opened its eyes incredulously, and shrugged its shoulders. The idea of Miss Brown having a nervous system liable to be upset by anything under the sun, from a wild bull to a boa-constrictor, was too ridiculous for words. A practitioner of the manufacturing districts might have regarded the stomach as the original cause; but the natives of Dredgefield for generations had led outdoor lives, and indigestion had never been one of their favourite complaints. If they *had* any preference in this way, it was for rheumatism. It could not have been influenza, because influenza was not yet invented; it might have been that Miss Brown, in her obstinate refusal to be reconciled to her niece, had done violence to her better nature, and that a sustained effort of this kind had finally told upon her. Anyhow, she sent for Dr Rowley, much to his, and to everybody's, astonishment.

Dr Rowley was a kindly little man, round and rosy, and a couple of inches shorter than his patient, so that it seemed quite absurd he should order Miss Brown to go to bed. She complied, nevertheless, and stayed there for several days, thinking she was getting to be a feeble old woman, not long for *this* world—which was quite a mistake, for in less than a fortnight she was almost herself again.

Dr Rowley had a kind heart, and was eager to do a little office of peace and goodwill outside his profession. He told Miss Brown that Bella had been constant in making inquiries about her. Miss Brown said, 'Oh, indeed; had she?' in tones not wholly ungracious; so he was encouraged to add that she had been anxious to come to Hollybush Farm and nurse her aunt, but that he (Dr Rowley) had absolutely forbidden it. Miss Brown stared at this, and he hastened to explain that the present state of Mrs Merryweather's own health—

'What!' cried Miss Brown, who had never dreamed of Bella's being ill.

'Oh, nothing to be alarmed about, Miss Brown,' Dr Rowley assured her. 'Only at such times a little care and—and circumspection are advisable. As much freedom as possible from all kinds of worry; that is all. The mind should constantly be diverted from—from—— However, Miss Brown, these are details in which you, as a single lady, cannot be supposed to take much interest.'

So the doctor took his departure, leaving her a good deal puzzled at first, but with the truth gradually dawning upon her.

(Continued on page 472.)

UNFINISHED.

By G. R. GLASGOW.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, in one of those gallant, unforgettable phrases that punctuate his essays, has said that 'it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive,' but this, I think, is true only of a very vaguely sketched-out journey, when you do not particularly want to arrive anywhere, but just to wander at will. It is very pleasant to wander in byways, to follow up branch-lines into unknown places, to sail in and out of unfrequented streams, with gay fellow-travellers who do not mind where they go; but, however hopefully you may travel, such voyaging will not bring you to your journey's end; and if, like all the rest of the world, you start on the road that leads to Rome, in so far as you fall short of your initial plan, your journey remains an unfinished and incomplete attempt. You may have many pleasant things to tell of Verona; you may be able to describe in glowing language the glories of Venice, and the mysterious beauty of St Mark's; you may have stood on the Bridge of Sighs, and studied the frescoes in the church of St George and the Dragon; but you will not be able to describe Rome, or to give your impressions of St Peter's or the Appian Way. You may have gone far, but you will not have gone far enough; your journey will be a mere sketch, instead of the finished picture you intended it to be.

I have been thinking lately a good deal about unfinished work of all kinds, drawn thereto by contemplating a number of sketches, the unfinished work of a clever artist of the last generation. There are over thirty of them, mostly in faint, half-obliterated pencil; some sketchily inked in; some on good, stout paper that has defied the wear and tear of time; many just memoranda on a thin writing-pad; but all so covered with hieroglyphics—with notes of colour, of form, of possible improvements—that one saw that all were intended as merely the first steps to a coloured sketch or a finished picture. If the idea had been carried out—the pencil notes erased, and colour washed in—they would no doubt have been charming; the artist, like most of her generation, and like her 'who was cousin to Lady Jones,' painted in water-colours, and, to judge by the few framed and finished pictures left to us, she painted charmingly. It was an art much cultivated in those days when ladies would almost as soon have thought of leaving their tooth-brushes out of their holiday kits as their paint-boxes.

These sketches were given to me with a vague, half-formulated wish that I should finish them! Even now the artist could not bear

to tear up these children of her fancy, nor was she strong-minded enough to burn them—but what else can one do with unfinished work, especially other people's? It is never too late to pick up your own, and make a completed picture from memory or imagination; but no amount of guiding notes or data such as deface these drawings can for a moment make you see the place with other eyes, or enter into the spirit of it from another artist's point of view. And yet a few hours' work at the beginning, a little determination, would have turned each of these map-like scraps of paper into a more or less interesting and finished work of art.

It is very often the same with a writer. He gets an idea into his mind, and it eludes and obsesses him, whilst he faintly pursues, twisting and turning it into the channel that pleases him best—invents the thread of the story, toys with the dialogue, makes an occasional note, and determines that a start will be made next morning, repeating to himself very firmly the old saying that 'a thing begun is a thing half done.' But somehow it never *is* begun—it never gets beyond the embryo, and gradually fades away into the limbo of forgotten things. 'Any time is no time'—also an old and true saying.

A man may have great talent, he may even have genius, but if he cannot get his ideas on to paper he remains mute and inglorious to the end, for one brick laid upon the earth is worth a thousand castles in the air. He is one of those of whom 'tis said in the obituary notice: 'He did not fulfil the promise of his youth'—he leaves only unfinished work!

But sometimes, as in the suggestions in marble of Rodin or the sketches of Turner, the sketch *is* the finished work. Genius has taught such people exactly where to stop. Even so you may deliberately turn aside on the road to Rome and stand fast at Venice, instead of travelling, however hopefully, to the end of the journey; then it is Venice you will describe to an admiring audience, not Rome, and you will, after all, have accomplished something, and not merely drifted. Very likely the possibility of stopping short may have been at the back of your mind all the time; but the vague, unsatisfying journeyings without a definite object, the sketchy and quite incomprehensible hieroglyphics and notes that never grow into a picture, the ideas that never crystallise into print or show a touch of creative art—these are the sad unfinished works with which the road to some artists' hell must surely be paved.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

PORTUGAL, like every other country, suffers at present from too much politics. In times of peace and plenty, when it seemed that in spite of all human limitations and difficulties the world ran smoothly on and a measure of happiness and content was within the reach of all who sought it fairly, we would say with a smile that politics was a game, as it really was with some, though we then, unthinkingly, scarcely half-believed our saying—for at heart we held politics in some awe as a thing, after all, of transcendent importance, a system for the government and the welfare of the people, with vast ideals reaching far on towards a millennium. But now we discover, through the hazards of war and the following tribulations, that politics is a real game, and something more than a game—a deep and depressing evil from which humanity suffers, and which of itself threatens the future of the world and of civilisation. The greed of men for power, influence, authority, has more and more led them to excesses of unscrupulousness and selfishness in politics, a complete disregard of the public welfare so long as their own aims may be furthered—machinations, mendacities, every form of corruption—until the progress of peoples is arrested by this positive vice. These things, it may be said, have always existed; politics prevailed, no doubt, in the days of the Pharaohs, and we know that Rome and Athens were full of them. But in recent times, with economic and other questions assuming a greater complexity, the fever of politics has increased, and with situations less intelligible to the people than they used to be, the politicians, swarming in numbers, increasing in unscrupulousness, have taken advantage of circumstances, so that our present politics, in which there is small room for ideals, are the most dangerous that have been known. We suffer from them in Britain; they suffer deeply in France. Germany and Russia owe to a large extent their unhappy state to politics; Italy, Spain, many other European countries, the East, the Americas, all labour under this heavy load of politics, led by the hunters of selfish vanities. But it seems to one who has had occasion to make some close study of the general situation that Portugal, a small and comparatively obscure state, tucked

away in a corner of Europe where, as one might say, she is seldom seen, has laboured more heavily than any other nation in recent times under a depressing load of politics, and it is largely that which has brought her to her present unhappy position. Of course, there have been other leading contributory causes. The Bolshevik danger is great in this western part of the Iberian peninsula. Beyond doubt the emissaries of Lenin are abroad in the land, striving assiduously. I was given much convincing and authoritative information upon this point by those who knew and understood that the Russian Bolsheviks attached great importance to the capture in some measure of Portugal, regarding it as a kind of key position for them. Certainly the Bolshevik element is very strong, and it may be said that of all the European countries most likely in recent times to turn over to the Soviet system, following the example of Russia, Portugal ranks first. She has been very near it already, but the danger may be averted. In face of this menace, however, the better minds of the nation have felt afraid, and hindered in their action. Another strong contributory cause of Portugal's sufferings and disorder has, of course, been the war, but the country should not have felt the strain of the upheaval so much. Her burden was comparatively small, and though she is not self-supporting, her fields and pastures supply her with an abundance of food that would be the envy of many other states. Her contribution to the man-power of the war, if adequate, was not such as to make a vital strain upon the nation.

* * *

On the other hand, Portugal suffered immediately, and suffers still, from the vice of profiteering. While there are many poor in Portugal, while distress is in many parts acute, and we have the spectacle of a tax for the poor being levied upon every hotel bill, and even every time a person buys a glass of milk (two centavos to the escudo is the 'assistance' tax in hotels and restaurants, and it is twice as much in milk-shops and beer-halls), wealth has been piled up enormously by individuals, and, in proportion to the population, Portugal contains, as it would seem to the onlooker, a larger number of new rich than any other national community.

They flaunt their wealth ; they make some vulgar displays, and some others which are not so much vulgar as impressive. One of the general difficulties of the world at the present time is apparently to get building done. Material is so scarce, and labour is so expensive and so hard to handle, that in most countries the people are crying aloud for habitations in which to live. But in Portugal the new rich, such is their wealth, their power, and their influence, have no difficulties ; and at Estoril and Mont Estoril near by—lovely spots on the Portuguese Riviera, a few miles away from Lisbon, where there is sunshine through the winter, roses bloom in January, palms give welcome shade, and birds sing continually—they are making for themselves a place of charming villas, all with outside walls of white or creamy glistening tiles, with decorations in delicate tints and tasteful designs (these tiled houses are often really beautiful things, such as those who have not seen them have no conception of), representing the wealth and the interests of the capital city, and corresponding in a manner to Tivoli of old, or Pompeii perhaps. All these things and others have been contributory causes to the difficulties of Portugal ; but in the main it is politics that have brought the country to a desperate pass, and caused her to stop suddenly in frightened apprehension, as occurred a few weeks ago, at the sudden realisation that if things went much further on that road there would be foreign intervention, and she might for a season lose her independence and freedom of action. There had been a meeting in Lisbon of representatives of the Allies to consider what steps it might be desirable to take in certain contingencies to save their sick friend from herself and protect their own interests. Portugal has always been a land for politics, and the collapse of the monarchy let loose a flood of this vile stuff, flinging out such enchanting possibilities to every little political schemer in the land as he had never dreamt of, and few of them were sufficiently honest, had enough of the true patriot in them, to resist the temptation to achieve some degree of power, to be unselfish, to be for the country only. Parties arose, and then more parties, and parties again, and all the time the country lacked men who were strong enough for the real business of good steady government. When a party became fairly established, dissensions occurred within it because of indiscipline and the general desire for power. Each man would be himself a leader. Then the party would break up into small sections, each with its own head ; alliances would be made with other parties and other sections for the purpose of enhancing power. New parties would thus be formed, and machinations were the continual order, the country meanwhile crying out for control and some ordering of its affairs. But no ; the politicians and the parties

pressed steadily on with their selfish practices ; they hardly made a semblance of heeding the national needs ; all was politics, a multiplicity of parties, the formation of new sections, and the wild rivalries of the political gamblers. Little wonder that in such circumstances monarchist hopes should revive, and a gallant adventurer in Paiva Couceiro, something of a Bonnie Prince Charlie in his manner and attitude, should feel new hopes, and, crossing the northern border, should proclaim the monarchy again in Oporto. Once or twice a stronger man arose from the maelstrom of politics and called the country to its senses. Such a one was Sidonio Paes, the President who was assassinated some eighteen months ago. He was suspected of being too much royalist, and to this day it is a question in Portugal as to the real character and intentions of this man, whose mind is discussed upon evidences, deductions, and conjectures, as we discuss the mind and sense of Hamlet. Some say he worked stealthily for the monarchy ; others that he was a sound, though Conservative, Republican. His memory is either worshipped or hated. In February, more than a year after his death, one found continual intercessional religious services being held for the salvation of his soul ; and to such an extent did these increase, and so much were they political and dangerous, that at last the Government stepped in with a forbiddance, and said that thereafter there must be no more of them, and the soul of the departed Paes must be left to look after itself. Then, in February, his body, the coffin and all about it piled high with wreaths tied in purple ribbons, still lay in state in the old church at Belem, opposite to the tomb of Vasco da Gama. Whether he was a sound Republican or not, Sidonio Paes was a brave and an honest man, and one of the strongest that Portugal in her troubles has produced.

* * *

Near the end of last year the tricks of the politicians, and the complexities they had formed from which they could not extricate themselves, led to an amazing state of things. The neglected country was slipping to something like ruin ; the Bolsheviks, the strikers, the revolutionaries were manifesting themselves. I went to sleep in my bed at night sometimes to the sound of the crashing of bombs in the street outside, and the city was so much possessed with nerves that when a motor-car went sparking through the big central square—the Rocio—the people would give a start, and there would be a commotion as if more bombing, exploding evil were abroad. A few months before, the new President, José d'Almeida, had gathered the leaders of parties together at the headquarters of government at Belem, and appealed to them to sink their differences, abandon their parties if need be, and strive for the country's sake. It was an honest appeal ; the President himself, once a keen party man, had abandoned his party and caused it to be dis-

solved. For a day a sympathy for Portugal was stirred in the hearts of the politicians; they were moved with a little compassion for their land, and a touch of simple sincerity, of unselfishness, was felt within them. They promised to be better, and they went away from Belem to Lisbon full of good intentions. But, once contracted, the vice of politics is a hard thing with which to grapple. Soon the old fault broke out again, and it was the worse for the rest it had had, while it throve in the extremely difficult financial situation that had arisen and the desperation that it engendered. More parties were constructed, more sections; more men would be leaders; more dissensions and machinations arose. The Government fell, and, amid the mass of jealousy and confusion, the crisis thus brought about could not be met. Ministry after Ministry was tried in construction, but every attempt failed for weeks, until at last one Fernandez Costa, a good Republican and a man with some knowledge of finance, but of no considerable strength, succeeded in piecing together a Cabinet that seemed as if it might be sworn in to government and might hold together. But immediately its formation was announced there were demonstrations against it. On the day after its construction, and before it had been presented to the President and to the Parliament, a mob marched through the streets demonstrating against it. This crowd hardly knew what it did at the beginning; there is always a crowd for any sort of demonstration in Lisbon. It gathered knowledge as it went along, and so its demonstration intensified. At last the idea seized it of bearding the new Cabinet in its den. Ecstatic upon the idea, it galloped to the place where the Cabinet was sitting, making its preparations for entry into government. A deputation strode past the complaisant guards into the chamber where the Ministers deliberated, showed pistols, and demanded the resignation of Fernandez Costa and all the rest. The alternative was some shooting. Fernandez Costa accepted the situation, and in one of the most remarkable letters of resignation that a Premier ever penned he sent his abdication to the President, explaining the circumstances with as much show of dignity as he could muster. Then followed more crises, more machinations, and more intense difficulties, until it seemed that the breaking-point was reached; but at last there was a lull and a certain improvement in prospects when Colonel Baptista, a man of some determination, took the helm and gripped it firmly. In the meantime the country was overborne with strikes; the railways, the postal and telegraphic services, the telephones, had all broken down, and the land was given up to gambling on a grander scale than any country had been given up to it before. There were some sixty gambling-saloons in Lisbon, another hundred or more along the Riviera; in Oporto and all the smaller towns of the pro-

vinces the gambling evil was terrible, and there were cries of anguish from all quarters that it was draining the life of the people away; and yet at this moment the malign spirits in the land were concocting schemes by which Portugal might openly exhibit herself as a gambling country, and invite foreigners to visit her for that purpose. None too soon for her welfare did Portugal shut these places down. It was the first step towards recovery.

* * *

Let us turn from such peculiarly material considerations, troubles and doubts of the passing time, to eternal beauties, things that do not pass away. In scenic beauty-spots this western border of the Iberian peninsula is more abundant than is imagined by those who do not wander in such parts. Queen of them all is Cintra, of which the poets have chanted rapturously. One day I went to Cintra, and approached it by the road on foot. I did so in a somewhat cavilling mood, since a while before, when Cintra seemed so near, it had peevishly appeared to retreat, and there was nearly an hour of postponement of the intimate acquaintance. Consequently there was an early impression that the poets were deluders. They see and are charmed as others are, but forthwith, their imaginations aflame, they depart upon æsthetic enthusiasms of a general kind. Thus it happens that those who follow them are laden in advance with an expectancy, vague but immense, in which mood little below the standard of a Paradise could satisfy them. A glory that grows slowly, steadily, but surely, upon receptive senses, completed by a climax most superb, is hardly enough; there must be for them the quick achievement, the staggering surprise of exalted natural beauty, some gorgeous sublimity of grandeur. Of the sights of the world it has seemed to me that only one in my experience overwhelmingly seizes the artistic soul at the first glance, and that is when, as you journey up the great Niagara gorge on a sunny afternoon, the falls, in a shining distance that seems ethereal, suddenly appear on your rounding a bend. Ethereal, indeed, with gossamer vapours all about them, is just how then they seem. On this the poets have been mostly silent; few of them travelled out that way. But numbers of them proceed to Portugal, and while Byron pretended that Cintra was too splendid for his poetic pen, Southey declared that this was the most blessed spot in the habitable world. So they sang in ecstasies. Yet at first, as one strolled into Cintra on a bright spring morning, one wondered why the poets raved; for, whilst indeed one saw at the beginning that here were beauty, dignity, grandeur, and, above all, an immense variety and a fine depth of verdure, there was a cantankerous feeling that the poets, lacking judgment, had valued the scene over highly. And that, too, even though one might have been

predisposed towards it by a point or two on the first delayed admission ; for, on entering the little and ancient town in which medieval Moors and modern kings have loved to dwell, was there not a lemon-grove on one side of the road, and melons ripening on the trellised roof of a summer-house on the other, as nowhere else in these parts in February ? And passing along the winding, hilly streets, up and down which the patient pack-donkeys labour with their women-tended loads, hearing as we do the murmur of a rivulet which veritably is like a spring song of Mendelssohn, seeing a medley of the working-folks of Cintra round about a fountain, being attracted by the constant recurrence of high, smooth walls everywhere, covered with lichen, which seem to impart a peculiar strength and dignity to this place, and conscious likewise of the old Moorish palace with its strange conical kitchen chimneys towering over us upon an immediate height, we still experience a certain sense of want created by the poets.

* * *

But the effect of the charm of Cintra is gradual and quickly accumulative. There is a new and subtle revelation at each pace. A tranquil and meditative mood is essential for a proper appreciation of the glory of this spot. There should be rest, contemplation, and soliloquy by the wanderer here ; he must himself be in the poet's mood. Thus he may adventure upon the steep ascent to the heights of Penha, which in their abruptness are hidden as he wanders in the little town itself. At the summit is the famous castle, up to the time of the revolution the favourite residence of the Portuguese kings, queens, and princes, that in which they abode to the end. The journey to the heights may be made by horse-carriage, or by motor-car, or on foot, or on the back of a donkey. It is a matter for careful consideration, for this ascent, beginning at the middle of the little town, the first stage being through a narrow street, is long and steep. It may be, winding as it does, much over a mile. Compassionate folk do not ask horses, already a little tired perhaps, to make this climb for them, and the motor-car is incongruous to the surroundings and gives no space for reflection on the way, as is needed for the true appreciation and enjoyment of the time and the place. It is good to walk, and if one tarries for days and nights in Cintra and has the opportunity, this is the true way. It is better that hours should be taken for this winding mile, when the Moorish castle—not the aforementioned palace—on the twin crag opposite makes wonderment across a ravine, and in its stark barbarian grandeur poses before us as we move about, casting the view from many different points. The other way is by donkey-back, and it is recommended for its adventurous flavour and its appositeness to the

circumstances, since it is well known that the Moors rode donkeys, and after them Robert Louis Stevenson when engaged in certain travels. We should, then, ascend the Penha by donkey rather than grind and groan along that glorious path in a motor-car ; but not all who thus adventure, with only such experience of the ass for riding as was gathered spasmodically on sea-side sands in a distant childhood, have a fair appreciation in advance of the importance of preserving the centre of gravity of the human contrivance over the spine of the patient animal, and the difficulty of doing it. Good it is to go up to Penha on the back of an ass, pleasant the dainty patter of its hoofs along the moistened road, but bad that anything should detract from an intense concentration and the tendency to deep reflection. For as we climb on and round by this winding, shady, perfumed road, up the steep heights of this rock on which the palace is perched as an eagle's nest, the majesty of Cintra fills the soul. To a scene of massive verdure, viewed across depths from wooded shades, there is added that sense of solitude and eternity essential to what is truly sublime in nature. Over the walls, green lichen still, there are precipices, ravines ; and as we mount the hill, the instinct of approach to the hidden palace increases, though it is never to be seen until the last. We pass enormous boulders bordering the walk, looking as if they might have been hurled there in some mythical age when Hercules and Titan revelled in such a playground, and then, through the gates, there is a sudden lapse to the gentleness of flower-laden gardens, and we reach the palace doors.

* * *

Within the Penha palace are wonders enough, and sadnesses with them. Of the pomps and vanities of earthly poses there are morals written silently. Here is the bedchamber, with domed ceiling, of a still living queen who slept there on her last night in Portugal ; here by the bedside is the candle, with blackened wick, she extinguished as, uneasy, she sought her slumber then. There lie upon a table in an adjoining room a number of illustrated papers dated for that very week of flight ten years ago, and there are periodicals of social gossip telling of the doings of kings and queens and those concerned with them. But from this that passes, irony speaking from every point, one moves to the terrace without, and, near the golden cupola, gazes on that which does not pass away. For here is a view, so splendid in its spaciousness, that is one of the grandest the world affords. For fifty miles or more we look across a plain of Portugal, white villages glistening on many spots, Collares of the vineyards, Montserrat of the beauteous gardens near, the convent of Mafra out upon a distance, Lisbon and the Tagus, and the blue Atlantic blended into the sky

so that ships seem hanging to the heavens ; and in the foreground or the middle distance, giving strength by contrast to the rest, that recurring, awesome rock on which the Moors in their intrepidity built themselves a fastness. . . . And if Penha is in her moods, even while you gaze in

wonder, while you feel that, after all, the poets wrote but a little of the truth, she may with jealousy suddenly, in an instant, wrap impenetrable mist about you, snatching away the gorgeous scene. Then, wondering, humble, you feel fearfully and carefully for your descent.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXII.—*continued.*

II.

‘MR VAN DERWATER,’ said the chairman hoarsely ; and a murmur indicated that he had voiced the wish of the gathering.

Slowly, almost ponderously, the diplomat rose, bowing to the chairman and then to Watson, who was looking straight ahead, his face flushed crimson.

‘Mr Chairman—Mr Watson—Gentlemen,’ said Van Derwater. He stroked his chin meditatively, and looked calmly about as though leisurely recalling a tit-bit of anecdote or quotation. ‘Our friend from overseas has not erred on the side of subterfuge. He has been frank—excellently frank. He has told us that this Republic has become a jest, and that we are responsible. I assume from several of your faces that you are not pleased with the truth. Surely you did not need Mr Watson to tell you what they are saying in England and France. That has been obvious—unpleasantly obvious—and, I suppose, obviously unpleasant.’

He smiled with a little touch of irony, and leaning forward, flicked the ash from his cigar to a plate.

‘Mr Watson,’ he resumed, ‘has asked what we have done with America’s soul. That is a telling phrase, and I should like to meet it with an equally telling one—but this is not a matter of phraseology, but of the deepest thought. Gentlemen, if you will, look back with me over the brief history of this Republic. There are great truths hidden in the Past.

‘In 1778 Monsieur Turgot wrote that America was the hope of the human race—that the earth could see consolation in the thought of the asylum at last open to the down-trodden of all nations. Three years later the Abbé Tynals, writing of the American Revolution, said : “At the sound of the snapping chains, our own fetters seem to grow lighter, and we imagine for a moment that the air we breathe grows purer at the news that the universe counts some tyrants the less.” Ten years after that the editor Prudhomme declared : “Philosophy and America have brought about the French Revolution.”

‘I will not weary you, gentlemen, with further extracts, but I ask you to note—and this is something which many of our public men have

forgotten to-day—that at the very commencement of our career we were inextricably involved with European affairs. Entangling alliances—no ! But segregation—impossible !’

For an instant his cold, academic manner was galvanised into emphasis. His listeners, who were still smarting under Watson’s words, and had been restless at the unimpassioned tone of Van Derwater’s reply, began to feel the grip of his slowly developing logic.

‘Thus,’ the speaker went on, ‘at the commencement, our national destiny became a thing dominated by the philosophy of humanitarianism. When we had shed our swaddling-clothes and taken form as a people, the issue of the North and the South began to rise. Because of his realisation of the part America had to play in human affairs, Lincoln, the great-hearted Lincoln, said we must have war. Against the counsel of his Cabinet, loathing everything that had to do with bloodshed, this man of the people declared that there could be no North or South, but only America. And to secure that he plunged this country into a four years’ war—four years of untold suffering and terrible bravery. When, during the struggle, Lincoln was informed that peace could be had by dropping the question of the slaves’ emancipation, his answer was the proclamation that all men were free. With his great heart bleeding, he said, “The war must go on.” Philosophy and America brought on the French Revolution. Philosophy and humanitarianism brought on the war of North and South.

‘The psychology of America, which had been hidden beneath the physical side of our rebellion, took definite form as a result. The gates of the country were open to the entire world. The down-trodden, the persecuted, the discouraged, the helpless—no matter of what creed or nationality, they saw the rainbow of hope. By hundreds of thousands they poured into this country. Slav and Teuton, Galician, Italian, Belgian, Jew, in an endless stream they came to America, and, true to Washington and Lincoln, she received them with the words, “Welcome—free men.” And so we shouldered the burdens of the Past, and men who had been slaves—white as well as black—drank from the fountain of freedom.’

There was no applause, but men were leaning

forward, afraid they might miss a single word. Van Derwater's depth of human understanding, his lack of passion, his solitariness that had been likened to an air of impending tragedy, held his listeners with a magic no one could have explained. He might have come as a spirit of times that had passed, so charged with the ages was his strange, powerful personality.

'From an open sky,' he continued, 'came the present war. The older nations, knit by tradition and startled by its imminence, flew to arms at a word from their leaders. France, who had been our friend, looked to us; but what was our position? In fifty tongues our citizens cried out that it was to escape war that they had come to America. Could we tell the Jew that Russia, which had persecuted him to the point of madness, was on the side of mercy? Could we convince the Teuton that his Fatherland had become suddenly peopled with savages? Could we say to the Irishman, bitterly antagonistic to England, that Britain was fighting for the liberation of small nations? Could we ask the Greek, the Pole, the Galician, to go back to the continent from which they had come, and give their blood that the old order of things might go on?

'But, you ask, what of the real American, descended from the men who fought in the Rebellion and the Civil War? Yes—what of him? From earliest boyhood he has been taught that Britain is our traditional enemy. To secure existence we had to fight her. To maintain existence we fought her again in 1812. When we were locked in a death-struggle with the rebellious South, she tried to hurt our cause—although history will show that the real heart of Britain was solidly with the North. In our short life as a people we find that, always, the enemy is Britain. In one day could we change the teaching of a lifetime? The soul of America was not dead, but it was buried beneath the conflicting elements in which lay her ultimate strength, but her present weakness.

'What, then, was the situation? Events had outridden our national development. Whether it could have been avoided or not I do not know. Whether our education was at fault, or whether materialism had made us blind—these things I cannot tell you. I only know that this war found us potentially a nation, but actually a babel of tongues. Without philosophy and humanitarianism this nation could not go to war—and in those two things we were not ready.

'I do not belittle the many gallant men who have left these shores to fight with the Allies, but I say that in a world-crisis the voices of individuals cannot be heard unless they speak through the medium of their nationality. The question from France is not "Will Americans never come?" but "Will America never come?" When the war found the Americanisation of our

people unfinished, it became the duty of every loyal man in the Republic to give his very life-blood to achieve solidarity. Do you think we could not see that the Allies were fighting our battle? It was impossible for this nation that had shouldered the problems of the Old World not to see it—so we began the education of all our people. We could have hurled this nation into war at almost any hour by an appeal to national dignity, but our destiny was imperative in its demands. Not in heat, which would be bound to cool; not in revenge, which would soon be forgotten; but by philosophy and humanitarianism alone could this great Republic go to war.

'Yet, when this Administration looked for help, what did it find? The two races that come to this country and never help its Americanisation are the Germans and the English. They remain true to their former citizenship, and they die true to it. Gentlemen, that must not be again. America will always be open to the world, but he who passes within these gates to live must accept responsibilities as well as privileges.

'I am almost finished. For two years and a half we have fought against the disintegrating forces within our country. We have endured the sneers of belligerents, the insults of Germany, and the tolerance of Britain—and still we have fought on. Literally we were struggling, as did our forefathers, for nationhood. But let me ask Mr Watson if our psychological unpreparedness was entirely our fault. When Britain allied herself with Russia, did she give a thought to the effect it would have on the American mind? To us, Russia was the last stronghold of barbaric despotism, and yet Britain made that alliance, identifying herself with the forces of reaction. I do not say that we would have entered into a similar or any agreement with Britain, but there are alliances of the spirit far more binding than the most solemn treaties. I accuse Britain of failing to make the advances toward a spiritual covenant with the United States, in which lay—and still lies—the hope of this world.'

A messenger had entered the room and handed a note to the chairman. It was passed along to Van Derwater's place and left in front of him. He took it up without opening it, and fingered it idly as he spoke.

'A nation does not need to be at war,' he went on, 'to find that traitors are in her midst. The struggle of this Administration for unity of thought has been thwarted right and left by men of no vision, men drunk with greed, men blinded with education and so-called idealism. Mr Watson, you ask what we have done with America's soul. I will tell you what we have done for it. There are many of us in this room who have given everything we have—our time, our friends, and things which we valued more

than life—because we have respected the trust imposed on us of maintaining America's destiny. I am sorry for your empty sleeve. But let me assure you that we, also, have known suffering. Because we believe in America—*first, last, and always in America*—we have stayed here, enduring sneers and contumely, in order that when America speaks it will be like the sound of a rushing cataract—one voice, one heart, but the voice and heart of Humanity. In no other way can America go to war. And until that moment arrives I shall wear this garb of neutrality as proudly as any soldier his uniform of honour.'

He sat down, and in an instant the whole crowd was on its feet. Men cheered and shouted, and, unashamed, tears ran down many faces. With his heart pounding and his eyes blinded with emotion, Selwyn did not make a move. He could only watch, through the mist, the figure of Gerard Van Derwater with its cloak of loneliness. He saw him look down at the message and break the seal of the envelope. He saw a flush of colour sweep into the pallid cheeks and then recede again. Still with the air of calmness and self-control, Van Derwater rose again to his feet. 'Gentlemen,' he said. The room was hushed instantly and

every face was turned towards him. 'Gentlemen, I have received a message from my headquarters. Germany has announced the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare.'

For a moment the room swam before Selwyn's eyes. The shouts and exclamations of the others seemed to come from a distance. And suddenly he found that he was on his feet. His eyes were like brilliants and his voice rang out above all the other sounds. 'Van!' he cried, 'does this mean war—at last?'

With steady, unchanging demeanour his former friend looked at him. 'Yes,' he said. 'At last.'

And as they watched they saw Van Derwater's hands contract, and for a moment that passed as quickly as it came his whole being shook in a convulsive tremor of feeling. Then, in a silence that was poignant, he sank slowly into his chair, his shoulders drooping, listless and weary. With eyes that were seeing into some secret world of their own he gazed dreamily across the room, and a smile crept into his face—a smile of one who sees the dawn after a long, bitter night.

'Thank God!' he said, with lips that trembled oddly. 'Thank God!'

(Continued on page 488.)

FISH AND THEIR EGGS.

AS a general rule fish seem utterly careless as to what becomes of their eggs and their young. They deposit their eggs, and leave the rest to chance. In the case of such familiar fish as trout, cod, pike, &c., eggs and young are freely devoured by their own kind as well as by others. There are, however, some very interesting and remarkable exceptions, in which the care and the solicitude bestowed on the young are not surpassed by any other member of the animal kingdom.

The case of the male stickleback building a nest and guarding eggs and young is well known, and need not be dwelt upon. Any one can observe it by keeping these interesting little fish in an aquarium. We wish here to call attention to some less-known, and perhaps even more remarkable, cases.

In the rivers of the country south of Hudson's Bay there is a species of chub which the Indians of those parts call *awadosi*—that is to say, stone-carriers. Many individuals seem to club together to build a *stone nest*. They carry stones to the chosen spot, and heap them up together for a common nest. Each nest contains from a barrow-load to four or five tons. The stones, which weigh from under an ounce up to a pound, are carried in the mouth. On this nest the eggs are laid.

In many cases, as with the stickleback, it

is the male fish which constitutes itself the nurse. In that quaint little fish known as the sea-horse the male has a sort of pouch at the base of the tail. Into this the female places the eggs, and they are there carried about till hatched. More remarkable, perhaps, are the species in which the males carry the eggs about in their mouths till they are hatched. During this period, in some cases at any rate, they eat nothing. Quite a number of live young have been taken out of the mouth of a male parent. Considering that so many fish devour their own eggs, it is surely a wonderful triumph of instinct that the parent who has made his mouth his nursery should be able to refrain from swallowing eggs or young—especially after fasting, as he apparently must, for several days.

The paradise-fish from China takes the eggs in his mouth, but does not keep them there. In the first place, he ejects bubbles of air which rise to the surface, and do not burst. They form a patch of lasting and tenacious froth on the surface. Then he takes the eggs in his mouth, and places them underneath the bubbles, which thus form a sort of nest.

Occasionally it is the female which takes upon herself the duty of caring for the eggs. In a species of American fresh-water fish the female, after depositing her eggs, presses the lower part

of her body over them. And then a little receptacle is prepared for each egg in a curious way. The skin under it forms a tiny cup enclosing the egg, which ultimately becomes a little stalked globule hanging down from the

belly of the fish. These curious fringes on the female fish were observed long ago, but only recently has it been learned that they are eggs. The eggs are carried about in this way till hatched.

THE AWFUL MISS BROWN.

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

III.

WHEN the doctor paid his next visit he was surprised to find how Miss Brown (who as a rule was remarkable for straightforward, not to say blunt, speech) contrived to get news of her niece from him without putting direct questions. It chanced he was rather busier than usual, and as by this time she was almost completely recovered from her indisposition, he felt himself justified in neglecting to call at Hollybush Farm (which was out of his way) for two or three days.

Towards the close of the second day Miss Brown was observed to grow exceedingly fidgety; next morning her nervousness had increased. About midday she heard some one raise the latch of the garden gate, and, glancing through the window, saw Richard Merryweather hurrying towards the front-door. His step was buoyant and elastic, his face as bright as the day, which was a very fine one. Richard putting a cheerful countenance upon things in general would have suggested nothing remarkable in an ordinary way; but his appearance was that of a man animated by a joy strange and new; for things, however old, are ever new unto those to whom they happen for the first time.

Miss Brown experienced a sudden sense of relief, and, simultaneously, a hardening of the heart towards him, as she went to the door to inquire his business.

'Well,' she asked, 'what do *you* want?'

If Miss Brown had regained her self-possession, it was quite evident that Richard was flurried and excited to the verge of incoherence. 'Bella couldn't rest—positively couldn't rest,' he exclaimed, 'until I promised to come and tell you it was all right.'

'Tell me, *what* was all right?' demanded Miss Brown.

'We both made sure you'd be glad to hear it. I say, Miss Brown,' pleaded Richard, '*do* say you're glad to hear it! Let me tell her you are. Dear girl! It will make her *so* happy.'

'Richard Merryweather,' she said, glancing at him contemptuously, 'what do you mean? Are you mad?'

'I think I am—just a little. I can't help it. I've been so anxious, and it's such a relief to have it over, and both of them doing famously. Dr Rowley says he never saw a finer child.'

'Oh, *that's* what's the matter with you, is it?

Well, you've no one to blame for it but yourselves.'

'Miss Brown!' (more beseeching and breathless than ever). 'At a time like this—bygones be bygones—after all she has been through'——

Hester Brown was a woman, after all, and could not help being subject to a few human weaknesses, however hard she had striven to be rid of the whole catalogue. In spite of herself, her eyes and her voice softened, though, unfortunately, she took too much for granted.

'I have no objection to your saying that I hope the little girl'——

'But it isn't a girl,' interrupted Richard.

'What!' cried Miss Brown.

'It's a boy,' he explained.

'A *boy*!'

'Yes. As fine a little fellow as ever you'——

Miss Brown fell back across her threshold, and shut the door in his face.

'It's just like him,' she muttered to herself bitterly. 'I might have known it!'

To have the door banged in his face did Richard good in a way. It pulled him up, and steadied his nerves, as a bucket of cold water might have done. He laughed gently to himself as he thought, 'She was going to give me a message of some kind, and I won't go back without one, if I can help it.'

He heard Miss Brown's voice, and guessing it came through some open window near at hand, followed the sound round a corner of the house. It was the kitchen window, and the lower sash being raised, he thrust in his head.

'Miss Brown!' he said. 'Do, please! Just a few kind words. It won't cost you much to say them, and they'll be worth a lot to her.'

Miss Brown was quite angry—first, at the sex of her new relation; next, at being attacked a second time, before a staring country wench with round eyes and an open mouth, who stopped in her work to listen. The first thing she did was to close the window with such violence that Richard had to withdraw his head rapidly to avoid being guillotined. Then she left the kitchen, and ascended to her own chamber, whither he could not follow her without a ladder. She heard his lingering step below; and, standing a little back within the room, she watched to see him fairly off the premises.

At last, slowly and with bowed head, he went down the path towards the gate. As he passed

it he turned with a longing glance, and a face so sad she would hardly have known it. When he went on again she saw how different from the brisk, eager tread of a few minutes before was the heavy step with which he was returning to his young wife and newly born child. Before he had gone far he paused, as if minded to retrace his steps and try again; but all his old light-hearted hopefulness seemed to have deserted him. He shook his head, as if he thought, 'There's no help for it!' and then she lost sight of him.

She started, as she felt something tickling her cheek. She brushed it away, like a fly, and said, 'Hester Brown, don't be a fool!' But the thought of Bella, awaiting her husband's return with a longing which was doomed to disappointment, *would* intrude itself; and, willy-nilly, Hester Brown was destined to make a fool of herself.

CHAPTER V.

I.

RICHARD had been sure Miss Brown would melt when she heard the news—the great news!—and that all would be forgiven. A sanguine temperament has its drawbacks. It may help a man over many obstacles in the path of life; but if he comes to a fence which *won't* be negotiated upon any terms whatever, his despair is proportionately greater than that of the pessimist, who, expecting nothing but disappointments, usually gets what he bargains for.

When Merryweather came within sight of his own house his heart sank as he thought of the task before him. How could he tell Bella the result of his errand to Miss Brown? How could he comfort her when she knew? Should he hasten back to Hollybush Farm, and once more entreat her, or upbraid her with her hardness, and try to move her that way? Move her! Could anything move her? And that poor girl lying there, anxiously expecting his return with the message she was longing for! Good heavens! What was he to do? For the first time in his life this good-natured fellow found the world out of joint. In his despair he clenched his hand and struck his forehead; then he strove to calm himself, and make the best of this bad job.

Suddenly, as he looked back along the road, he gave a great gasp of astonishment. Round a far-off bend, a tall, vigorous woman was coming rapidly towards him with swift, powerful strides. There was no mistaking Miss Brown, though he could scarcely credit his eyes, even when she stood in front of them.

'Have you seen her yet?' she asked.

'No; not yet,' he answered, still regarding her with amazement.

He thought she looked greatly relieved, as they walked on together without another word; for Richard's heart was too full for speech, and Miss Brown was rather out of breath.

When they came to the house she stopped and said, 'Don't you think she ought to know I am here, before we meet?'

'Miss Brown,' broke out Richard, in unbounded gratitude for the turn things had taken so unexpectedly, at the very acme of his despair and desperation, 'she will be overjoyed—it will do her more good than all the—this really *is* kind of you—I am deeply'—

'Answer my question,' commanded Miss Brown.

'Yes,' said Richard. 'It will be such a surprise that I think—I really *do* think it would be better for her to know you are here before she sees you.'

'Then,' replied Miss Brown, pointing sternly to the door, 'go and tell her!'

II.

'It's wonnerful!' said Farmer Dobbs, a day or so after, when he and his cronies were assembled at 'The Load of Hay.' 'It's downright wonnerful! Who'd ha' thought as he'd ha' worked a reg'lar miracle wi' that there baby, and wi' a woman like Miss Brown?'

'Worked a miracle wi' a baby?' sneered Giles Jobson. 'It worn't him nor it worn't the baby. Him and his baby! It was Miss Brown as thought she'd do it, and did it; just as she thought, for the last twelve months, as she wouldn't do it, and didn't.'

'Well, she's been there pretty reg'lar ever since,' said Dobbs.

This was the truth, for regularly, once a day, Miss Brown called to see her niece—which was much for such a busy woman. When Bella was up and about once more, her visits became less frequent; but there was no sign of their ceasing altogether. Miss Brown might fancy she despised herself for consenting to a reconciliation, after holding out for a whole year; but she could not conceal the fact that she was a happier woman for her weakness.

Dredgefield agreed with Farmer Dobbs in thinking it wonderful, but Miss Brown *was* Miss Brown; so there was no more to be said.

III.

What would Dredgefield have thought if it had witnessed a little incident which happened when Bella's baby was three months old? One day, when Miss Brown was present, Richard held the infant in his arms, and, uttering certain parental inanities, swung it gently to and fro in front of her. She looked on in grim silence until, during one of these oscillations, its head seemed to go dangerously near the edge of a good solid table that stood in the centre of the room.

Then she started up. 'Tut, tut!' she cried in angry alarm. 'Give it to me!'

And she took it! *Miss Brown actually took the baby*; and, what is more, she did not give it up again until she rose to go, when she restored it to its mother with a caution against masculine incompetence.

Bella laid it asleep in its little cot and accompanied her aunt into the garden, to take leave of her.

'I'll be very careful, aunt,' she said. 'Perhaps Dick is a little clumsy with baby. But, aunt dear,' she added coaxingly, 'isn't he a good fellow?'

Miss Brown hesitated. She had yielded so much already that she found the words difficult to say; but they came at last. '*He might be worse.*'

'Dick!' cried Bella, after Miss Brown had gone. 'Dick!'

He ran out. 'What is it?'

'What *do* you think? I asked Aunt Hester if you weren't a good fellow, and she said you might be worse!'

'Hurrah!' shouted Richard, almost loud enough to wake the baby. 'I *knew* she would come round!'

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A PRINTING-PRESS FOR THE OFFICE.

IN many large business-houses there is an almost constant demand for printed forms of one kind or another, and sheets which are typewritten and duplicated would often be printed if suitable apparatus were available in the office. Such apparatus is furnished by the 'Multigraph,' by means of which type can be set up and printed from by any one of average intelligence. The basic part of the machine consists of a small rotary printing-press, which may be either turned by hand or driven by a small electric motor, the electricity being obtainable by connection with an ordinary electric-light plug. The type is very short, and is cut to fit into dovetail grooves in segments which can be quickly attached to the printing-drum. It can be set by hand or by a semi-automatic device to be described later. In its simplest form the machine may be used for printing or reproducing typewritten letters by means of a broad ribbon which is large enough to cover the complete body of type. When driven by an electric motor, and, therefore, being run at a much higher speed than when turned by hand, the 'Multigraph' is fitted with an automatic paper-feeding device, which holds 500 sheets and stops the machine when the feeder is empty. Another useful accessory is an automatic platen-release, which prevents the type from printing on the platen when the supply of paper fails. Other attachments include an 'ink-fountain' and a set of rollers for using printing-ink of any colour, and for facilitating printing from electrotypes; also a device for printing facsimile signatures at the same time as letters, an electro of the desired signature being inked in a special colour by a separate mechanism. The semi-automatic setting-up of the type in the segments is accomplished thus. In the machine for effecting it, the type is carried in a grooved drum, and the segment to be filled is mounted with its grooves opposite those in the drum.

Across the top of the machine is a bar marked with the letters of the alphabet in various types. This bar is provided with a sliding indicator, which is moved by means of a hand-wheel by the left hand of the operator, while the right hand manipulates an operating-key. Having set the indicator to the letter wanted, the operator turns the key, which slides the letter from its groove in the type-drum to the corresponding groove in the segment. The operation is performed quickly, a smart man or woman being able to set up eighty words a minute. The complete outfit includes a printing-machine and the apparatus for setting the type; but, for use where space is limited, a machine is also sold in which the printing and the type-setting devices are combined. With this machine, however, the setting of type cannot be carried on while printing is proceeding, as is the case with the separate machines. The printing-machine will produce forms, circulars, or letters at rates up to 4800 an hour, and it is said to save 40 per cent. of the charges made for printing such matter.

AN IMPROVED EARTH-AUGER.

When fencing is put up, it is necessary to dig for the posts a series of holes, varying in depth from two to three feet. These holes need be only just large enough to take the bottom of the posts, but if dug with a spade they must be much bigger at the top to enable the operator to get at the bottom, the result being that the posts are supported in the main by loose, freshly-filled-in earth. With the 'Empire' earth-auger, however, holes can be bored of exactly the right size, so that the posts are held rigidly in position by undisturbed, firm ground, while the labour involved in digging the holes is vastly reduced. The auger proper is fitted with two hard steel blades, one of which can be opened to shake out the earth when the auger is full. It is turned by a vertical spindle terminating at the top in a wooden crossbar; in fact, the tool

closely resembles that used for boring wood. The implement is made in two sizes, one of which can be adjusted to cut holes from five to eight inches in diameter, and the other to cut holes from eight to fourteen inches across. Each size has a maximum cutting-depth of three feet six inches.

A NEW CHURN FOR THE HOME.

In these days of high prices it is not surprising that in many households the cream is skimmed off the milk and made into butter. Where the quantity is very small the churning is often done in a bottle or a jar, but for larger quantities small mechanical churns are obtainable. Most of these involve the turning of a handle, which, by means of gearing, rotates a vertical stirrer. Recently, however, a simpler form of home butter-churn has been placed on the market. This consists of a cylindrical vessel, made of tin-plate, nine inches high and six inches in diameter, into which the cream is poured. Right up the middle of the vessel is a perforated wooden partition, dividing it into two equal parts. Fitting exactly into each of these halves is a perforated, semicircular, wooden plunger, fastened to the bottom of a long wooden rod which serves as a handle. These rods or handles pass through holes in the lid (also of tin-plate) which forms the top of the churn, and is held firmly in place by fasteners connecting it with the container. The butter is made by lifting up and pressing down each handle alternately—one up, the other down—so that the cream is first forced by one plunger through the perforations in the centre partition, and is then forced back again so quickly by the other plunger that the cream is always kept in motion. The working of the plungers, while very easy, thus gives the maximum amount of agitation to the cream, and the butter forms comparatively quickly. The churn is made in three different sizes, which are capable of dealing with $3\frac{1}{2}$, 5, and 7 pints of cream respectively.

SOME PARTICULARS OF THE 'BIG BERTHAS.'

Among the more sensational incidents of the Great War, few excited greater interest than the bombardment of Paris by abnormally long-range guns from a distance of over seventy miles. Until recently particulars of these guns and their mountings were withheld by the Allied Governments, but lately they were published in the *Journal of the American Society of Engineers* and quoted in *The Times Engineering Supplement*. It will be remembered that the shells which fell in Paris in 1918 were comparatively small, being only $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, and all gunnery experts agreed at the time that they must have been fired from an enormously long gun. This proves to have been the case, the 'Big Berthas' having a length of no less than 118 feet. The monsters were made from worn-out 38-cm.

(15-inch) naval guns, which were bored out and fitted with rifled tubes having the correct diameter for the $8\frac{1}{4}$ -inch shells. These tubes, however, were much longer than the old guns, which measured 56 feet, the new length being $98\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Even with these long barrels it was not possible to give the shells enough speed to carry them to Paris, and extension pieces, measuring 19.7 feet, were added, making a total of just over 118 feet from breech to muzzle. The weight of the old guns was increased from 68 to 142 tons by the new tubes and extensions. A velocity of from 4760 to 5090 feet per second was imparted to the shells during their passage through these long barrels, but the pressure at the breech was not appreciably above that usual in naval guns—about 20 tons per square inch—the speed being produced by the continuous pressure throughout the long length. Before these guns were brought into use it was thought that no increase in range could be achieved by increasing beyond 45° the angle made by the gun with the ground—the angle of elevation, as it is called—but 'Big Berthas' were given an elevation of 55° . Each shell weighed 264 lb., and measured about 19 inches in length, but the latter figure was approximately doubled by the addition of a false cap to reduce the air resistance to a minimum. It is considered probable that each of these guns was worn out after firing fifty rounds, but the tubes were thick enough to stand reboring to $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and subsequently to $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches. In fact, during the last stage of the bombardment $9\frac{1}{2}$ -inch shells were coming over. Seven of these guns were made and used, while three were in course of construction at the Skoda works in Austria when the armistice was signed. It was here that a commission of ordnance officers investigated the big guns in the spring of last year. An emplacement for a 'Big Bertha' was found near Château-Thierry in August 1918 after the German Army had retired. This consisted of a base measuring about 35 feet in diameter, with a turn-table $28\frac{1}{2}$ feet across, which was supported on 112 8-inch steel balls. Mechanical means were provided for pointing the gun in the right direction, and for giving it the necessary elevation.

GETTING UNDER A MOTOR-CAR MADE EASY.

Few owners of cars care to lie on their backs on a muddy road under the body of their car to adjust or repair parts of the mechanism; yet such operations are not infrequently necessary. To enable them to be carried out with a minimum of discomfort, an American inventor has devised what he calls an 'Auto Crawler,' which consists of a curved trough, mounted on swivelling castors, to fit the back of the operator, so that he can move himself easily into the required position. As described in the *Scientific American*, the trough is built up of wooden slats, is provided with a detachable head-rest, and is

collapseable, so that it can be folded up into a small compass and stowed under a seat.

AN UNPUNCTURABLE PNEUMATIC TIRE.

The problem of inventing for bicycles and motor-cars a pneumatic tire that will not puncture must have occupied some of the best brains in the world at one time or another, and many inventors are still at work trying to solve it. Whether the 'Rapson Unpuncturable Tire' will prove to be a satisfactory and final solution remains to be seen, but two out of the four fitted to a Rolls-Royce car have recently stood up to a road-test of over 5700 miles without being punctured, while four previous tires of the same kind were run on the same car for 11,000 miles without being pierced. The outer cover of the Rapson tire is very similar in form to that ordinarily used, but the air-tube is much smaller and thicker than is usual. As in the ordinary tire, the air-tube is next the rim, except for the thin parts of the cover, which fit into the rim-grooves. This arrangement leaves between the air-tube and the cover a considerable space, which is partially filled by what the inventor terms 'a deflector,' made of rubber. The inside of the 'deflector' fits closely round the air-tube, while the outside is fluted in what may be described as the longitudinal direction, forming three ribs and four channels. Ribs on the inside of the cover fit into the two side-channels, leaving one rib directly over the tread, with an air-channel on each side of it. Holes are also made round the 'deflector' under each rib. According to the inventor, if a nail penetrates the tread of the outer cover, it is turned to one side by the 'deflector,' instead of passing straight through into the air-tube. In any case, only an unusually long nail could cause a puncture, owing to the great thickness of rubber to be passed through. Most experts agree that the Rapson tire promises well, and the makers are showing their confidence in its future by arranging to manufacture it on a large scale.

FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON BY ROCKET.

It is somewhat surprising that the rocket, which has been a familiar feature of firework displays for so many years, should have remained *in statu quo* so far as efficiency of propulsion is concerned. This lack of progress has recently been demonstrated by Professor Robert H. Goddard, who has been trying experiments with various forms of rockets at Mount Wilson Observatory, California, U.S.A. No doubt cheapness of production rather than efficiency has been aimed at in the ordinary firework type of rocket, but apparently improvements could be made which would enable these projectiles to rise to much greater heights than they do at present without any increase in their consumption of explosive. Professor Goddard set himself to work at this problem with a view to producing a

rocket capable of exploring the earth's atmosphere at great heights. He consequently devoted his attention primarily to improving the means of propulsion. With a nickel-steel combustion-chamber, fitted with the most efficient form of discharge-nozzle, the professor has obtained speeds of discharge of nearly 8000 feet per second, with a calculated efficiency of 64 per cent. These figures are a vast improvement on the firework or signal rocket, from which the gases issue at a rate of 1000 feet per second, with an efficiency of only 2 per cent. From a rocket fitted with the new form of nozzle, and containing a number of charges which will be ignited in succession, some remarkable results are anticipated. For instance, with a total weight of 3.6 lb., including recording-instruments, the new rocket is expected to reach a height of 35 miles, while nearly 438 miles would be attained with a weight of 12.3 lb. Naturally any records secured by the instruments would be destroyed if the latter were allowed to fall without being checked, 'but,' says *Popular Science Siftings*, 'control of the speed of descent calls for only a simple arrangement of tiny parachutes, adding practically nothing to the weight carried.' The results of the experiments made so far have given rise to the suggestion that with a rocket carrying a sufficient weight of explosive it might be possible to reach the moon. Rough calculations indicate that a rocket with a weight of 1274 lb. would proceed to a point beyond the control of the earth's gravity, when it would go on until it came within the influence of another body—say that of the moon—if proper precautions were taken.

THIEF-PROOF DEVICE FOR MOTOR-CARS.

It is common knowledge that large numbers of motor-cars are stolen, and many thief-proof devices have been invented to check this nefarious practice. Not all of them, however, ensure absolute security, but the device known as the 'Camelok' is calculated to defeat the most expert car-thief. It consists of a lever which locks down over the foot-brake pedal, thereby locking the brake hard on. When out of action, the lever is held in a vertical position by a laminated spring. All the chauffeur or the owner has to do to render the car thief-proof is to press down the lever with the foot and snap it into the lock, when it can be opened only by a key specially made to correspond with that particular lock. With the foot-brake hard on, it is impossible for an unauthorised person even to tow the car away, let alone drive it off. The application of the lever prevents a car from moving when stopped on the steepest gradient. Made in oxidised steel, the 'Camelok' (which weighs slightly under three pounds) is neither in the way nor unsightly, while it enables an owner to leave his car unattended with perfect confidence. Each is fitted with a high-class, brass lever lock, and, as has already been implied, no

key will fit any lock but the one for which it was originally designed.

A FRAGRANT YET POWERFUL DISINFECTANT.

Their peculiarly distinctive smell and the possibility of their staining articles with which they come in contact have long been objections to the more extended use of disinfectants. These drawbacks have, however, now been overcome, and there has recently been placed on the market a substance which is not only a disinfectant six times as strong as ordinary carbolic acid, but is an agreeable perfume as well, for it consists of the essential oils and attars of flowering plants combined with a most powerful germ-destroyer—formaldehyde. A unique feature in this fragrant germicide is that the watery solution of formalin has been combined with the essential oils to form a clear solution without the aid of spirit, so that the compound consists almost entirely of these two ingredients, forming a concentrated solution which necessitates dilution with water to the extent of forty times its own volume. Thus diluted, the preparation is distributed by means of a very fine spray, which not only carries the disinfectant into the most remote corners of the room, freeing it of all airborne germs, but permeates the apartment with the particular perfume—pine, lily, lavender, lilac, May-blossom, wallflower, carnation, or briar-rose, for example—which makes the greatest appeal to the lady of the house. Moreover, any one present inhaling the fine particles of spray thus laden with essential oils is strengthened in his powers of resistance to the attacks of infectious germs of any kind, for essential oils, when sprayed into the air, stimulate the germ-resisting power of the mucous membrane lining the nose

and the throat. Another good feature of this preparation is that it is a valuable protection against insects, compelling house-flies and other small but undesirable inmates to remove from the area in which it is used.

A NEW METHOD OF RAISING SUNKEN VESSELS.

There has recently been patented a device for raising sunken ships which bids fair to be highly effectual. The principle underlying the invention is the firing into the vessel of a novel form of grip. This, after penetrating the hull, automatically opens out two extending arms, which firmly grasp the plates. The grips are discharged from a special gun by means of compressed air. After being loaded on the surface, the gun is submerged to the level of the vessel, and is then fired by electricity, magnetic power being employed to keep the muzzle of the gun pointing towards the vessel. The gun can be raised to the surface again and reloaded as often as is necessary. When a sufficient number of grips have been placed in position, the vessel, if it is not at too great a depth, can be refloated by means of the cables attached to them. If, however, the water is too deep to permit of this, specially constructed cylinders are slid down the cables, and compressed air is pumped into them until they are buoyant enough to raise the vessel. 'It is stated,' says *The Nautical Magazine*, 'that offers to purchase the patent have already been made by several shipping and salvage companies.'

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE FAITHFUL HEART.

By FREDERICK TILSLEY, Author of *Cheerio*.

I.

CHARLES HENRY PORSON, but recently returned from foreign lands, glanced wearily about the principal thoroughfare of the dreary but select suburb that was his home, and swore softly under his breath. Less than two years ago the place of his birth had seemed a very desirable place indeed, but now he regarded it without enthusiasm.

'What a hole!' he muttered with intense disgust. 'What a dreary, lifeless hole! The war that changed the face of Europe was evidently not big enough to make any appreciable difference in the old home town.'

He produced his cigarette-case and flicked it open.

'I have just purchased cigarettes from the same elderly tobacconist who used to serve

me seven years ago, and he doesn't look a day older.'

He searched for matches, and then shivered as a gust of wind chilled the back of his neck.

'The same fat barber who mutilated my hair and the King's English simultaneously in '14 repeated the performance yesterday, confound him! He appears, however, to have engaged a fresh lather-boy; but, then, he never could keep the same boy for more than two weeks.'

Finding his matches at last, Charles lighted a cigarette.

'The same red-faced tram-driver has just cracked the same hoarse and hoary joke with the same red-faced butcher as he passed the shop, and that tired-looking lady across the road pushed that same creaking bassinet about this same street when William was still German Emperor. The contents of the bassinet are

probably different, but they make a very similar noise.'

He smiled and raised his hat.

'That tall, blonde girl who is dressing the window of The Largest Millinery Establishment smiled at me in just that way before the war. She has put her hair up, to be sure, and the fine dark eyes are not so shy as they used to be. Probably she powders her nose every morning and keeps company with a manly warehouseman every evening, but otherwise she is very little changed. Immediately opposite me I see the dear old church in which I was christened—the clock is seven minutes slow, as usual.'

Resuming his cigarette, Charles noticed that the same policeman upon whose evidence he had been fined for joy-riding on his first motor-bicycle years ago had paused near the bank, and was now regarding him a trifle suspiciously.

Charles grinned.

'P.-C. Brown has noticed me talking to myself, and is now mounting guard over the bank in case I attempt to hold it up with a loaded revolver. Splendid fellow, it's a shame to disappoint him, but I'm afraid I must—for one thing, I've no revolver. And now here comes the same old downpour of rain. What a hole! One of these days I shall pack up and clear out to South America or the west coast of Africa, or somewhere.'

Neither South America nor the west coast of Africa being immediately available, however, he turned up the collar of his coat and moved gloomily in the direction of a near-by picture-palace, which advertised a *matinée* for that afternoon. Near the entrance he paused in order to inspect a highly coloured poster which depicted a large young man in a very blue suit, who, with an expression of concentrated gloom in his protruding eyes, was carefully steering an expensive motor-car over a steep cliff.

THE FAITHFUL HEART!

A soul-stirring drama of love and hate, in five parts, featuring George F. Jackson; produced by Charles B. Johnson and Henry J. Sampson; written by James L. Dobson; Photographer, Cyrus K. Bragson, read Charles H. Porson, and shuddered.

He paused irresolute for a moment, glancing wildly about as though seeking some avenue of escape, and then, an extra damp gust of wind assisting him to make up his mind, sighed and accepted the inevitable.

II.

The entertainment had already begun, and the fifty-second episode of a serial that was unspeakable in every sense of the word drew to a thrilling close as a uniformed attendant, armed with an electric torch of dropsical proportions, guided Charles through that throbbing darkness which is peculiar to the cinema, and deposited him in a seat. The villain of the serial having

disposed of the heroine for still another week by carefully suspending her by the hair over a vat of boiling acid, to the accompaniment of suitable music from the orchestra, a brief interval was announced, and when the lights went up Charles seized the opportunity to glance about him.

Evidently the afternoon *clientèle* of this particular cinema was not extensive, for the audience appeared to consist principally of a few elderly ladies, several young children, and, in the very next seat to Charles, a girl of perhaps twenty-three years of age. He noted with considerable satisfaction that the seats in their immediate vicinity were none of them occupied, and thought how pleasant it would have been if only he had known her.

'I'm not particularly keen on bobbed hair,' he reflected, 'but I would much rather talk to her than follow the agonised throbs of "The Faithful Heart."'

Watching her furtively from the corners of his eyes, he saw that she was possessed of a sallow, futile sort of prettiness that might with luck survive three years of married life, and then—

And then she turned her head lazily and looked at him. Charles drew a deep breath.

'Good-afternoon,' he said calmly. 'I'm sure I've seen you before somewhere.'

'I think you are mistaken,' she answered, and looked straight before her again. Her voice was cold, but not sufficiently so entirely to suspend operations.

'I know I can't prove it,' admitted the persistent Charles, 'but I'll swear I'm not mistaken.'

Convinced by his tone that he really meant what he said, she turned again and regarded him with rather small but very blue eyes.

'You may have seen me before, but I am quite sure we have never met.'

Charles nodded.

'That's all I claimed,' he pointed out.

'Do you live here?' she inquired, after a short silence.

'In between wars, yes. I was born some years ago within a stone's-throw of this place, and christened in that old church across the road. Why should I deny it?'

She laughed rather pleasantly.

'How many wars have you been in?'

'Only one up to the present, but I'm still under thirty. Have you lived here long?'

'For the last—let me see—six years.'

'Since you were seventeen, in fact,' murmured the daring Charles, and a moment later found himself gazing blankly at the back of a neatly bobbed head surmounted by a small, black-velvet hat.

'Judging from the position of her head, that short, straight nose of hers must be elevated at a most alarming angle,' he reflected ruefully. Then

his brow cleared, and he grinned cynically. 'It's all right; she's only pretending to be offended in order to give me the opportunity of noticing how attractively that short hair curls about her neck.'

'Don't you think George J.—I mean George F. Jackson rather jolly?' he asked aloud, feeling vaguely that this was the correct sort of question to ask in a cinema. She thawed immediately and turned sparkling blue eyes on him.

'Rather,' she answered enthusiastically. 'Isn't he a splendid actor—and so good-looking in a—*a natural way*?'

Charles suppressed a groan.

'And so—*er—faithful*,' he suggested solemnly.

Her lip curled disdainfully.

'You are being cynical now, and I dislike cynical men intensely—there's no excuse for them.'

'Oh!' said Charles faintly.

'What right have men to be cynical? The world is theirs to do as they like with.'

Charles became apologetic.

'It's the weather,' he explained. 'I wasn't born cynical, you know, but a damp atmosphere always affects me this way. Seriously, I don't think I am going to like the principal attraction of this entertainment; I have a sort of presentiment that the heart mentioned on the Futurist poster outside will prove as feeble as it is faithful.'

'You can sneer,' the girl answered quietly, 'but there *are* faithful hearts in the world, and there are men and women who are worthy of trust.'

'A confirmed sentimentalist, evidently,' thought Charles. 'I'm quite sure I've met her before, if only I could call the occasion to mind.'

'It's not so much the faithfulness as the publicity I object to,' he said contritely. 'I consider it rank bad taste on George's part to make a public exhibition of his faithful and probably lacerated organ. But there, these Americans always were lacking in restraint. Do you know, I'm absolutely certain we have met before. I'd even bet on it.'

Another brief thaw set in, and the girl showed her rather large but very even teeth in a complacent smile. This young man was obviously sincere in his belief that he had met her before; also, he was very obviously falling in love with her. She felt rather sorry for Charles. It was, of course, very wicked of him to fall in love with her on such short notice and without a proper introduction, but, being a broad-minded girl, she was able to make allowances. Girls, even the most prudish and engaged of them, are seldom indignant with a man who has had the good taste to fall in love with them. She sighed, and removed the glove from her left hand. Charles, noticing the engagement-ring, understood the trend of her thoughts imme-

diately, and sternly suppressed a momentary inclination to laugh aloud. When she was quite sure he thoroughly appreciated the significance of the ring, she spoke again.

'Yes,' she said softly, 'there *are* faithful hearts.'

Charles stared fixedly at the ring, and removed his tongue from his cheek.

'Tell me about *him*,' he whispered hoarsely.

She gave him a sympathetic glance, and pulled her glove on again. Charles knew instinctively that he was being felt sorry for.

'There is very little to tell,' she said.

He gave her a peculiar glance, and then averted his eyes quickly.

'But tell me that little,' he persisted, 'and then I will relate a story. We will call yours "*The Faithful Heart*."'

'Don't be silly! There is really nothing to tell. Dick and I have known each other for years and years, and in our case the path of true love has run smooth. We have had no short quarrels and long estrangements, and I am convinced we never shall have, for we were made for each other. Our love has burned like a steady flame, and I am very, very happy. When he had to go out to France, our faith in each other upheld us through those terrible years of suspense; but I prefer not to talk of that—the memory is still too painful.' She dabbed at her moist eyes with a tiny handkerchief, and Charles nodded understandingly, for he was profoundly moved.

'A short but beautiful story,' he said gravely. 'You have done much to restore my faith in mankind. Thank you for telling me. And now, if you care to hear it, I will tell you my story, which may be called "*The Great and Extensive Love*." Being a sort of a war story, it is hopelessly out of date, and if you would rather not hear'—

'Tell me,' she interrupted quickly. 'We still tolerate hundreds of war films produced by people who knew nothing about the war.'

He nodded.

'That is perfectly true.'

She gave him an encouraging smile, and composed herself to listen.

III.

'I spent the first year of the war in England on special Government work,' began Charles. 'There is no need to bore you with details of this special work, and I mention it at all only because carrying it out obliged me to make a weekly journey down to town. After I had been making this journey for about four months, something rather interesting happened. Alighting from the train one morning, I found that a large crowd had broken through the barrier at the end of the platform, and upon making inquiries I was informed that a battalion of Royal Fusiliers had just left for an unknown destina-

tion, and that their friends and relatives had insisted upon giving them a genuine British "send-off." Amongst this crowd I particularly noticed a pretty little girl. She was weeping very bitterly indeed, and at her throat was the cap-badge of the Royal Fusiliers.

"A mere child," I said to myself. "But, heavens, how she must have loved him!"

Charles paused for a moment; but the girl, who was now sitting with her face averted, maintained silence, and he continued.

"Two weeks later the incident was repeated. On this occasion I was accompanied by a friend, who was able to tell me that a company of Royal Engineers had left for an unknown destination that same morning—you see, his next-door neighbour was amongst them, so he knew all about it. As we passed down the crowded platform my friend drew my attention to a pretty little girl who was weeping very bitterly indeed, and at her throat I noticed the cap-badge of the Royal Engineers. "Quite a kiddie," said my friend sympathetically. "A mere child. But, heavens, how she must have loved him!"

Charles paused again as the girl at his side uttered a little exclamation, and then, pretending not to have noticed the interruption, went on.

"Well, in the months that followed, this incident repeated itself time and time again. Sometimes the departing troops were infantry, sometimes artillery, and sometimes cavalry, but always that broken-hearted, faithful little girl came to see them off with the current cap-badge at her throat. It was getting on towards Christmas when my father died suddenly. The shock made mother so ill that for a time I thought I was going to lose her too, and you may be sure that my frame of mind at this time was not an enviable one; so, when the Medical Corps went away, I made my unhappiness an excuse to speak to the weeping little girl, who, of course, came to the station to see them off, and in this way we became acquainted. . . . When my own time came, weeks afterwards, she—she was waiting at the station. . . . Heavens, how she must have loved us!"

There was a short silence, and then the girl spoke.

"Perhaps that—that girl was acting from a sense of duty," she said in a painful whisper. "Very young and romantic girls sometimes get strange ideas, and it is quite likely she had no feeling beyond ordinary friendship and gratitude for the magnificent sacrifice they were making, for any of those boys—perhaps they were lonely boys from distant towns, boys who were miserable because their relatives and friends were far away. But what's the use? You are a cynic; you will never understand."

"You are making a great mistake," answered Charles gently. "It is because I am a cynic

that I am able to appreciate the wonderful thing she did at its true worth. Perhaps the best memory a boy could take out there with him was that of a waiting English girl—a little friend who would miss him. That he might never see her again mattered but little—only the memory mattered."

The girl turned and looked him in the eyes.

"Do you think I—I ought to tell Dick your story?" she asked quietly.

"Certainly not," he answered sharply. "I forbid you to do anything of the sort. It's my story, and you are the only one who has ever heard it. I—I shall never tell it again. I dare say Dick's a very fine fellow—handsome, manly, faithful, and all that sort of thing; but I am sure he would look upon the heroine of my story as an outrageous little flirt, and that would make me very angry. You see, it takes a cynic to appreciate the heroine of my story, and—well, whoever heard of a cynic named Dick?"

She turned away again with a little sigh of relief.

Charles echoed her sigh.

"I have one regret," he said.

"Wh—what is that?" she asked unsteadily.

"I never gave her a cap-badge. I quite intended to leave one with her when I went away, but the agony of parting drove the matter completely from my mind." He drew the tarnished ornament from his vest-pocket as he spoke. "If she still collects such souvenirs, she is very welcome to this." He sighed again. "But very likely this little heroine of mine has grown up into a dignified young woman, and thrown all her cap-badges away, and"—

The girl leaned towards him.

"And?"—

"And become engaged to some Dick or other. But—but I'd like her to have this, somehow. I don't know why, but I would."

The lights went down again. Soft music stole through the darkness, and Charles smiled as he felt her breath on his cheek. He smiled again as gloved fingers lightly touched the back of his hand, and the badge was taken from him. Then the darkness began to throb, and the title of the play flickered weirdly on the screen:

"THE FAITHFUL HEART!"

•• TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

A DAUGHTER OF THE DOPPERS.

A SOUTH AFRICAN TALE

By E. A. THOMAS.

CHAPTER I.

THE sun, which had driven all living things to cover, was setting behind the Doornberg in flaring colours. Its rays, deflected and broken up by the summit of the cloud-crowned mountain, spread fan-like to the distant heavens, only to be lost half-way in formless vapour. Below, the earth trembled in pure delight at its release from the brazen grasp of the retiring tyrant, while the karoo bushes, stirred by the first gentle flow of the evening breeze, waved a welcome to the twilight.

There was no sign of life at the homestead. The doors and the windows—effective barriers against the intense heat—were tightly closed. The ragged blue-gum trees lined up in front of the *stoep* awaited the coming breeze with boughs exhausted and listless, while among the *katdoorns* which barred one side of the house against intrusion numberless sparrows were clamorously contending for the less thorny roosting-places.

At the rear of the house, and at no great distance from it, old Jan Klopper, Ta'antje, his wife, and their two children were patiently awaiting by the kraals the return of the sheep from the veld. Clouds of white dust in different directions marked the approach of the animals. The dead silence of the expanse was shattered by the tinkling of the bells of the *kapater* goats leading their detachments home, the shrill bleats of the lambs mingling with the deeper notes of the oldsters. Nearer the homestead a soaring hawk set the hens cackling in alarm. The rapacious intruder—usually strenuous in the struggle for existence—had indulged in a siesta during the intense heat of the day, but was now out on business. Ta'antje, marking the depredator, turned without a word from her husband's side and proceeded towards the homestead, intent upon the protection of her chickens.

As the sheep arrived they were counted into their respective kraals by Oom Jan with the unfailing accuracy born of years of practice. His habitual imperturbability was only slightly disturbed when two or three jumped the bar together; but he never failed to include the

correct number in his reckoning. Whenever the result disclosed the fact that an animal was missing, he scored the record on the herd's back with a pliant *sjambok* and deducted the value of the sheep from the 'boy's' wages. Oom Jan never doubted his count. He was sure of his figures, and acted promptly.

On this occasion there was no punishment parade, the count having proved true; so Oom Jan, accompanied by his children, proceeded to the dam to inspect the water—always an important and anxious duty; after which, the short twilight having come to an end, he sauntered off to the homestead and to supper.

Oom Jan was a good specimen, physically, of the race to which he belonged—the race which has sprung from the fusion of the Dutch settlers and the French refugees of the Cape. Tall, fleshy, huge-shouldered, broad-chested, with a face deeply browned by the ardent rays of the karoo sun, health had given him her richest gifts, and had furnished him with apparently impenetrable armour against the onslaughts of time and disease. His face reflected the melancholy quietude of his surroundings, and determination and obstinacy were written large upon it. The pervading expression was an Ah Sin-like simplicity, which, together with the great white beard, had been known to gain the owner the confidence of a Jew *smouser* (pedlar).

He and his wife were Doppers—that austere sect which looks upon most of those things commonly supposed to make life bright and enjoyable as so many snares set by Satan for the entrapping of souls. Music—other than the dreary psalm-tunes of their Church—is sinful, and dancing too great an abomination to be even spoken of. Their one and only fashion of dress is fixed and immutable as Table Mountain, and any departure from the unwritten law, however simple in execution, marks the offender out for censure by the elders of the Church. The name which this sect bears is popularly supposed to have been bestowed because of the peculiar manner in which the art of hair-dressing is practised among the male members. A basin sufficiently

large for the purpose is placed—cap fashion—on the head of the person to be shorn. The hair showing beneath the rim of the basin is trimmed off until no more is visible. The vessel, or 'dop,' is then lifted off and the full effect of the operation is disclosed. The result is somewhat mop-like, no doubt, but the procedure employed is at once easy and convenient, and, moreover, always fashionable. Being odd and inelegant only in the eyes of those not of his sect (for whose tastes he has no reverence), the Dopper cares little for outside criticism, and is perfectly happy in the approval of his own people.

Unlike the majority of Boer women—who are generous to a degree to their husbands—Ta'antje had presented her lord with two children only, a boy and a girl, who were now sixteen and fourteen years old respectively. Up to this period—notwithstanding the fact that Oom Jan was reckoned rich among his neighbours—the children had remained in darkest ignorance of the great world they lived in. A trip to Vaalbos at *Nachemaal* time was an unforgettable event in their sombre lives, poor as the experience was. On these occasions they learned to shake hands in the limp Dopper fashion, and their knowledge of worldly things, adapting itself to the subjects which made conversation interesting to their elders, was limited to the state of the veld, the prospects of rain, and the mysterious diseases which so persistently attacked the sheep. Now and again they heard of the railway-train that swept across the veld with headlong speed; but their stunted minds failed to grasp so marvellous a fact as vehicular traffic without the aid of a beast of burden. The fire, smoke, and uproar characteristic of the monster were features which made it easy for them to acquiesce in their father's oft-expressed view that such things were the work of Satan, to be avoided, and to be spoken of only in whispers. The 'bogey-man' had not penetrated into the karoo, but a fitting substitute was found in the locomotive; so that a threat to send them from home in the railway-train invariably cut short their most rebellious moods.

Nachmaal was to them an enjoyable time, and they usually proceeded to Vaalbos with their parents several days before the Sunday appointed for the solemn Sacrament. *Ooms, tantes, and nichtjes* flocked to the village in numbers, arriving in all sorts and conditions of vehicles, from the aristocratic spider drawn by shaggy, long-tailed karoo ponies, to the tented ox-wagon with its yoked and lumbering team. The young bloods, resplendent in new broad-brimmed felt hats, black coats, and lavender-coloured trousers, cantered into the village on showy horses bedecked with huge saddle-cloths of gorgeous hues. Others, in folding-hood carts drawn by dapper Paarl horses, performed the *Engelse draai* ('English turn') in

true breakneck style in front of the Commercial Hotel, to their own gratification, and to the admiration of their friends on the *stoep*.

In the evening, when fires were lighted near those mobile mansions of the African veld—the half and full tented ox-wagons—outspanned on the outskirts of the village, the children, accompanied by a 'boy,' would wander forth, unknown to their parents, to witness the unholy joys indulged in by those who were not of their sect. The gray-beards seated around the fires, and the matrons in groups by the wagons, discussing familiar subjects, offered no attraction to them; but the young people engaged in dancing had for them a fascination they were unable to resist. The children watched, open-eyed and breathless, the couples going through the maze of figures of the *drie-voor-uit* to a tune squeezed out of a weary-toned concertina by a bearded veld expert. They were sinning, and they knew it; but the indulgence in forbidden pleasures had the same attraction for them as it had for city folks, so the risk of punishment was cheerfully faced.

We left Oom Jan and the children proceeding to supper, to which the insistent tones of Ta'antje's voice was now summoning them. The meal proceeded sedately for some time, and not a word was uttered. The idle prattling of children was never heard in this solemn house. They dared not speak unless spoken to by their elders, and so they sat gravely staring at each other until the meal ended. After prayers a *balie* of water and towels were brought in by the Hottentot servant. Oom Jan and Ta'antje washed their feet and passed the vessel to the children, who performed their ablutions and then trooped off to bed.

'Antje,' asked Oom Jan, 'why does not Miss Vermooten come here now?'

'Because,' replied Ta'antje solemnly, 'she says she cannot teach Steenie from the Bible any more. The child knows everything. I heard her the other day telling the herd "boys" the story of Samson and Delilah—and quite correctly. Miss Vermooten says that you must either get Steenie other books or send her to school.'

'Why should I send her to school, and why should she have other books? The Bible was the only book I learned out of, and it was good enough for my father before me. A Boer's wife can do without learning of worldly things. It makes them sinful.'

'That is true, Jan,' agreed Ta'antje. 'And now let us go to bed.'

CHAPTER II.

STEENIE was up before the sun next morning, and assisted her father in his duty of seeing the sheep off to the veld.

Oom Jan loved her—there could be no doubt

about that; but with it all he was somewhat afraid of her. She was so different from the rest. The great brown eyes, set in a freckled face crowned by fair sun-bleached curls, spoke to him as her lips never could. Whenever he flogged a 'boy' he saw remonstrance and reproach in them, and knew that she disapproved, so that it came about that before inflicting punishment he involuntarily but silently consulted her, seeking in her beautiful eyes the disapproval he feared.

When breakfast was over she wandered across to the kraals. There her father was talking to a stranger, a battered, weary-looking man clad in a soldier's old overcoat, torn moleskins, and *veldschoens* (hide shoes) almost soleless.

'Can you speak Dutch?' she heard her father inquire. 'Because we cannot understand any other language here.'

'Yes,' replied the man in the Taal, 'I can speak and write Dutch. I am a schoolmaster. I taught Van Zyl's children at "Uitkomst." I will teach your children,' he pursued eagerly, 'if only for food. I am destitute.'

'Why did you leave Van Zyl?' came from Oom Jan.

'The children were old enough to be sent to Cape Town to complete their education,' replied the man.

'How old are they?'

'A little older than that little girl,' said the tramp, pointing to Steenie.

'Van Zyl and his wife are good old people. How came it about that they sent their children away to learn things a Boer's child does not require to know? The customs of our people are altering for the worse—and Piet Van Zyl too, of all men!'

'But,' said the broken-down schoolmaster, 'Van Zyl now knows the value of education. He has been ill, and Dr Bray spoke to him about the children. The old order of things is passing away. Education'—

'Education!' interrupted Oom Jan. 'Why do you harp upon it? What has it done for you? I know no book beyond the Bible, and yet'—and Oom Jan looked around at his thousands of *morgen*, and then contemptuously at the tramp.

The man winced. His face, weak and drink-sodden, was yet refined and intellectual in character. He turned lamely away. Oom Jan's glance, following the retreating figure, encountered Steenie's eyes. He saw in them something which impelled him to call the wanderer back.

'You may stay here,' he said sharply. 'But, look here, nothing but the Bible, you hear; nothing but the Bible!'

The man seemed to divine intuitively that the little girl was responsible for the change in Oom Jan's attitude, for as he turned his look of gratitude was not directed at the burly form

before him, but towards the forlorn little figure standing expectantly by the kraal wall.

From that moment he was Steenie's slave. She led him quietly and unobtrusively to the house, where he shed his rags and donned a corduroy suit. His appearance thereby was changed for the better, and an observer would have placed him as being a man of gentle birth; but the air of self-depreciation and humility, born of a hunted and bibulous life, clung to him like a garment that he had not shed with his rags.

It was a miserable enough post—he knew all about it; he had served on other farms in the same capacity. The last resort of the wretched, 'Cape-smoke' stricken ne'er-do-wells who roam the southern veld, the last post before the nameless grave is reached—a dog's life; but it was infinitely preferable to the footsore trudge, the scorching sun, and the karoo-bush couch. So he was content.

He could not do much with Gert, the boy, for whom the outdoor life had too many attractions; but Steenie progressed slowly but surely under his guidance, until her voracious appetite for acquiring knowledge could no longer be satisfied with the literary matter available. It was then that the forbidden fruit was tasted. She begged him to teach her the English alphabet. He gave way. He had now no will apart from hers, and, the fatal plunge having been taken, they drifted, by easy transitions, on to spelling and reading, and so to *Ebb Tide*.

What remote sentiment or reminiscence of past happiness had induced the old tramp to encumber himself on his aimless wanderings with that particular volume of Stevenson's was known to himself alone. It can but be recorded that it brought great happiness to the girl. This first dip into the beautiful sea of English literature astonished and charmed her. She was shocked by the blasphemies of the Cockney, but the bright and beautiful world disclosed to her eager eyes by the dirty little book compensated for all. Attwater naturally appealed to her, he shot so well; and at sundown she would sit on the *stoep* gazing at the clouds embroidering the horizon, wondering whether they rested over the distant coral island with its waving palms and snow-white shores.

About this time Dr Bray, the district surgeon, called at the farm on his way to the railway station. The momentous secret was imparted to him by the old tramp, for the girl knew *Ebb Tide* by heart, and new English books were required. Dr Bray spoke to her, and was struck by the intelligence which brightened her freckled face; while the English speech, with its quaint accent and guttural enunciation, both surprised and amused him. He was a man of refined and cultured tastes, and he had not, on his previous visits, been too favourably impressed

by this stockingless *veldschoen*-shod little creature. Indeed, he had scarcely noticed her, for he had a horror of *kapjes* (sun-bonnets) and *veldschoens* and slovenly *voerchitz* (printed calico) dresses. But here was a revelation. There were possibilities in this brown-eyed little girl he had never dreamed of.

'Would you like to go to a big school to be taught properly? There are many subjects you have not even heard of! Mathematics, the geography of the world, music, painting, and ever so many more things. You will become a clever woman and teach others, so that your life may be a useful one, and full of interest.'

Steenie only half-comprehended what was said to her, but what she understood flushed her eyes with brightness. She could only say, 'Please, doctor—yes, please—but father will not hear of it.'

'I'll speak to him,' said the doctor.

Steenie jumped from the *stoep* and ran towards the sheep-kraals as if she had committed a serious offence and feared punishment. She entered one of them, and peeping over the wall, awaited, with bated breath and beating heart, the result of the good-natured doctor's mission.

In the meantime Dr Bray had entered the house. He found the old people in the *zit kamer* (sitting-room) solemnly drinking coffee, and plunged at once into the subject which was uppermost in his mind. 'Oom Jan,' he said, 'that girl of yours is a wonderful child. I am surprised to find how well she has got on with old Billy.'

'Yes,' agreed the old man. 'She is a good little girl; only, she wastes too much time over her lessons. I must get rid of that English loafer; he has taught the child strange ways. She sits on the *stoep* for hours and thinks—thinks. My wife is certain she heard her converse in English with the schoolmaster the other evening. She will not mind the sheep now. If she goes on like that she will end up by marrying an Englishman.'

'She might do worse, Oom Jan. I am an Englishman, you know, and really my people are not half so bad as you imagine them to be.'

'You are one of the good ones, doctor,' returned the old man. 'You are more like one of us; you speak Dutch and you understand our ways. You don't call us ignorant, lazy Dutchmen, and you don't humbug us at *Nachtmaal* time. But the time will come when this country will again be ours. Look at Miss Vermooten's map there on the wall—she showed me Oom Paul's country. Do you see that portion coloured green? That is the Transvaal!'

'Yes,' agreed the doctor; 'the whole of that portion coloured green is the Transvaal.'

'Well,' continued Oom Jan, 'don't you see? The ways of the Lord are wonderful!'

'See what?' inquired the doctor, gazing earnestly at the old man.

'There, there!' excitedly exclaimed Oom Jan, as he ran his finger along the western border-line of the Transvaal; 'don't you see it? Oom Paul's face, doctor. There is his forehead, his nose, his mouth, his beard—just as he looks, for I have seen him. See! he is gazing straight across the British territory—the Rooi Grond—it will all be his one day.'

Dr Bray's eyes followed the strong finger as it moved slowly along the border-line, and saw what undoubtedly resembled the profile of a human face. 'You have a vivid imagination, Oom Jan,' he said smilingly; 'but you must not talk sedition. You are a British subject, and I am a J.P., so we will drop the matter and talk about Steenie. You must send her to Cape Town to be educated.'

'Educated!' exclaimed Oom Jan. 'What for? To learn English ways and manners? What does a Boer's wife want with education?'

'But she might not marry a Boer.'

'She shall,' returned the old man. 'I say so; and is she not my child?'

On each subsequent occasion that Dr Bray visited the farm the battle was renewed, but he could not prevail against the spirit of obstinacy inherent in his opponent's character, and he was about to drop the matter through a feeling of sheer helplessness, when he gained an ally from a totally unexpected quarter, and the long contest was concluded in his favour.

Ta'antje, feeling restless and low-spirited, determined to pay a visit to Juffrouw Schoonraad, the wife of Oom Jan's nearest neighbour. So one bright afternoon the Cape cart was inspanned, and Ta'antje, in her short-bodied, plain-skirted Sunday gown, drove over in state. She was struck during the course of her visit with the display of airs and graces provided for her benefit by the youngest daughter of the house, who had just returned home from Cape Town, where she had been educated. Ta'antje marvelled at the number of men that flocked about the young girl—she counted fifteen saddle-horses on the *werf* (yard, paddock), and it worried her. She felt that her daughter would make but a poor show against so much brilliancy. Swallowing her prejudices, from that moment she became the doctor's ally, thus forming a combination which her husband was unable to meet with any chance of success. And so it came about that Steenie was sent to Cape Town to complete what old Billy the schoolmaster had begun.

The claim of her brother Gert in the matter of education was at least as reasonable as her own, and the old Dopper had to give way in his case also. It was arranged to send the boy to Stellenbosch, Ta'antje having decided, under the altered conditions, to have a theologian in the family.

(Continued on page 506.)

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S FRIEND AND TYRANT,
TOM PURDIE.

By ARCHIBALD STALKER.

IN July 1804 the Sheriff of Selkirkshire, pestered by Lord-Lieutenant Napier, who insisted that the sheriff should no longer be a carpet-bagger from Edinburgh, but should have a house within his own jurisdiction, took a lease of Ashestiel, which is rather 'up,' as Abbotsford is just a bit 'down,' Tweed. He was only a little while settled in his new house and farm when a poacher was brought before him on the usual charge. The poacher pleaded guilty in a talkative and humorous way of his own; he declared that he could not get employment, that he had a wife and a crowd of bairns to provide food for, and that the only way to get food was to take the grouse that were at his doors. He fairly compelled the sheriff to let him off, possibly on some formality. The poacher got the astonishment of his life when he was offered the job of shepherd on the sheriff's farm of Ashestiel. He jumped at it, and so Sir Walter Scott got his tyrant, the affectionate, proud, dour, and faithful Tom Purdie.

In 1804 Tom was thirty-seven and the sheriff was thirty-two. Scott hated farming, but in that townless region a farm was almost a necessity for him. Accordingly it was not so much a shepherd as a shepherd-manager that Sir Walter required, and Tom soon received full authority. It was also part of his duties to keep watch over the house while the Scotts were in Edinburgh, and if in the dark winter days Tom may have longed for the return of the master, Sir Walter himself has recorded that he 'pined for the hill-side and the sweet society of Tom Purdie.' And again: 'I shall be glad to be at Abbotsford, to get rid of the town, where I have not, in the proper and social sense of the word, a single friend whose company pleases me. In the country I have always Tom Purdie.'

Exactly twenty years after they met, Scott, writing *Redgauntlet*, drew a picture of Tom, who was then about fifty-seven. 'His brow was not much furrowed, and his jet-black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated, and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity, the last somewhat impaired, perhaps, by years, but the first remaining in full vigour. A hard and harsh countenance, eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows which were grizzled like his hair, a wide mouth furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth of uncommon whiteness and of a size and breadth which might have become the jaws of an ogre.'

Poverty, unemployment, and poaching (which included the risk of man-traps, spring-guns, and

thrashings) had soured Tom's naturally hard temper, but the air of Ashestiel and Abbotsford was a dissolvent of sourness, and Tom's bitterness became a sort of dour blitheness. He kept up some contempt for those who could not shoot or fish with credit, and was particularly angry with the biggest salmon he ever saw because it had been caught by an English guest—who turned out to be a Scot with an English accent. Tom was ever so pleased, and his face shone with delight, when any of the guests at Abbotsford whom he did not like got into trouble. When Constable, very fat and gouty, was following Sir Walter up and down the rough ground and through the terrible heather, protesting as he sweated and panted that there was no other poet on earth after whom he would dance in such a fashion, Tom was in ecstasy, lingering behind Sir Walter to enjoy the sight of Constable's efforts.

Tom took a measure of the sheriff that nobody else took. He was the sheriff's man. His heart swelled when the collar of his coat was grasped by his master, whose increasing weight was accompanied by a more painful limp; his pride was to be with the sheriff, and he claimed an interest in the very novels—'our buiks' he called them. But out of doors he was the elder brother, much more experienced in everything, and the sheriff was to be instructed. Even when he had to give way to Sir Walter, it was clear that he did so in order not to give offence, and that he continued to believe his own opinion and his own way much better.

For a long time Tom was confined mainly to the shepherd's job, but it is plain that he disliked it. Scott loved to have him when walking, and after the removal to Abbotsford, and as the young woods grew, the shepherd was gradually transferred to the woodlands. The sheriff's lameness increased greatly after 1819, and the sturdy shoulder became a necessity. 'What a blessing there is in a man like Tom, whom no familiarity can spoil, whom you may scold and praise and joke with, knowing the quality of the man is unalterable in his love and reverence to his master! Use an ordinary servant in the same way, and he will be your master in a month.'

When walking in rough weather Tom carried Scott's plaid, and told long, long stories, dating perhaps twenty years back, about hits and misses with the gun. When the sheriff developed rheumatism Tom insisted that their walks on cold, windy days must be by the sheltered ways, even though his master pleaded for the exposed braes and hills. They must have looked like a tall and a small brother as they wandered through the

woods and the heather. When Lady Scott issued her decision that the sheriff's clothes were getting shabby, the white hat, the green jacket, and the breeches were given to Tom, and the sheriff got a new suit, so that Tom must have seemed another sheriff, more alert, browner, and smaller. The fact that the one was tall and the other short would have given a tailor some concern, but probably it did not worry Tom.

As the woods of Abbotsford grew the sheriff's joy was to thin them with his forester. Both wore belts, and in the belt of each were an axe, a chisel, a small saw, and a hammer. If it was a big job, requiring the help of the labourers, the sheriff spent the day with them, and all were invited to supper at Tom's cottage. But even during the years that Tom was shepherd his occupation was broken by the claims made on his time for fishing and shooting excursions with Sir Walter, and with numberless guests who had to be entertained while Sir Walter was busy at 'our books,' for odd jobs about the house, and for many miscellaneous affairs out of doors and in. He was after the sheriff's own pattern, eager to be abroad, a good shot, a good fisher, a phrase-maker, strong in prejudice, and hardy as the heather. His brother was considered the best fisherman in the district, and Tom was as critical as he.

It was an incident in Tom's career as a shepherd that was responsible for Sir Walter's constant references to himself in his journal as S.W.S. The morning after that on which the news of the baronetcy reached Abbotsford, Tom was not to be found in any of his usual haunts, and he remained away all day. The other shepherd and he spent the whole day marking the sheep with an additional letter to signify 'Sir,' so that the beasts that had been marked W.S. now bore S.W.S. Tom also ordered one of the masons who were busy on Abbotsford to carve the S. on the stones that marked the boundary between Abbotsford and Kippielaw. This item of calling a mason from his work is one indication among many of Tom's authority.

The marking of sheep was very much in the manner of Tom's signpost. For the convenience of guests and strangers he erected in the woods of Abbotsford a signpost, and with his own hand painted on it: 'The Rod to Selkirk.' This brought him great fame, as Mr Polly's sign of 'Omlets' on the river brought much custom to the little inn.

Until he became pained with walking Sir Walter never rode on Sundays—not from any scruple about the day, but because he considered that a horse was no less entitled than a man to a weekly holiday. His 'Sunday pony,' as he called him, was Tom, and the sheriff laid heavily on Tom's coat-collar with his left hand. Tom was as joyful as a proud steed when the sheriff got him in his grip, and no easy grip it was. It was on a Sunday, and it was with Tom, that perhaps

the most beautiful recorded incident in Scott's life happened. There was a little dispute between Tom and him about the thinning of a hedge at Huntlyburn. Sir Walter had given some directions or advice that had not been attended to, for Tom was neither to be convinced nor directed. When they moved on it was no longer Tom's collar that Sir Walter had a hold of, but Constable's, and Tom dropped gravely behind.

They approached a gate, and Tom sprang forward to open it.

'Give us a pinch of your snuff, Tom,' said the sheriff when they had passed through, and his face, which had been vexed, cleared up.

Tom's mull was brought out, and this time when they moved on it was again his 'Sunday pony' that Scott had. When they came to the house, Sir Walter, Constable, and Lockhart sat down on chairs outside, and Tom, who ought to have taken himself off, lounged about. At length he asked the sheriff to give him a word in private, and the two stalked off into the garden. Scott reappeared alone, and his face was one smile of delight.

'Will ye guess what he has been saying now? Well, this is a great satisfaction. Tom assures me that he has thought the matter over, and *will take my advice* about the thinning of that clump.'

An exquisite relationship between master and man! The man, dour, opinionative, hard-hearted, and utterly unconcerned at disobeying his master when he thought the master was wrong, but appalled at the least estrangement; the master, an expert, ruffled for a moment at disobedience, but whole-heartedly banishing the matter from his mind and resuming his familiar ways in a moment, without any submission on the one hand or rebuke on the other. And Tom's way of putting it!

As the years passed episodes like this must have been plentiful, for Sir Walter has recorded that Tom generally contrived to be master. 'Now and then I am restive, and insist upon my own way; then comes the tug-of-war. Tom retreats, and reappears in about two or three hours with "I'm thinkin' whether ye're no richt in this matter, and I'm no sure I'll no tak' your way."'

Evidence abounds that Tom thought much more of his own skill than of the directions his master gave him, the master whose pride it was that he had had the best teachers and had read all the best books on planting. 'Tom is very costive about trees,' complained Sir Walter to Laidlaw, 'and talks of only 300 poplars. I shall send at least double that number. Don't let Tom forget hedgerow trees, which he is very unwilling to remember. He thinks he is saving me money when he is starving my projects, but he is a pearl of honesty and good intention.'

Tom had a half-bred pointer which he called Di Vernon when she pleased him. Di became an exceptional favourite with him, and he went

about boasting of her cleverness. If he stayed longer than he should have stayed at the public-house and mixed just one more tumbler than he ought, Di, he declared, was accustomed to jump up, take him by the sleeve, and howl. When shaken off she had more than once fled home and brought Mrs Purdie, whom, of course, there was no resisting. We know that Abbotsford was the home of marvellous men and dogs, but this story nevertheless exhibits Tom in the guise of a romancer, and it is to be hoped that his discourses with the sheriff were not so barefaced.

When the wild cramps came in 1819 one of the attempts at treatment was a scalding bath. Immediately the cramps came on, Sir Walter was stripped and flung into the bath, and smallish Tom was there with his sinew and strength to heave and hold the great bulk of the sheriff—'like a hauled saumon,' he muttered grimly as he struggled with him. I am sure that in his agonising pain the sheriff summoned a smile in appreciation of Tom's excited comparison.

Tom was free of the house inside as well as of the woods and hills outside. No matter how ceremonious the occasion, or how many people were present, it was a rule that when Sunday dinner was over Tom came in to drink long life to the laird, the lady, and the company, in whisky or wine as his taste varied.

In March 1826 he was definitely released from all shepherding and miscellaneous farm-work, and was made forester—a great day for Sir Walter and Abbotsford when the woods definitely had their keeper, and no less of a day for Tom, who loved the woods, and loved better the company of the sheriff. Morning after morning thereafter Tom's place was outside the window of the south-looking room in which the sheriff wrote. Time and again, playing with his own axe and with the sheriff's, Tom would pass the window, not a whit more eager for his master to appear than Scott was to go out. Often Sir Walter's sore physical trials made the allotted task of writing a burden; on such days Tom had the longer wait, and sometimes, indeed, waited in vain. At other times his persistence in hanging round the window fairly coaxed the sheriff to let the heavy task go hang. Sometimes, if he thought that time was up and that 'our books' were getting too much attention, he stood and stared in at the window till Sir Walter came.

'Our books' provided him with an occupation that was little in keeping with poaching or pony-personation. He was librarian of Abbotsford, actually in full charge of the books, and did not hesitate to remonstrate with any of the household or of the guests who marked any book or disarranged the shelves.

Tom had twenty pounds a year from the sheriff, probably a large salary a hundred years ago. His shepherd's perquisite of a certain number of sheep was worth, perhaps, as much

again, and no doubt Mrs Purdie shared in the good things of the house. Tom was much respected by the cottars and the workmen because he had saved a hundred pounds, and because his fine Family Bible had cost him seven pounds. Remembering these and other titles to regard, Tom developed a certain ceremoniousness that showed appreciation of his station. When he went out to fish or to shoot with any of the family or with visitors he would not on any account go in his working-jacket, but made a point of changing into the green jacket which he regularly inherited from Sir Walter.

Reading the Waverley Novels Tom declared the greatest of his comforts, for whenever he was off his sleep, as sometimes happened, he had only to take up one of the novels and he was drowsy before he had read two pages. This gave much joy at Abbotsford, and Sir Walter frequently repeated the story.

Tom's prejudices were his own, and bore no taint of resemblance to his master's. There were few men whom Sir Walter admired and loved as much as Sir Adam Ferguson, but Tom detested him, and lost no opportunity of dealing him sharp cuts. When Sir Walter obtained a knighthood for Adam, Tom was openly indignant. 'This will take some of the shine out of us,' he said. Skene was a great favourite, and Tom used to give him private and confidential wrinkles about salmon-fishing, 'which he thought nobody knew but himself,' wrote the ungrateful Skene.

Sir Walter found in him 'a Scotch slovenliness which leads him to see things half-finished without pain or anxiety.' This is a gift. A ploughman who can stop in the middle of a furrow; a clerk who can endure a littered desk; a housewife who can stop for a cup of tea while the house is topsy-turvy—and the millions of the rest of them—how quiet of mind, how vacuous, how enviable! And Sir Walter, whose tasks were gigantic, and who could not rest when he had a job on—how he must have despised, fretted at, envied Tom, whose mind was unhastened by anything on earth! Consider the deaths of both of them. The contrast is the same contrast as their lives provided. Old Tom had mentioned a sore throat, but absolutely nothing else. He had been out the previous day with Sir Walter and had got soaked, but no attention had been paid to that small item. He rose in the morning, and whether he felt ill or well he made no complaint, but sat down, laid his elbow on the table, put his head on his hand, and, absolutely in silence and without apparent pain, died. His family thought he had drowsed, and went to and fro for an hour or two before they tried to awake him. This was Tom's death, on 29th October 1829—three years before his master's. This was euthanasia, but Sir Walter's sufferings we know.

'There is a heart cold that loved me well,' said Sir Walter. 'I have seldom been so much shocked;' and again, 'Though I am on most

occasions like Edward Bruce, who used not to make moan for others, and loved not that others should lament for him, yet on this occasion I have felt very acute sorrow. I was so much accustomed to the poor fellow that I feel as if I had lost feet and hands, so ready was he always to supply the want of either.'

Tom lies in Melrose churchyard, near the

church, under a stone erected by Scott. Surely never was an act of human generosity so richly rewarded as Scott's reclamation of Tom. And it would be difficult to parallel the twenty-five years of comradeship between these two men, one a distinguished man of letters, familiar with kings and powerful men all over the world, and the other a rough peasant.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.—THE SMUGGLER BREED.

I.

ON an April evening, in the fateful year 1918, a certain liveliness could have been noted in the vicinity of Drury Lane Theatre. The occasion was another season of opera in English, and as the offering for the night was *Madam Butterfly*, the usual heterogeneous fraternity of Puccini-worshippers were gathering in large numbers.

Although the splendour of Covent Garden (which had been closed for the war) was missing, the boxes held their modicum of brilliantly dressed women; and through the audience there was a considerable sprinkling of soldiers, mostly from the British dominions and America, grasping hungrily at one of the few war-time London theatrical productions that did not engender a deep and lasting melancholy—to say nothing of a deep and lasting doubt of English humour and English delicacy.

In one of the upper boxes Lady Erskin had a small unescorted party. Lady Erskin herself was a plump little miniature who was rather exercised over the dilemma of whether to display a huge feathery fan and obliterate herself, or to sacrifice the fan to the glory of being stared at by common people. With her was her sister, the wife of a country rector, who assumed such an elaborate air of ennui that any one could have told it was her first time in a box. Between them was Lady Erskin's rather pretty daughter, and behind her, with all her vivid personality made glorious in its setting of velvety cloak and creamy gown, was Elise Durwent, enjoying a three days' respite from her long tour of duty.

The lights went out, and with the rising of the curtain the little drama of tenderness and cruelty, expressed in the medium of heart-gripping harmonies and climaxes, held the stage. From the distance, *Butterfly* could be heard approaching, her voice coming nearer as the typical Puccini progressions followed her ascent. There was the marriage, the cursing of *Butterfly* by the Bonze, and the exquisite love duet, so full of passionate *abandon*, and

yet shaded with such delicacy and beauty. At the conclusion of the act, where the orchestra adds its overpowering *tour de force* to the singers', the audience burst into applause that lasted for several minutes. It was the spontaneous gratitude of hundreds of war-tired souls whose bonds had been relaxed for an hour by the magic touch of music.

'Do you think the tenor is good-looking?' asked Lady Erskin of no one in particular.

'Who is that in the opposite box, with the leopard's skin on her shoulders?' queried the rector's wife.

'I think *Butterfly* is topping,' said Lady Erskin's daughter. 'I always weep buckets in the second act.'

'I should like to die to music like that,' said Elise, almost to herself.

II.

Close by a communication-trench, Dick Durwent stood shivering in the cool night-air. He was waiting to go forward on sentry-duty, the remainder of the relief having gathered at the other end of the reserve-trench in which he was standing; but though it was spring there was a chill and a dampness in the air that seemed to breathe from the pores of the mutilated earth. A desultory shelling was going on, but for a week past a comparative calm had succeeded the hideous nightmare of March and early April, when Germany had so nearly swept the board clean of stakes.

He heard the voices of a carrying-party coming up, and suddenly he crouched low. There was a horrible whine, growing to a shriek—and a shell burst a few yards away. Shaken and almost deafened, Durwent remained where he was until he saw an object roll nearly to his feet. It was a jar of rum that was being brought up for issue. He lifted the thing up, and again he shivered in the raw air like one sickening of the ague. Quick as the thought itself, he put the jar down, and seizing his water-bottle, emptied its contents on the ground. Kneeling down, he filled it with rum, and leaving the jar lying at such an angle that

it would appear to have spilled a certain amount, he hurriedly joined the rest of the relief warned for duty.

Dick had been on guard in the front line for an hour when he received word that a patrol was going out. A moment later they passed him, an officer and two men, and he saw them quietly climb over the parapet which had been hastily improvised when the battalion took over the position. They had been gone only a couple of minutes when pistol-shots rang out, and the flares thrown up revealed a shadowy fight between two patrols that had met in the dark. The firing stopped, and Durwent's eyes, staring into the blackness, saw two men crouching low and dragging something after them. He challenged, to find that it was the patrol returning, and that the one they were bringing back was the officer, killed.

The trench was so narrow that they could not carry him back, and they left the body lying on the parapet until a stretcher could be fetched.

Dulled as he had become to terrible sights, the horror of that silent, grotesque figure began to freeze Dick Durwent's blood. A few minutes before it had been a thing of life. It had loved and hated and laughed; its veins had coursed with the warm blood of youth; and there it sprawled, a ghastly jumble of arms and legs—motionless, silent, *dead*. He tried to keep his eyes turned away, but it haunted him. When he stared straight ahead into the dark it beckoned to him—he could see the fingers twitching! And not till he would creep near would he be satisfied that, after all, it had not moved.

'Sherwood!' He heard a quivering voice to his right. It was the nearest sentry, an eighteen-year-old boy, who had called him by the name given him by Austin Selwyn, the name under which he had enlisted.

'What's the matter?' called Durwent

Without his rifle, the little chap stumbled towards him, and, dark as it was, Dick could see that his face was livid and his eyes were wide with terror.

'Sherwood,' whimpered the boy, 'I can't stand it—I've lost my nerve. . . . That thing there—there. . . . It moves. It's dead, and it moves. . . . Look, it's grinning at me now! I'm going back. I can't stay here—I can't.'

'Steady, steady,' said Durwent, gripping the boy by the shoulder and shaking him roughly. 'Pull yourself together. Don't be a kid. You've seen far worse than this and never turned a hair.'

'I can't help it,' whined the boy. 'There's dead men walking out there all over. Can't you see them? They whisper in the dark—I can hear them all the time. I'm going back.'

'You can't, you little idiot. They'll shoot you.'

'I don't care. Let them shoot.'

'Where's your rifle? Get back to your post.

If you're caught like this, there'll be a firing-party at daybreak for you.'

'I don't care,' cried the lad hysterically. 'They can't keep me here. I'm going'—

'Here'—Throwing the young fellow against the parapet and holding him there by leaning heavily against him, Durwent felt for his water-bottle and withdrew the stopper. 'Drink this,' he said, forcing the mouth of the flask between the boy's lips. 'Take a shot of rum. It will put the guts back into you.'

The young soldier choked with the burning liquid, and tears oozed from his eyes, but the chill of the body passed, and with it the chill of cowardice. With a half-whimper, half-laugh, he forced a silly, coarse jest from his lips. 'Where did you get it, Sherwood?'

'Never mind,' said Dick. 'Come on now. Back you go—and stick it out.'

III.

The second act of *Madam Butterfly* was in progress.

With the sure touch of high artistry, both composer and librettist had delineated the result of Pinkerton's faithlessness—a faithlessness that was obvious to every one but Cho-cho-san, who still believed that her husband would return with the roses. Firm in her trust, she pictured to Sazuki the day when he would come, 'a little speck in the distance, climbing the hillock'—how she would wait 'a bit to tease him and a bit so as not to die at our first meeting'—ending with the triumphant assurance (born of her woman's intuition, which, alas! proves so frequently unreliable) that it would all come to pass as she told. She *knew* it.

And so to the visit of the American consul, who tries to tell her that her husband has written that he has tired of her—she, poor soul, reading in his words the message that he still loves her. Then the final tableau of the act with Butterfly, her baby and Sazuki standing at the Shosi facing the distant harbour where his ship has just been signalled. Softly the humming of the priests at worship ceases, and the curtain descends on what must always remain a masterpiece of delicate pathos—a story that will never lose its appeal while woman's trust in man lends its charm to drab existence.

'The tenor didn't come in at all in that act,' said Lady Erskin.

'Really,' said the rector's wife, fixing her lorgnette on the opposite box, 'that person with the leopard's skin looks absolutely like a cannibal.'

'I'm just swimming in tears,' was the comment of Lady Erskin's daughter.

Elise said nothing; nor did she hear them speak. Her heart was fluttering wildly, and her hands were clasped tightly together. She had heard a far-away cry—and the voice was Dick's.

IV.

The raw air of the night, the dread of that loathsome, silent thing, the haunting terror of the boy's eyes a few minutes before, the whine of shells, all bored their way into Dick Durwent's brain. He began to tremble. With every bit of will-power he fought it off, but he felt the fumes of madness coming over him.

For days on end he had had no rest. In the Fifth Army *débâcle* of March his battalion had been one of the first to break, although remnants had fought as few men had ever fought before; and when they had been reorganised they were moved back into the line, undermanned, ill-equipped, and branded with disgrace. It was the culmination of three years' service at the front, and his nerves were at the breaking-point. Mounds of earth ahead of him, and gnarled, dismembered trees, began to take the ghostly shapes that the frightened boy had told of.

Mumbling meaningless things, he reached for his water-bottle and poured a mouthful of rum down his throat. It set his heart beating more firmly, and his blood was no longer like ice in a sluggish river. He replaced the stopper and resumed his watch, but every fibre of his body was craving for more of the alcohol. With set teeth he struggled for self-control, but every instinct was fighting against him. He took another sip, then a long draught of the scorching liquid, and leaned against the parapet. He pressed his hot face against the damp earth, and burrowed his fingers into it in a frenzied effort for self-mastery. Again he drank, and his mouth burned with the stuff. His head was swimming, and he could hear surf breaking on a rocky coast. The dead man was grinning at him, but death no longer held any terrors for him. He raised the bottle in a mock toast and drank greedily of the rum again.

The pounding of the waves puzzled him. He could not remember that they were near any water. But more and more distinctly he could hear the roll of surf dashed into spray against the shore. . . . It was strange. . . . Once more he pressed the bottle to his lips, and it set his very arteries on fire. Yes. Over to the left he could see the glimmer of the ocean. There was a light; some one was beside it. It was Elise! She was giving a signal. That was it—the smugglers were landing their contraband, and she was signalling that all was clear.

He looked over to the dead man. The corpse was rising to its feet. It had all been a hoax on its part—it was an excise-officer. His eyes were fixed on the light, too. His men would be near, and they would capture Elise—and afterwards the smugglers, led by their great-grandfather. He would have to warn her. He couldn't shout, for that would give everything away. He would crawl near to her first.

He finished the rum, draining the bottle to

the last drop, and started to creep along the trench, his heavy, powerless limbs carrying him only inches where his imagination made it yards. He looked back once. The dead man was following him. It had become a race between himself and a corpse. He kept his eye on the light. He could see Elise quite plainly. She was looking out towards the sea.

Feeling his muscles growing weaker, and fearful that the dead man would overtake him, he struggled to his feet and clapped his hands to his mouth.

'Elise!' he yelled. 'Elise!'

And with the roar of surf in his ears, he sank to the ground in a drunken stupor.

V.

The last act of *Madam Butterfly* was ending. The cruel little story wound to a close with the return of Pinkerton and his sympathy-uninspiring American wife, and then the suicide of Butterfly—the logical, but comparatively unmoving, finale to the opera.

But Elise neither saw the actors nor heard the music. With her hands covering her eyes, she had been listening for the voice of Dick. She could hear it, distant and faint, growing nearer, as if he were coming towards her through a forest. There was in it a despair she had never heard before. He was in danger—where or how she could not fathom—but over the surging music of the orchestra she could hear the voice of Boy-blue crying through the infinity of space.

The opera was over, and there was a storm of applause that developed into an ovation.

'The tenor isn't really handsome, after all,' said Lady Erskin.

'I think the women of to-day are shameless,' said the rector's wife, casting a last indignant glance at the box across the theatre.

'I feel a perfect rag,' said Lady Erskin's daughter. 'Good heavens! Elise, what's the matter?'

'Nothing. I—I don't know,' Elise answered, looking up with terror-stricken eyes. 'I'm just overwrought. That's all.'

'You poor dear!' said Lady Erskin. 'You shouldn't take the opera so seriously. After all, it didn't really happen—and I have no doubt in real life the tenor is quite a model husband, with at least ten children.'

VI.

'Drunk,' said the company commander, stooping over the prostrate body of Dick Durwent. 'He was all right when he took over. Where did he get the stuff?'

'Smell that, sir,' said the subaltern of the night, handing him a water-bottle.

'Humph! This looks bad. Have him carried to the rear and placed under arrest.'

(Continued on page 501.)

THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE AMAZONS.

By ANTHONY CLYNE.

TO understand the atmosphere of the Amazons, the nature of the South American jungle, it is not sufficient to digest geographical or other scientific text-books. These will furnish data, but they will hardly bring before one's mind the spirit of the jungle in all its vastness, silent and sombre, yet teeming with strange life. The first book one should read is Bates's *Naturalist on the River Amazons*. Although written sixty years ago, it is as true to-day of the nature of the Amazons as then, and only in such unimportant details as the tiny inroads of civilisation upon the vast jungle—details which can easily be corrected by any geographical treatise on South America—is it out of date. Time makes little impression there. The Amazons are as they were countless years ago.

For many people, as civilisation extends its sway, so romance fades from the conquered territory. To them it is the wild wastes of tangled growths—miles upon miles of country where man appears utterly insignificant, a pigmy amid the vastness of nature, his civilisation of trifling extent and power—which arouse within them the undefinable sense of romance. For such, the immense basin of the largest river in the world and its great network of tributaries remains, and will remain for many years, a land of mystery, exercising unique fascination over their minds.

Henry Walter Bates had been a manufacturer of hosiery, like his father, and Alfred Russel Wallace had been an architect and a land-surveyor, when in 1848 they sailed together in a trading-vessel to Pará, having little money, but hoping to sell their collections when made. They spent four years in the Amazons together, and then Wallace left to sojourn in the Malay Islands for eight years, there to make his marvellous collection of geological specimens and formulate the thesis of natural selection, which Darwin was independently discovering. Bates remained for eleven years in the Amazons, succeeding in reaching a point 1400 miles up the river, and discovering over eight thousand new species of insects.

The jungle of tropical America is lonely, still, sombre. A mystery profound broods over its interlacing boughs and the yellow waters of its great rivers. It is an undisturbed wilderness of nature. H. G. Wells has captured its spirit in his short story, *The Empire of the Ants*. 'They were six days up the Amazon, some hundreds of miles from the ocean, and east and west of him there was a horizon like the sea, and to the south nothing but a sandbank island with some tufts of scrub. The water was always running like a sluice, thick with dirt, animated with crocodiles and hovering birds, and fed by some inexhaust-

ible source of tree-trunks; and the waste of it, the headlong waste of it, filled his soul. . . . And the weather, like everything else in this amazing new world, the weather had no human aspect, and was hot by night and was hot by day, and the air steam, even the wind was hot steam, smelling of vegetation in decay; and the alligators and the strange birds, the flies of many sorts and sizes, the beetles, the ants, the snakes and monkeys seemed to wonder what man was doing in an atmosphere that had no gladness in its sunshine and no coolness in its night. . . . This forest was interminable, it had an air of being invincible, and man seemed at best an infrequent precarious intruder. One travelled for miles amidst the still, silent struggle of giant trees, of strangulating creepers, of assertive flowers; everywhere the alligator, the turtle, and endless varieties of birds and insects seemed at home, dwelt irreplaceably—but man, man at most held a footing upon resentful clearings, fought weeds, fought beasts and insects for the barest foothold, fell a prey to snake and beast, insect and fever, and was presently carried away.'

There are some wonderful descriptions of the brooding silence and gloomy loneliness of the Guiana forest by James Rodway, the botanist. There is *Green Mansions*, by that poet-naturalist, W. H. Hudson. Of that country between the watershed of the Guianas and the Amazons, André wrote in 1902 in *A Naturalist in the Guianas*. Then there is *Jungle Peace*, by William Beebe, which has recently been published, the latest and a worthy contribution to the literature of the subject. All these help us to realise the strange fascination of the jungle. To most it would offer no attractions. Unlike the jungle of Africa, it provides no big game for the adventurous explorer seeking the thrill of a lion or an elephant at bay, and huge trophies of his prowess. But over those who feel the spell of the South American jungle its power is irresistible. Its limitless, unbroken gloom, its infinite variety of life, absorbs them, subdues them.

The floods and rapids of the swirling yellow Amazons, or the black sluggish waters of the Rio Negro, with sun-baked islands where the alligators sleep, flowing through deep gorges where the shadowy silence crushes the mind of man, the daring intruder, or between marshes where herons and gulls are continually hovering; the innumerable myriad-coloured butterflies of unearthly beauty; the immense colonies of venomous, almost intelligent, ants; the light-coloured, long-tailed cuckoos; the flocks of parrots; the great red and yellow macaws flying across at morning and evening uttering their hoarse cries; the secluded villages, far apart, walled in by

impenetrable dark forest, where dwell the weird native tribes, melancholy and grotesque and simple and reticent as their jungle prison, scattered sparsely and precariously amid the profusion of other living things—all these combine to create for some travellers an inescapable attraction, not unmingled with fear. They feel the menace of nature, altogether vast and incalculable, to their puny strength; a brooding threat that lies close over the tangled jungle, and, like the hot vaporous mists, over its rivers and stagnant lagoons. But they must enter the shadows, for something beckons.

Conan Doyle, in *The Lost World*, has a fine description of a journey through the great Amazonian forest under the menace of an unseen enemy. As the boats pass through its mysterious fastnesses, the explorers hear a peculiar deep throbbing in the air, rhythmic and solemn, now faint and scarcely audible, now louder and harsher, coming and going fitfully. The native servants call it drum-talk. It is the drum-talk of the Indian tribes watching their progress every mile of that long journey, patiently waiting for some chance to kill them. Sometimes the drums beat quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes in obvious

question and answer, one far to the east breaking out in a high staccato rattle, and being followed after a pause by a deep roll from the north. There was something indescribably nerve-shaking and menacing in that constant mutter, which seemed to shape itself into the very syllables of the half-breed, endlessly repeated, 'We will kill you if we can. We will kill you if we can.' No one ever moved in the silent woods. All the peace and soothing of quiet nature lay in that dark curtain of vegetation, but away from behind there came ever the one message from our fellow-man. 'We will kill you if we can,' said the men in the east. 'We will kill you if we can,' said the men in the north.

It is not only the human tribes that are menacing. Nature herself seems frowning there—the inscrutable, silent, threatening frown of her illimitable jungle. A subtle, evasive sense of imminent danger pervades the depths of the wilderness. Nature is as treacherous as the traitor half-breed Gomez, who plans their destruction; as savagely cruel as the Indians. And yet the Amazons allure some as no other land has ever done. It is all beautiful in so strange a fashion, beautiful beyond words.

AN OLD TIMER'S YARN.

By R. G. ARCHER.

I.

ALTHOUGH the greater portion of southern Ontario has now been cleared and cultivated, there remain many large areas of comparatively poor land which still retain their virgin garb of spruce and pine. Such is a belt of country, some forty miles wide, which reaches southward from the vast primeval forests of the north almost as far as the town of Kingston, at the lower end of the great lake. Here and there amid the monotonous succession of low pine-clad hills and sombre lakes one may find a little township whose inhabitants have won independence and homely comfort; but, generally speaking, there is little in the land to offer any hope for future development.

Knowing this, I was very much surprised, when travelling there some years ago, to find such names as Silver Creek and Eldorado, calling to mind old schoolboy tales of lost treasure and of adventure; and being curious to know their origin, I made inquiries among the local people, with the result that, after several disappointments, I heard the following story.

II.

Long ago, before the white men had pushed northward from the shores of Lake Ontario, and while the red men still ruled the land, there lived in the settlement of Kingston an old trapper

named Dan Brynn. He was a small, wiry man, with a rugged gray-bearded face which did not belie his reputation for hardihood and daring. In the pursuit of his calling Brynn was wont to venture alone where the other whites dared go only in large parties. In other respects also he was a noted character in the settlement.

One day, when making some purchases in the local store, he created a sensation by offering in exchange for his goods a small lump of pure silver, though in what manner he had come by it he refused to say.

The news of this incident spread rapidly through the settlement, for traces of silver had already been found farther east, and there were many who believed that in the vast unknown territories to west and to north many a rich deposit awaited the lucky discoverer. All efforts failed, however, to induce the old trapper to reveal his secret. To inquiries, entreaties, and bribes he gave the same reply: 'I got it honest, an' more 'n that it ain't for no man to know.'

And so, for a while, the matter rested, and gradually the first surge of excitement abated; for as time wore on it became obvious that if Dan Brynn did possess a treasure, it must be a very small one, as it was only on rare occasions, when he went to the store to buy a stock of tobacco or some necessity which his simple life required, that he ever produced any of the precious metal.

As he grew older Dan gradually gave up trapping, and spent most of his time in Kingston, leading a quiet life, and seldom travelling very far from his shack. But in spring, when the south wind blew soft from Lake Ontario, and the snows melted beneath the strengthening sun, the old adventurous spirit seemed to revive within him, and when at length the last drifts had disappeared from the hollows he would take his gun and his pack and vanish for a few weeks into the vast wilderness of woods and lakes which lay to the northward of the settlement.

In this way two or three years slipped by, until one spring he fell sick, and for over a month was unable to leave his shack. It was not a serious malady, but in view of his advancing years his friends strongly advised him to abandon his annual trip to the woods, or at least postpone it until his strength was fully restored. The old man was not to be persuaded, however; it would do him more good, he said, to have another touch of his old life than to remain idle in his shack; and a week later, one beautiful morning in May, he once more shouldered his pack and took the north-bound trail.

It was only to be expected that in the rough-and-ready band of trappers and traders who formed the bulk of the community men could be found whose principles were not of the highest order, and who were prepared to undertake any shady venture for the sake of personal gain.

One of these was an individual called Mullan, who was never known to have done a single day's work unless sheer necessity drove him to it—and that, as it happened, was not often. Most of his time he spent in a liquor-shanty, drinking and gambling, both of which he did with such skill and judgment that he rarely rose from a table the loser.

Unlike most people, his interest in Brynn's silver had not waned with the passage of time, and from the beginning he had kept a close watch on the old man's movements. The result was a growing conviction that somewhere in the woods Dan had a secret *cache*, on which he drew from time to time to replenish the small stock he was supposed to have in his shack.

Had his courage been at all proportionate to his cupidity, Mullan would have followed the old trapper alone; but, then, he was no bushman. To his imaginative mind the great silent forest seemed always gloomy and full of menace, and not for all the silver in the world would he have ventured alone into its unexplored depths.

He had not far, however, to look for a suitable partner. Among his associates was a big, dissolute trapper of some forty years of age, a man of considerable skill and experience, who might have done well had he chosen the right path in life. Kedge—for such was his name—readily agreed to Mullan's proposal. He had no objec-

tion to looting Brynn's *cache*, if such a thing existed, any more than he had to taking a valuable animal from another man's trap; and so it came about that when Brynn set out from the settlement, these two, keeping a safe distance in rear, followed on his trail.

III.

The old trapper made good progress, and speedily covered the five miles of open grass-land that sloped gently upward to the dark line of the forest-fringed horizon. In contrast to the solid, wall-like aspect they presented from a distance, the trees, which varied considerably both in size and in species, now appeared broken in outline and irregular in growth. Isolated clumps and long ragged strips reached forward like outlying reefs and projecting headlands of a rock-bound coast. Gradually, however, these clumps and strips grew larger and wider, until finally they joined forces in the silence and shadow of unbroken forest.

There was nowhere the faintest sign of a track, and the heavy undergrowth of bushes and saplings made progress in any direct line extremely difficult. But during the whole of that day and those which followed Brynn never once appeared in doubt. With that instinctive knowledge of distance and direction possessed by those who lead a forest life, he pushed steadily onward, and though forced at times to make detours, tended always towards a course which was very nearly due north.

The density of the bush, though hindering Brynn, made the work of Mullan and Kedge comparatively easy, as it enabled them to keep track of their quarry with scarcely any risk of detection. As long as he was on the move they kept well behind, but when he halted to take a meal, or choose a camping-ground for the night, they closed up, for it was on such occasions that they wished to observe his every movement.

As they advanced, the character of the country over which they passed began to change. The forest-bed, which had hitherto been mossy and tolerably level, became hard and uneven, and gradually rose into a succession of low ridges and hummocks. These new obstacles would have added considerably to the difficulties of the journey had they not been entirely free of undergrowth. This circumstance was due to the rock, which, approaching so near to the surface of the soil as occasionally to expose itself in jags and boulders, prevented the growth of bushes and deciduous trees, permitting only of the presence of hardy pines. The last-named, though always continuous, did not grow thickly, and revealed between their sombre, tapering forms patches of blue sky, and occasionally from higher places glimpses of rough rolling country that grew ever more rugged and jumbled as the eye travelled northward.

IV.

For four days Brynn continued steadily on his course, but on the fifth day he began to slacken his pace, and cast about, as though seeking some trail or definite mark. Several times he halted, and finally, towards the close of the afternoon, he turned aside and ascended a steep pine-clad hill, whose scarred forehead overlooked a deep lake full of shadows and beautiful reflections.

Suppressing their excitement, Mullan and Kedge, who throughout the day had kept as close to their quarry as they dared, now wormed their way up the side of the hill until they were within fifty feet of the summit.

So far Brynn had committed no act which threw the faintest light on the object of his journey, but both men were now convinced that the climax was at hand, and that they were about to reap the reward of their perseverance.

But what they saw, far from satisfying them, only added to the mystery, and made them realise that the task they had undertaken was likely to prove a far more complicated one than they had ever imagined. Brynn was busily engaged lighting a fire, which, to judge from the quantity of green wood he kept heaping upon it and the dense column of black smoke which rose from the hissing flames, could be intended only for a signal. But to whom? Excepting those at the settlement, there were in all probability no other white men within fifty miles of them.

An hour or more passed; then far away to the westward, from somewhere amid the jumble of pine-clad hills, an answering column of black smoke rose up against the evening sky.

'Injuns, sure,' whispered Kedge as the two withdrew to a place of concealment some distance from the bottom of the hill. This piece of information, confirming as it did his own fears, caused Mullan's enthusiasm to wane considerably. Cases were not unknown in which white men had become friendly with Indians, and it was quite possible that Brynn was among the number; but, generally speaking, the tribes bitterly resented the coming of the pale-face, and short shrift was meted out to those unfortunate enough to fall into their hands.

Apart from this latter unpleasant possibility, which, so far as Mullan was concerned, was sufficient in itself to cause him to abandon the venture, there were other points to be considered. It was quite possible that Brynn's journey might have nothing whatever to do with his silver, and that he might only be paying a visit to some chief with whom he had become friendly in the past. But even if their original suspicions were correct, the mere fact that Indians were concerned in the affair at all reduced their chances of success to a minimum.

Kedge, however, with all his faults, was no

quitter, and he refused to back out of the business because it had developed an unexpected element of risk. He had outwitted redskins before, he said, and he could do so again.

Much against his wish, Mullan was forced to follow his companion's lead, for without him he would almost certainly have become lost in the bewildering sameness of the country which surrounded them.

The following morning Brynn, who had camped overnight on the hill, rose early, and at once set off in the direction in which the signal had been seen the previous evening. Kedge's surmise was soon proved to be correct, for about an hour later the old trapper was met by a young Indian, whose dress proclaimed him a member of one of the numerous branch-tribes of the Hurons. Having made signs to show that he had come to act as a guide, the lad turned and led the way through the trees.

Shortly after midday they arrived at a clearing in which stood a fairly large camp. Apparently the braves were absent on some expedition, for Brynn, whose coming seemed to cause no surprise, was received by some of the squaws, who immediately conducted him to a wigwam where food and drink had already been prepared for him.

Realising the danger they incurred by remaining too close to the clearing, Mullan and Kedge withdrew to a safe distance, to await developments and discuss what they should do.

Their position was rapidly becoming critical. At the longest their stock of provisions could not last beyond another two days, after which they would be forced to use their guns, a thing they dared not do as long as they continued to play the part of spies. Finally, after a long discussion in which the bold spirit of Kedge again prevailed over his weaker companion, they agreed to wait another twenty-four hours.

V.

It was close on sunset when the braves returned. The chief, an elderly man of powerful physique, greeted Brynn with courtesy, but no show of friendship. On the contrary, his whole demeanour was that of a man who has an unpleasant duty to perform, and after a brief conversation he retired to his wigwam, and did not reappear during the remainder of the evening.

But events were rapidly moving to a climax. The following morning the headmen of the tribe gathered together in the centre of the clearing, where presently they were joined by Brynn and the chief, the whole party squatting down in a circle according to the native custom when holding a palaver. For a few moments there was silence; then, at a sign from the chief, the old trapper began to speak.

During these preliminaries Kedge cautiously worked his way forward until he was in a posi-

tion to overhear the greater part of the conversation, which was carried on in a jargon he understood.

Brynn, it appeared, had at some period in the past rendered a great service to the tribe, and, as a reward, the chief of that time had offered to give him every year a small quantity of silver. Two conditions were stipulated, however—the first, that Brynn should never reveal the source from which he got it; and second, that he should come for it at a certain time each spring.

In the years which followed, the red men had faithfully kept their word, notwithstanding the death of their leader, who fell in an expedition against another tribe. Brynn, for his part, had so far found no reason to cavil at the conditions of a bargain so profitable to himself, but in view of the changed circumstances he now wished to put forward another proposal. He pointed out that he was growing old, and very soon would be no longer able to undertake the journey from the settlement, and accordingly he asked for enough silver to last for the remainder of his days.

To this the new chief, who hated the whites with a cordiality he was at no pains to hide, objected, saying that a bargain was a bargain, and could not be broken. In vain the white man argued and pleaded; the chief, unanimously supported by his councillors, refused to give way, and finally rose to his feet to show that the discussion was ended.

But Brynn was not to be denied. From argument he passed to threats, and declared that if the red men would not agree to a reasonable proposal, he would at once return to Kingston and raise a force of whites to attack them.

For a space the chief was silent, while a look of evil joy spread over his dark features. 'So, white man,' he hissed, 'you would break the oath you swore to us in the past? Good! We are no longer your debtors.' And suddenly snatching his tomahawk, he sprang upon the old trapper and smashed his skull with a single blow. Not content with the mere killing of his enemy, he drew his scalping-knife and bent forward to complete what was destined to be his last triumph.

Kedge, though a drunkard and a thief, still retained a degree of manhood which revolted at the horrid spectacle before him, and, without pausing to consider the consequences of his action, half rose from his hiding-place and fired at the sinewy form of the stooping warrior. At such a range it was almost impossible to miss, and the savage, with a choking cry, collapsed across the huddled form of his victim.

In an instant the whole camp was in an uproar, and the headmen, recovering from the first shock of surprise, rushed with a yell of rage towards the place where the smoke of the fatal shot trailed through the trees at the edge of the clearing.

Kedge knew full well the fate which awaited him at the hands of the blood-maddened Indians, and at once sought refuge in flight. But the tragedy was not yet complete; even as he turned, a projecting branch struck him full in the eye, causing him to stagger and fall sideways with a crash among the branches of a young pine-tree. Confused and half-blinded, his foremost pursuers almost upon him, he knew his hour had come, and with a groan that was half a curse he drew his pistol and very wisely chose a quick road to eternity.

VI.

Meanwhile Mullan, whose knowledge of bushmanship did not fit him to act as a scout, had viewed these happenings from a distance. The suddenness of the whole affair rendered him for the moment insensible to the full measure of his own peril, but when it dawned upon him he turned and fled panic-stricken through the woods, whither he knew not.

Long after the shrieks and whoops of the Indians had echoed into silence he continued his wild career, ignorant of the fact that the savages had spent some time venting their rage and spite on the bodies of the two pale-faces, and had not discovered the tracks of another of the hated race until he was beyond pursuit.

Hour after hour Mullan struggled on until the sun sank low in the west. By this time the low pine-clad hills had flattened out, forming a level tract of forest where the trees grew so thickly that their interlacing branches and dense foliage shut out the light of the evening sky.

Darkness brought no sense of security to the wretched fugitive. Exhausted by his long flight, and unable to see a yard before him, he at last sank down on the soft mossy ground, but not to rest. Even in the company of Kedge he had hated the long forest nights; but now loneliness, and the thought that the Indians might still be on his trail, increased his fears to the limit of endurance.

Around him in the darkness all nature seemed to be stirring. Eerie rustlings and faint snappings broke the stillness, causing him to start, and peer fearfully into the gloom whence they came. But always when he looked the sounds ceased, leaving the silence deeper than before. Thus he lay for some time, a prey to all the terrors which superstition, aided by the conditions, could inspire. At length he could bear it no longer. Something in the outer blackness appeared to be taking shape and closing in upon him, bringing with it a fear that was more than mortal, and when a night-bird cried suddenly from a branch overhead he leaped to his feet and fled demented through the woods.

The light of dawn, which seemed so loath to penetrate the forest gloom, at last brought some relief to his shattered nerves, and, more

dead than alive, he collapsed by the bole of a large tree, and fell asleep.

It was after midday when he awoke, faint with hunger and thirst. Fortunately he still retained his wallet containing some dried fish, and good water was plentiful. Rough though the fare was, it restored some of his strength, and in a calmer frame of mind he began to consider his position and what course he should take.

He had no idea where he was, but he knew that if he kept facing south he was bound sooner or later to strike the shore of Lake Ontario; and after that it would be a comparatively easy task to reach the settlement. Not a moment was to be lost, and taking as best he could a line by the sun, he pushed hurriedly on his way.

Another night of dread was followed by a day of toil and hunger. His stock of food was now exhausted, and having discarded his gun in his first wild flight, nothing now remained for him but to plod on, in the vain hope of falling in with some wandering white men.

But for good or ill he had still some part to play in human affairs, for just before sunset, to his unspeakable relief, he suddenly broke clear of the forest, actually within half-a-dozen miles of the very place he had entered it but eight days before. There in front of him, in the golden light of evening, the fresh flowering grass-land rolled away in long sweeps and folds. There in the distance lay the white shacks of the settlement, and, beyond, the vast blue expanse of Lake Ontario.

VII.

Never did criminal receive an eleventh-hour reprieve with greater joy than did the hunted wretch, as with renewed strength he struggled onward out of the gloom of the forest into sunshine and safety. But though a merciful Providence had lifted the shadow of death from his path, he was still faced with the grave difficulty of explaining the disappearance of his late companion. Questions would certainly be asked, and to tell the truth would be tantamount to a confession of intended theft. His cunning brain, however, soon invented a story which would not only clear him of all suspicion, but perhaps even yet turn the scales of fortune in his favour.

On reaching the settlement, he told, in a voice genuinely broken by hunger and hardship, how he and Kedge, while wandering in the woods, had fallen in with Brynn, who was being pursued by Indians. He told of the running fight which followed, during which the old trapper had confessed that it was from the Indians with whom he had quarrelled that he got his silver; of the death of Kedge and Brynn, and his own capture and ultimate escape from the Indian camp.

In spite of his evil reputation, the evidence of his battered appearance caused this tissue of lies to be readily believed, and a strong force of whites was soon gathered together to attack the tribe. A few days later, led by Mullan, they set out for the north. But so vague was the latter's knowledge of the country that fully a week elapsed before they reached the clearing, only to find it deserted. The red men—according to the custom of their tribe—had moved their camp on the death of the chief, and had vanished into the unknown regions to the north.

Nevertheless, the white men remained for some weeks in the neighbourhood, and in deference to their hopes, named the clearing in which they camped Eldorado. But search as they would, they found neither gold nor silver, and at length, becoming disgusted with their lack of success, they broke up into small parties and returned to Kingston.

Mullan, so the story goes, continued for some time to lead his old life of gambler and cheat, until one evening, when rather more drunk than usual, he made some contradictory statements, resulting in a forced confession of the real part he had played in the events I have described. Shortly afterwards he disappeared, and it was generally believed that he met his death at the hands of some of the old trapper's friends who had more than one grudge against him.

Such is the story of Dan Brynn's treasure, and of how the township of Eldorado received its name; but whether it be true or merely an old timer's yarn, the man who related it could not inform me.

A LYRIC.

HIDDEN in a garden bower,
Fragrant with the gillyflower,
Hollyhocks and columbine,
Where convolvuluses twine
Tenderly their climbing stems,
Crown'd with azure diadems;
Where drones dreamily the bee,
Hid in floral nunnery;
Where the idle butterfly,
Winging wearily, goes by,
On the summer-scented gale,
To the orchard in the vale;
Where the lark with lyric tongue,
In the cloudless vault is hung,
Waking echoes in the wood's
Green umbrageous solitudes;
Where cool crystal fountains leap—
There alone my love doth sleep.

Where the buttercups, alas !
Flower in the tangled grass,
And the meadow worts and weeds
Overrun the path that leads
To the lychgate in the lane,
And the breezes pause again,
And the cypress shades are deep—
There alone my love doth sleep.

DOUGLAS CARSEWELL.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE CONSTABLE OF THE TOWER.

By Major-General Sir GEORGE YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., C.B.

I.

AFTER William the Conqueror had won the battle of Hastings he marched on London, which at once capitulated to him. The inhabitants were not, however, very friendly, as may be imagined; therefore the Conqueror decided to build a strong fortress to overawe the city. The site he chose was on the banks of the Thames, at the same commanding spot as had been selected, many centuries before, by the Romans under Julius Cæsar, the ruins of whose old fort still remained. The site which these two great commanders and invaders selected was so situated as to serve a double purpose. A fort here was admirably placed both to command the approaches by water from the sea and to overawe the inhabitants of a not too friendly town. Julius Cæsar's fort had no particular name, and was generally spoken of as Julius Cæsar's Tower, and is thus alluded to by Shakespeare. The only vestige of this tower that remains is a small portion of a brick wall, which is now covered with a tarpaulin to preserve it, and may be seen near the south-east corner of the White Tower. Whether this fragment is a portion of Julius Cæsar's Tower, or is the southern corner of the Roman wall, is a point on which antiquarians differ. Not improbably, however, it may be both; the fragment of brickwork may be the south-east corner of the Roman wall, and perchance at this south-east corner stood Julius Cæsar's Tower.

William of Normandy, with political foresight, and as a graceful concession to the conquered, instead of naming his tower after himself or any place in Normandy, decided to call it the Tower of London. He set to work to build soon after the battle of Hastings, and it seems curious to us that his architect was a prelate of the Church, Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester! The Conqueror did not use the old Roman bricks which must have been found amongst the Roman ruins in great quantities, but sent ships across to France, to fetch the white stone of Caen with which it was built. It was this white stone which gave to the central keep of the fortress its name, *La Tour Blanche*—the White Tower, as it has now been called for centuries. When the Conqueror

died, his successors, notably William Rufus, Henry III., and Edward I., improved and amplified and strengthened the fortress, till it became the Tower of London much as we now see it.

Very soon after William the Conqueror started to build the Tower he appointed one of his Norman followers to give military advice during its construction, so that it might be impregnable from all sides, and, when it was completed to the king's satisfaction, to take command of the fortress and its Norman garrison. This officer the king named 'The Constable of the Tower,' and the first to bear the title was Geoffrey de Mandeville. This Geoffrey de Mandeville was a stout soldier who had fought with William in many battles and skirmishes on the Continent, and had borne himself with conspicuous courage and resource at the battle of Hastings.

II.

Like many offices in those days, that of Constable of the Tower became almost a family inheritance. Thus we find no fewer than four De Mandevilles occupying this place of honour and distinction. Three successive occupants were father, son, and grandson; whilst a great-grandson followed in a later reign. When the first Geoffrey died he was succeeded by his son William de Mandeville, who was appointed by William Rufus. William de Mandeville was succeeded in his turn by his son, another Geoffrey, who was created Earl of Essex, that fateful title which was borne at various times by many different families quite unrelated to each other.

Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, after being Constable of the Tower for thirteen years, was, because of his treasonable practices, deprived of his office by King Stephen. Bursting into open revolt, the ambitious plotter was soon at the head of a formidable gang of robbers and desperadoes, who, among other places, burned and sacked Cambridge. To suppress this public nuisance King Stephen sent a body of troops, and a regular pitched battle took place between these and the followers of the Earl of Essex. In this encounter the earl himself was mortally wounded, and died at Mildenhall, in Suffolk. Then happened a very curious thing. Geoffrey de Mandeville,

having some time before committed sacrilege, had been excommunicated by the Pope, with the result that no one could be found to bury him. In this dilemma there came to the rescue the Knights Templars. During his chequered career Geoffrey de Mandeville had once been of signal service to the Knights Templars, and they in the hour of need forgot not their obligation. A party of the knights, therefore, journeyed to Mildenhall, and dressing the corpse in the robes of the Order, claimed him as a fellow-knight. They then put him into a coffin and carried him to London. When the Temple was reached a consultation was held, for even the Knights Templars dared not openly flout the Pope's excommunication. But they found a way out of the difficulty. Selecting two stout trees in the Temple garden, they slung the coffin in mid-air between them. There it remained for nearly twenty years; then intercession was made to a new Pope, and the ban was removed. The Templars cut down the coffin, and buried it outside the west door of the Temple church.

The Constable was not always primarily a man of war; in ancient days he was not infrequently a bishop, or even an archbishop, though these prelates were often of the Church militant, and could wield a sword or bestride a battle-horse with the best. Such a one was Thomas à Becket, chiefly known in history as saint and martyr. He had, however, charged with knights in battle, and had held the post of Constable of the Tower. This was in the days when no mean perquisites accrued to the Constable, as we shall see later, so that many high dignitaries were glad, by the king's favour, to add this considerable increment to their incomes. Thomas à Becket's connection with the Tower is commemorated by the fine structure known to this day as St Thomas's Tower, which was erected by Henry III., and stands as a defensive work over the great sinister arch of the Traitor's Gate. In this tower is to be found a small circular oratory, specially erected by Henry III. and dedicated to Thomas à Becket.

Another prelate who was Constable of the Tower and left a lasting memorial is William Longchamp. When Richard Cœur de Lion departed on his crusade to the Holy Land, he made William Longchamp, who was Bishop of Ely, Chancellor of the Kingdom and Constable of the Tower. With John, the king's faithless brother, scheming close at hand, the bishop thought he would take no risks, and set to work to deepen and broaden the moat of the Tower, till it reached its present dimensions. True, the bishop was not so stout a soldier as a sapper, for when John, having designs on the throne, attacked the Tower, up went the white flag, the only occasion in history on which the ancient fortress was taken by hostile forces. Besides these two prelates, at least five archbishops and several bishops have been appointed Constables.

III.

One of the greatest Constables the Tower has had was the Duke of Wellington, and he has left his name indelibly imprinted on its history. The hero of the Peninsular War, the victor at Waterloo, the great general who overthrew Napoleon, a duke and a prince, he accepted the constablership not as an empty honour or an added perquisite, but to do his best for the Tower as its titular head. It was in 1826, eleven years after Waterloo, that the duke took over office, and at once his orderly mind began to work. Constantly, clad in tight white overalls and a blue coat (the coat still hangs in the White Tower), he would mount his horse at Apsley House, and take his morning ride down to the Tower, a good seven miles' ride, much of it through unsavoury slums. There what did he find? The old Tower, through the neglect of ages, falling into decay and disrepute, great gaps in the crumbling walls, the lesser towers fast becoming ruins. Every passage and roadway within was blocked with squalid huts, mean buildings, and lean-tos. The moat was a fetid ditch into which the garrison and the inhabitants had emptied their filth for centuries. Only on the top was there a shallow layer of water, slightly freshened by the rising and falling tide, whilst beneath lay filthy slime to the depth of a man's height. Within the circle of this noisome ditch and inside the ruined walls of the Tower lived not only the garrison, but a dense population of men, women, and children who had in one way or another acquired a right to reside there. Amidst these congenial surroundings the microbes of every imaginable disease lived and flourished, and among them carried off more victims than did the axe of old. The duke took some little time to get his bearings, and, still more important, to procure money for his reforms; for, as after all great wars, there was not much money in the Treasury to spare on sentiment, or even on sanitation. But his best effort was made when he impressed Queen Victoria, so that she took a personal interest in the old Tower. Henceforth what seemed a hopeless task became, with perhaps a set-back here and there, a settled policy which was steadily carried on even after the old duke's death.

One of the first improvements to be taken in hand was the draining and cleansing of the moat. To effect this the river was shut out, a modicum of the filth and slime removed, and then six feet of dry earth and rubble were rammed in, thus making a hard, dry surface. At the same time the wretched hovels which disgraced the interior were gradually removed, and with them the superfluous population which had no duties to perform in the Tower, and were only an encumbrance and a source of disease. The restoration of the lesser towers and the repair of the broken-down walls was not allowed

to be a patchwork affair. In the person of Salvin, a first-class architect, and one imbued with the spirit of the place, the Tower obtained a true and sympathetic friend. Using the old plans and sketches of the Tower as it had been at its zenith, Salvin drew up a complete scheme of restoration. This comprehensive plan, though it took several decades to complete, has resulted in the old Tower of London being now erect and firm as ever. There was one portion, however, which needed little repair—namely, the White Tower, which stands sturdy and strong as it did when William the Conqueror first held his court within its massive walls.

The Duke of Wellington was Constable of the Tower for twenty-six years, and on his death the appointment went first to one of his old comrades, Field-Marshal Viscount Combermere, and then to another Peninsular veteran, Field-Marshal Sir John Fox Burgoyne. From that time onwards the office of Constable has invariably been held by a soldier, sometimes a field-marshal, and sometimes a general. One great name, alas! does not appear on the roll, that of Lord Roberts. So far as it has been possible to trace them, there have been about 136 Constables since the Tower was built.

IV.

The duties and responsibilities of the Constable have varied greatly during the ages, and have often been practically what the holder of the office chose to make them. An Archbishop of Canterbury, for instance, could hardly be expected to give up much of his time or attention to commanding a fortress, however important. Many Constables in early days undoubtedly lived in the Tower; indeed, there is a Constable's Tower to this day. Gradually, however, the absentee Constable who had bigger fish to fry elsewhere became the rule rather than the exception. Moreover, the Tower was no health-resort in those days, being situated amidst horrible surroundings. The Constable, therefore, decided to make his chief abode outside in a more salubrious spot, retaining only lodgings, as they were called, to serve him during his periodical visits. The last of these lodgings existed about a century ago, as is shown in an old plan, and apparently formed an adjunct to the Lanthorne Tower. Nowadays the Constable has neither residence nor lodgings in the Tower.

When he thus cut himself residentially adrift, the Constable left as his *locum tenens* the Lieutenant, and for the Lieutenant Henry VIII. built the Lieutenant's Lodgings, which still exist, though for some obscure reason their name has been changed to the 'King's House,' a manifest misnomer. Some 300 years ago the Lieutenant, taking his cue from the Constable, decided that he too would rather live outside, so he departed, and the Major took possession of the Lieutenant's Lodgings, and occupies them

to this day, and there carries on the current duties for the Constable.

The Constable's command, apart from the fortress itself, includes a battalion of the Guards and a battery of Garrison Artillery (which form the garrison), the Yeomen Warders, whose establishment is forty strong, and a large number of employees, whose work, either as craftsmen or as labourers, lies within the Tower. These are all nominally under the Constable's orders and sole control, but, as a matter of fact, many have grown to be semi-independent. Even those who have lived long in the Tower are puzzled to know where and with whom direct authority lies in numberless small matters. To illustrate this curious state of divided control, a minor case may be quoted. Visitors to the Tower interested in its history and its more important features were at one time able, with the consent of the Constable, to buy for a few pence little handbooks dealing with such parts as the Jewel House or the Beauchamp Tower. But the Treasury stopped the sale of these, because they interfered with the sale of another guide issued by the Stationery Office.

The Constable of the Tower is one of the few people in these realms who are entitled by ancient right to address the king direct. He can and does write to the king personally, and not through one of His Majesty's Secretaries of State. The Constable would not trouble the king on so small a matter as the sale of pamphlets, but he would be perfectly within his rights in doing so if he wished.

V.

The pay and perquisites of the Constable were in ancient days, when taken in combination, of considerable value. True, the actual salary was not more than £100 per annum, though that is equal to £1000 at the present day; but the perquisites were rich and rare. It was to the Constable's interest to have as many prisoners as possible in the Tower, and the higher their rank the more he profited. Thus on commitment as a prisoner a duke had to pay the Constable £20 as an entrance fee, an earl £13, a baron £10, and a knight £5, and each of these sums must be multiplied by ten to arrive at its present value.

For the sustenance of these prisoners and their retinues the Treasury made certain grants per week, and these were on a liberal scale—for a duke, 65 shillings; for an earl, 40 shillings; for a baron, 20 shillings; and for a knight, 10 shillings. The duke of those days apparently took his chaplain to prison with him as well as many servants, and this holy man had an allowance of 6s. 8d. per week; the duke's gentlemen received also 6s. 8d., whilst his yeomen were allotted 3s. 4d. All other servants were allowed 3s. 4d., all other yeomen 1s. 6d. These were the rates in the reign of Richard II., but

they were raised as gold declined in value. If the duke, or other prisoner, accepted these doles the Constable profited nothing; but if 'through pride and contempt' the distinguished captive brushed them aside, they became the perquisite of the Constable.

It was the Constable's right to stop all ships that passed up the river Thames from the sea, and to take toll from them. The procedure was for a Yeoman Warder to stand on the wharf and hold up a staff, the signal for the ship to stop and send off the Constable's toll in kind. This ancient staff is still preserved in the Warder's Hall. It is a gnarled and knotted staff some four feet in length, probably cut from an old thorn-tree. If the ship happened to be a merchantman from Bordeaux carrying wines, the Constable was entitled to two flagons of wine delivered free at the wharf. All fishing-vessels bringing oysters, mussels, and cockles to the London market, before proceeding past the Tower, had to pay their way by presenting the Constable with one maund, or large basketful, from their cargo. All vessels carrying fresh fish were allowed to make a money payment instead of paying fees in kind.

Another very valuable perquisite of the Constable was the exclusive fishing rights between London Bridge and the Tower. Nowadays this right would not be of much value, but at that time salmon and other savoury and valuable fish abounded in these waters.

Then comes a very quaint and exceedingly useful perquisite. In early days houses extended across London Bridge on both sides, making a street of it, very similar to the present Bridge Street in Bath. The only break in the continuity of the houses was opposite the stout piers which supported the bridge. Here only a frail wooden paling prevented people or cattle from falling into the river. There were no policemen to direct the traffic in those days, so that often the crush on the bridge, especially when cattle were being driven to market, was very great. Crowded and frightened, these cattle were often driven against the frail posts and rails, which would give way here and there, and plump would go the cattle into the river. All such cattle became the perquisite of the Constable, who sent out watermen to conduct them into the safe harbourage of the Tower, and thence to the Constable's kitchen. Indeed, the scandalmongers of the day went so far as to suggest that when the Constable was short of meat, and had a large banquet in view, he would send up a few varlets to London Bridge at the busiest time, there to create the necessary block and confusion, which would cause a few fat kine to fall into the river!

To the Constable also accrued all swans that floated down the Thames below London Bridge. Even now after heavy rain, in spite of the turmoil of many tugs and steamers, batches of

swans may often be seen in summer floating down to the Tower. There must have been a constant supply, for the river rushed like a torrent through London Bridge, and any swan which was taking an incautious siesta in the reaches just above the bridge was bound to be carried through, and so to the Constable's table. All flotsam and jetsam, including timber, which escaped down-stream through London Bridge was the Constable's perquisite.

Then in those rude days his floors and passages were carpeted for him. Not with carpets, to be sure, for these did not exist except as curios in kings' palaces, but with rushes. Out of every boat that brought rushes past the Tower the Constable was entitled to take as much as a good hefty varlet could clasp in his two arms.

East Smithfield, which was within the Tower liberties, and lay to the north-east, was a great centre for the drying of skins, to be used later in making jerkins and what not. On every skin there dried the Constable received a fee.

Those who have seen plans of the Tower of a time as late as the reign of Queen Elizabeth will notice that, though there is a broad and deep moat full of water, with precipitous banks round the outer edges, there are no railings or other safeguards against people or animals falling into the watery mire. On a dark night this must have been a particularly precarious vicinity. The Constable, however, had good and sufficient reasons for not encouraging the Treasury to incur useless expenditure on a protective railing, for all carts (with the goods stowed in them) which were misguided enough to fall into the Tower moat became the absolute perquisite of the Constable. Probably this was in the nature of a rough police law, to encourage the citizens to give the moat a wide berth, for a cart and its goods recovered from the slime and filth of the moat would not, as a rule, fetch much on being sold.

If the Constable lived on the spot, and collected all these perquisites himself, he became passing rich; but if, as was the later custom, he lived away, they would be farmed out, and doubtless gave rise to many abuses. Thus gradually, as the ages passed, they died away one by one, and the old staff in the Warder's Hall is the sole and silent relic of ancient days.

The Constable now receives no magnificent salary. His only is the high distinction of holding one of the oldest and most picturesque offices in the Empire, coupled with a small honorarium of £200 to cover his necessary expenses.

VI.

The late Constable of the Tower, Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, passed away only a few months ago, at a ripe old age, full of honours, and esteemed as a brave old warrior

by his king and country. His successor is an equally distinguished soldier, Field-Marshal Lord Methuen.

On the day appointed for the installation of a new Constable, all the officers of the Tower, together with the new Constable, assemble in the Lieutenant's Lodgings, which open on to Tower Green. Outside the Lodgings on Tower Green the Yeomen Warders, in their ancient uniforms, and carrying their halberds, are drawn up. On the parade-ground by the White Tower is formed up the battalion of the Guards which is in garrison. In the middle distance stands the Lord Chamberlain, accompanied by his staff, and holding in his hand the keys of the Tower. At zero, as we used to say in the war, the procession conducting the new Constable issues from the Lieutenant's Lodgings, and paces with stately measure across Tower Green. The procession is headed by the Yeoman Gaoler carrying the Axe, followed by all the Yeomen Warders and the officers of the Tower, conducting the new Constable. As the procession moves forward, it arrives in due course at the place where the Lord Chamberlain has taken his stand. The new Constable then moves to the front, and is met by the Lord Chamberlain, who, in the King's name, presents him with the keys of the Tower, thus investing him in his new office. The Constable makes a suitable reply—either a

plain 'Thank you, sir,' or a brief speech, as seems best to him. This preliminary ceremony being concluded, the Yeoman Porter steps to the front, and taking off his hat, proclaims in herald fashion, 'God preserve King George!' to which all present reply, 'Amen.' The troops at the same time present arms, and the band plays 'God Save the King.'

Next all the officers of the garrison advance, and are one by one presented to the Constable as their future chief. When this portion of the ceremony is completed the officers return to their posts, and the battalion marches past the Constable, this being their form of presentation to him. The Constable then orders the troops to be dismissed to barracks, and the original procession is re-formed and moves on. The Gaoler Warder leading the way as before, the Constable is first conducted into the White Tower, which is the keep of the fortress. He has now completed the act of taking over. He has received the keys, the command of the garrison has been handed over to him, and he is installed in the White Tower, as was Geoffrey de Mandeville by William the Conqueror all those hundreds of years ago.

It is part of Old England, and long may Old England and her ancient customs live, and long may live the Constable of the Tower of London!

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE SENTENCE.

I.

ON the outskirts of a village near the junction of the British and French armies, two guards with loaded rifles kept watch at the doors of a hut. The warm sunlight of May was bathing the fields in gold, where here and there a peasant woman could be seen sprinkling seed into the furrows. Across a field, cutting its way through a farmyard, a light railway carried its occasional wobbling, narrow-gauged traffic; and outside half-a-dozen huts soldiers were lolling in the warmth of early afternoon, polishing accoutrements and exchanging the lazy philosophy of men resting after herculean tasks. Elsewhere there was no sign of war. Cattle browsed about the meadows, and the villagers, long since grown used to the presence of foreign soldiers, pursued their endless duties.

A sergeant walked briskly from a cottage in the village, and went directly to the field where lay the hut guarded by the sentries. 'Fall in outside!' he said sharply, opening the door.

Hatless, and with his dark hair seeming to cast the shadows that had gathered beneath his

eyes, Dick Durwent emerged and took his place between the guards.

'To receive the sentence of the court,' said the sergeant in answer to his questioning glance. 'Escort and prisoner—'shun! Right turn! Quick march!'

Past the lounging soldiers to the road, and on to the village, they marched. Women glanced up, curious as to the meaning of the little procession, but with a shrug of their shoulders resumed their work, and soon forgot all about it. The escort halted outside the cottage from which the sergeant had come, and he entered it alone. A minute later he reappeared, and marched prisoner and guards into the room where the court-martial had been held that morning. The three officers were sitting in the same places—a lieutenant-colonel, whose set, sun-tanned face told nothing; a captain, whose firmness of jaw and steadiness of eye could not hide his twitching lip; and a subaltern, pale as Dick Durwent himself.

As president of the court, the senior officer handed a sealed envelope to the prisoner. Not a word was spoken on either side. The sergeant's command rang out, and the noise of metal heels upon the floor was startlingly loud.

Still without a word, carrying the unread sentence in his hand, Durwent was marched back to the hut. Again the women cast curious glances, and a little urchin in a cocked-hat stood at the salute as they passed.

When he was alone once more, Dick broke the seal of the envelope, and without his face altering, except that the shadows grew darker beneath his eyes, he read the finding of the court.

He was to be shot.

He read it twice. With a long, quivering intake of the breath, he tore the thing slowly into a dozen pieces and threw them in a corner.

Walking to the end of the hut, he leaned against the ledge of a little window, and looked out towards the horizon where the great blue of the sky stooped to earth. There was the laughter of soldiers, and from an adjoining meadow came the neighing of a restive horse. The sunlight deepened, and from a hundred branches birds were trilling welcome to the promise of another summer.

Two hours passed. The warmth of early afternoon was giving way to the cool mood of twilight—but the solitary figure had not moved.

II.

Nine days had passed when a motor-lorry drew up on the road, and the same sergeant ordered Dick Durwent to take his place outside the hut with his escort. The prisoner asked as to his destination, and was told that the sentence, having been confirmed, was to be promulgated before his unit.

They had been travelling for half-an-hour when they reached a field in which Durwent saw two companies of his battalion drawn up in the form of a hollow square. Faint with shame, staggering under the hideous cruelty of the whole thing, he was marched into the centre and ordered to take a pace forward, while the commanding officer read the sentence of court-martial to the men: that Private Sherwood, being found guilty of drunkenness while on guard—it being further proved that he had obtained unlawful possession of the liquor—was to be shot at dawn, and that the sentence would be carried out the following morning.

Although his senses reeled with the shock and ignominy of it all, the prisoner's bearing showed no sign of it. With his head erect and his brow unmarred by a frown, he looked into the faces of the men whom he had lived and slept and fought beside; men with whom he had shared privation and danger; men who had been his comrades through it all. But as he searched their faces he felt an overpowering loneliness. In the eyes of every one there was horror. To be killed in battle—what was that? But to be shot like a cur in the grizzly

morning! Yet their horror, their anger, was against the military law, and was born of a fear that the same thing might come to them. It was that which cut him to the quick. It was not that *he* was to be shot the next day, but that *they* might meet a similar fate. That was the fear which drove the blood from their cheeks and left their lips parted in awe.

And then he saw a face which almost broke down his manhood, and sent scalding tears to the very brink. It was the face of the lad he had saved from deserting that terrible night. The boy's agony was for him alone; it was pleading for understanding; it was trying to tell him that he would never forget—that the condemned man would not go to his death unmourned by one human heart.

Dick looked away, but the solitude and the pain had passed.

III.

It was his last night. All evening the chaplain had been with him, offering the solace of divine mercy and forgiveness; but though he was grateful for the good man's ministrations, Durwent felt that he wanted to be alone. He hardly knew why; but there were many things to think of, things which would be remembered more easily if he were by himself. Towards eleven o'clock he made the request of the chaplain, who left him, promising to return shortly after midnight; and, with his hands clasped behind his back, Dick walked slowly up and down the hut.

His mind journeyed to Roselawn—and Elise. At least—and at the thought he struck his hands together with joy—she would never know. She would think he had died in China. For several minutes he walked without his thoughts taking any other form than that, but gradually the realisation of his surroundings began to leave him. He was roaming through the woods with Elise; they were climbing a great tree for birds' eggs; they were casting flies for trout in the stream that ran through their estate; they were riding across country on ponies that whinnied with pleasure at the feel of the soft turf. But wherever his hungry imagination painted her, there was in her face the womanly tenderness that had always been hers in their companionship.

He stopped in his walk and pressed his clenched fingers against his lips. She had always believed in him. Through all the hell in which the Fates had cast his destiny, she had been one star towards which he could grope. But now—a drunkard—a renegade soldier of a renegade battalion—to be shot! He had killed her trust! The horrors of the night closed on him like hounds on a dying stag.

Uttering a dull cry of agony, he staggered across the hut with outstretched hands—and

in the darkness his poor disordered fancy saw once more the vision of his sister's face. It was as he had seen her when, as a boy bruised by life, he had gone to her for solace. She had not changed. She could not change. Her eyes, her lips, were saying that in the morning she would stand beside him, holding his hand in hers, until the levelled rifles severed his soul and his body for eternity.

He sank to his knees, and for the first time in many years he prayed. It was a prayer to an unknown God, in words that were meaningless, disjointed things. It was a soul crying out to its source, a soul struggling towards the throne of Eternal Justice, through a darkness lit only by a sister's love and the gratitude of an eighteen-year-old boy saved from shameful death.

The commands of the sergeant of the guard could be heard as sentries were changed. Durwent rose to his feet and tried to look from the window, but the night was as black as the grave which had already been dug for him. Once more there was no sound but the wind moaning about the deserted fields.

'Mas'r Dick.'

Dick's body grew rigid. Was it a prank of his mind, or had he really heard the words?

'Mas'r Dick.'

The door had opened an inch. His heart beat wildly, and he crouched close to the crevice.

'Mathews!' he gasped.

'Sh—sh!' An admonishing hand touched him. 'Come close, sir. This is a dirty business, Mas'r Dick. If you hear me cough noticeable, get back and pretend like you're asleep.'

'But—but, in God's name, what are you doing there?'

'I'm a-guardin' you, sir. Sh—sh!'

The old groom moved a couple of paces away from the door, humming a song about a coachman who loved a turnkey's daughter. Almost mad with excitement, Dick stood in the darkness of the hut with his outstretched arms shaking and quivering. He was afraid he would shout, and bit his finger-nails to help to repress the wild desire.

'Mas'r Dick.'

In an instant he was crouching again by the door.

'There'll be a orficer's inspection,' whispered the sentry, 'a minute or two arter midnight. When that there little ceremony has took place, you and me is going for a walk.'

'Where?'

'Anywheres, Mas'r Dick.'

'You mean—to escape?'

'Percisely so, sir.'

For a moment his pulses beat furiously with hope; but the realisation of what it meant for the old groom killed it like a sudden frost. 'No, Mathews,' he whispered. 'It isn't fair to you. I am not going to try

to escape. Give me your hand—I want to say good-bye.'

For answer, the imperturbable Mathews moved off again, and, in a soft but most unmusical bass, sang the second verse about the amorous coachman and the susceptible turnkey's daughter. Dick listened—hanging greedily on every little sound with its atmosphere of Rose-lawn.

'Mas'r Dick.' Mathews had returned. 'No argifyin' won't get you nowhere. If I have to knock you atwixt the ears and drag you out by the 'eels, you're comin' out of that there stall to-night. I ain't goin' for to see a Durwent made a target of. No, sir; not if I have to blow the whole army up and them frog-eaters along with 'em. Close that door, Mas'r Dick. I've got a contrairy temper, and can't stand no argifyin' like. Close that door, sir.'

Almost crazed with excitement, Dick strode about the hut. Even if he were to get away, the chances of capture were overwhelming. But—to be shot in an open fight for freedom! That would be a thousand times better than death by an open grave. Freedom! The word was intoxication. To breathe the air of heaven once again—to feel the canopy of the stars—to smell the musk of flowers and new grass! If only for an hour; yet what an hour!

And then the chance, remote, but still within the realm of possibility, of reaching the front line, where men died like men. Of all the desires he had ever known, none ever gripped him like the longing for battle, where death and honour were inseparable.

But once more the thought of Mathews chilled his purpose. It would mean penal servitude or worse for the old groom, and he was not going to be the means of ruining him for his faithfulness. He could not stoop so low as that.

These and a hundred similar thoughts flashed through his mind, and he was no nearer their solution when the door was opened and a sergeant shouted a command. He started. For a second he thought that dawn might be breaking, and that his hour had arrived; but an officer came up the steps, and he saw with a quiver of relief that it was the nightly inspection.

'Everything all right?'

'Yes, sir,' he answered.

'Where's the chaplain?'

'He'll be back directly, sir.'

'Food all right—everything possible being done for you?'

'I have no complaints, sir.'

In the light of the lamp held by the sergeant the two men looked at each other. Without saying anything more, the officer glanced about the hut. 'That will do, sergeant.—Good-night.'

'Good-night, sir,' answered Durwent.

The officer had hardly reached the door, where the sergeant had preceded him with the light, when he turned back impulsively and put out

his hand. 'I suppose this sort of thing is necessary,' he said hoarsely; 'but it's a damned rotten affair altogether.'

They clasped hands; and, turning on his heel, the officer left the hut.

'Take every precaution, sergeant,' Dick heard him say; 'and send a runner to the chaplain with my compliments. Tell him he must not leave the prisoner.'

'Very good, sir.'

Silence again—and the crunching of the sentries' heels on the sparsely sprinkled gravel. The ordeal was becoming unbearable. Dick feared the passing of the minutes which would bring back the chaplain, and yet every minute seemed an eternity. The conflict ravaged his very soul. Was he to take the chance offered him by the strangest trick of Destiny, or remain and die like a rat caught in a trap?

'Mas'r Dick.'

The door was quietly opened. The old groom's hand fell on his arm and drew him firmly outwards. He tried to pull back, but with unexpected strength the older man exerted his pressure, until he found himself outside.

It was so dark that he could not see a yard ahead of him as Mathews, retaining his grip on Dick's arm, led him towards the road. They were nearly clear of the field, when the groom stopped abruptly, and they lay flat on the ground. It was the orderly officer and the sergeant returning from the inspection of a hut some distance off.

'Sentry.' The officer had paused opposite the hut where the prisoner had been.

'Yes, sir,' came the answer from the soldier still on guard at the other door.

'Has the chaplain returned?'

'Not yet, sir.'

With an impatient exclamation, the officer went on towards the village; and gaining their feet, the two men reached the road.

'There's a path alongside, sir,' whispered Mathews, 'and you and me is goin' to put as much terry-firmy atwixt this village and us as our four legs can do. Now, sir, we're off!'

With lowered heads, they broke into a run. Stumbling over unseen stones, lacerating their hands and faces against bushes which overhung the path, they ran on into the dark. Once a staff car passed them, and they huddled in a ditch; but it was only for a few seconds, and they were up again. Unless they were unfortunate enough to run right into the arms of the military police, the night was offering every chance of success. A barking dog warned them that they had come to the outskirts of another village. Leaving the road, they circled the place by tortuously making their way through uneven fields, until they thought it safe once more to take the path. On they ran—past silent fields—by streams—by murky swamps.

Towards dawn Dick was faint with fatigue. The ordeal of the last month had cruelly sapped

his vitality, and as he ran he found himself stumbling to his knees.

'Hold hard, sir,' said the groom, who was leading. 'Another mile or so, and you and me, sir, will breathe ourselves proper.'

Only another mile—but a mile of utter anguish. Twice Dick fell, and the second time he could not rise without assistance.

'Mas'r Dick,' pleaded the groom, 'look 'ee, sir. Up yonder hill somewheres about I knows there is a cornfield, for I have noted it many a time. We can't hide here, sir, in this stubble. Lean on me, Mas'r Dick—that's the way. Now, sir, for England, 'ome, and beauty.'

Struggling to retain his consciousness, Dick limped beside the old servitor, until, gaining the hill, they saw an abandoned cornfield. There was a roll of guns as they made their way into the field, and through the dense blackness of the night a few streaks of gray could be seen towards the east.

Without a sound, Dick sank to the ground in complete exhaustion. The groom unstrapped his own greatcoat, which had been carried rolled, and covered the lad with it. Taking a thermos bottle from his haversack, he poured some hot tea between Dick's lips, and saw a little glow of warmth creep into the cheeks.

'Now, sir,' he said, 'take a bit o' this sandwich. 'Ave another swig o' the tea. Bless my heart, sir, won't them fellers be surprised when they finds as how they ain't got no corpse for their funeral? That's better, sir. I will say about army tea that even if it ain't what my old woman would make, it's rare strong, Mas'r Dick, rare strong and powerful, likewise and sim'lar.'

'Mathews,' said Dick weakly, 'how was it—you were on guard—last night? Was it just an accident?'

'Yes, sir. Just a accident. Well, not percisely a accident neither, sir. I be what the War Office calls "a headquarter troop," and do odd jobs behind the lines. Sometimes I dig graves, and other times I be a officer's servant, and likewise do a turn of sentry-go. Well, sir, when I heard that you was a prisoner and were goin' for to be shot, I persuades the corp'l to put me on guard, exchangin' a diggin' job with a bloke by the name o' Griggs, so as not to incermode the records o' the War Office. That's all, sir. There I were, and here we be; and arter you've had a sleep, you and me will have a jaw on our immed'ate future. 'Ave a good snooze, Mas'r Dick, and I'll keep an eye trimmed on the road.'

With the same boyishness he had shown that night in Selwyn's rooms, Dick put out his hand and pressed the old groom's arm. With a paternal air, Mathews patted the hand with his own and reached for his pipe, explaining that he would steal a smoke before daylight. But the lad did not hear him. He was lost in a deep, dreamless sleep.

(Continued on page 517.)

KING COAL: AUTOCRAT.

By IVOR M'INNES.

TO one who knows the north and the south, and who, too, is not unaware of the smokeless cities of the Mississippi valley, with their electrically driven factories and traction, a fair vision unfolds itself upon the retina of the future—a vision of a land where, from John o' Groat's to Land's End, no smoke-laden air pollutes, and no belching chimneys or disfiguring ash-dumps blot life out of grass-lands and beauty from the landscape.

That time is still in the 'sometime, never,' stage. As Mr Asquith said during his election campaign at Paisley, 'Coal is an article of prime necessity to our industries as a whole, . . . till some new form of motive-power is discovered and developed.'

So, till the day of cable-carried power sets in, folk must put up with coal, and our country, from the midlands to the north, must remain scarred by coal-pits and shrouded in smoke—though, perhaps, of less noxious quality than in those early days of the thirteenth century when, to quote from an ancient document, 'the smell and smoke emitted from coal became so offensive to the nobility and gentry that they remonstrated against it as a nuisance, and obtained a royal proclamation prohibiting coal to be used.' But the Act must have been very much of a dead letter, or, discovering coal on their own estates, the gentry and the nobility may have decided to put up with the inconvenience and pocket the profits—a process that seems to have grown rapidly popular, for in 1306, one finds, 'prejudice gave place to utility, and coal became in general requisition,' notwithstanding that 'in this, as in every other article of public utility, monopoly was extensively practised, the comfort of the many being forced to give place to the interest of the few.'

So, after all, profiteering is no new adventure. Neither is that twin-evil which flaunts itself hand-in-hand with profiteering—an artificial scarcity created by the withholding of supplies. Happily (as to-day also) there were not wanting those who—this time to quote from a seventeenth-century record—sought 'to defeat the combination of dealers in coal.'

What a little world it is, after all! And how certain, as well as circumscribed, is the orbit of thought's cycle! Only in recent months, in chronicling the death of Mr James Rowlands, the Member of Parliament for Dartford, Kent, it was recorded that 'in the summer of 1917 he propounded a scheme under which local authorities would be given power to buy and store coal in the summer months, in order that it might be sold in winter to householders who had no storage

accommodation, or not sufficient money to buy early in large quantities.'

'To defeat the profiteer'—that has been the cry all through the history of coal. It is with no great surprise, in consequence, that one observes that this 1917 plan was anticipated a year before the Fire of London; and with greater success, for the proposal was embodied in an Act of Parliament. (It would be interesting—would it not?—to find out if the Act has ever been repealed.) In the year 1665 an Act was passed 'that the poor might be constantly supplied with coals in times of scarcity,' and local authorities were 'ordered to purchase and lay up yearly' a store of coal for the purpose. In the City of London, for instance, the various Livery Companies had 'between Lady Day and Michaelmas to lay in stocks' which, in dear times, were 'to be vended in such manner and at such prices as the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen should direct by written precept.' The Merchant Taylors, thereby, had to stock 750 chaldrons (a chaldron is 25½ cwt.), the Grocers 675 chaldrons; and in this way each of the fifty-six Livery Companies had to hold stocks, on a sliding scale, down to the Glaziers and the Basketmakers, with six chaldrons each, and the Woolmen, the Fletchers, and the Bowyers, three chaldrons each.

While thus the City Companies became 'the granaries of Joseph' to the extent of over 9500 tons (7460 chaldrons), the profiteer was kept under a strict eye. The Justices of the Peace—from the reign of Charles II. to the days of William III.—had power, 'if any retailer of coals shall refuse to sell at the prices fixed by the J.P.'s' (there we get control, by the way—no! there's nothing new under the sun), 'to take a constable to force entrance, to sell the coal at proper rates and deduct their costs' before settling with the recalcitrant. If short weight were detected, 'forfeiture of all the coals in stock or double the value thereof' was the penalty.

From the 'back of beyond,' too, of the centuries comes another sidelight reflecting to-day. In the year of the Great Fire, Pepys tells in his Diary that coal was three pounds three shillings per chaldron. In April of a year later, because of the Dutch war, prices mounted up to four pounds four shillings per chaldron, and a couple of months later, by June, a leap was made to five pounds ten shillings per chaldron.

So after all, in the eternal fight between the profiteer and the powers that be, the profiteer seems always to have come out with more money than credit.

A DAUGHTER OF THE DOPPERS.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER Gert had left the train at Mulder's Vlei (where the line to Stellenbosch branches off), Steenie was seized with a depressing sense of loneliness which speedily reduced her to a state of misery, and ultimately to tears. Surrounded as she was by strangers, her inexperience and her vivid imagination conjured up evils and dire forebodings which she vainly endeavoured to allay. Sombre and uninteresting as her life on the farm had been, the love she bore her parents remained to torture her with home-sickness, intensified by regret. She remembered that the old people had consented to her leaving for so long a period, and, in particular, to her being educated at Cape Town, with a sacrifice of principles and prejudices ingrained in their natures—how deeply Steenie knew only too well. As the train neared Salt River, on the outskirts of Cape Town, her grief gave way to wonderment. The miles of closely packed houses, the huge vessels on the calm waters of Table Bay, and the motley crowd on the station platform filled her with amazement. But, above all—the sea: the sea that she had dreamed of through numberless hot karoo days, her fancy filling the pulsating veld with cool blue water. Here it was to look upon, to feel, to taste if she wished; but with it all there was something lacking—she missed the coral islands and the palms of her dreams.

Dr Bray's sister, a kindly, buxom, trust-compelling woman, met her, and took the girl to her home, because it was evident that in order to save the child the humiliation she was bound to feel should she enter the school dressed in her quaintly cut garments, a thorough inspection and revision of her wardrobe was necessary.

At first Steenie made few friends at the seminary. Her shy, wild manner repelled most of her class-mates; but soon the innate sweetness of her disposition and her evident desire to stand well with everybody won over most of them, so that at the end of her first term she was quite popular. She was, moreover, devoted to her studies, and the quiet resolution she displayed in overcoming the difficulties which beset her path, intensified as they were by her former training and habits, won for her the respect and admiration of her teachers. As her knowledge increased, and as her views of life and its mysteries broadened, she found that she was involved in a perpetual contest between her early prejudices and the results of her larger experience. She, who had first insisted that clothing and hats were merely for protective purposes, came to see, in harmony with the views of her sex, that adornment was the first necessity, utility the second. The *kappie* and

the *voerchitz* dress that had formerly satisfied her were now abhorrent in her eyes, and as time went on she became a devotee of smart hats and frocks. With it all she never lost the sweetness of her disposition. The instinct of her sex—to look nice—was always with her, but to vanity she was a stranger. Her tastes were effective but simple.

Many things she saw and heard in Cape Town were both pleasant and unpleasant to her. The overdressed women in the streets were an endless source of wonderment. The sudden dropping of the mask of religious observance inside the church for frivolous gossip and empty laughter outside the building jarred on her—it was so different from the solemnity of a Vaalbos Sabbath. Her riper experience and knowledge of human nature partly excused the frivolities of some of the women, but the whole problem was disconcerting, while at the same time it appealed to her keen sense of the ridiculous.

'It is really funny,' she said to one of the teachers, 'how different from country people town folks take religion. In the country the influence of the service is sustained until the congregation reach their homes, but here the worldly chatter starts at the very church door. When I see these girls crowding out, eagerly scanning the faces of the crowd for their respective Jacks, and volubly talking of the last dance or theatrical performance, the whole thing strikes me with the force of a farce. They are like so many sheep issuing from one of father's kraals, and the impulse to stand at the church door and count them out as he does is almost irresistible.'

Steenie visited her home once only during the four years she was away. That was when she had been at school for a short period only, at a time when the call of the veld was clamorous and insistent, and home-sickness punished her; but she returned to the new life with at least contentment, and with a keener longing for the unravelling of the mysteries of knowledge still unknown and untouched.

Love of music, latent in most South Africans, broke into passion, and the concerts in the City Hall were an unending source of delight to her. The grand organ, pealing through the mighty church she attended, awoke in her the passions which the quiet veld had nursed, and so she dreamed of vague things—of love still unrealised, and of ambitions to be satisfied. She was peculiarly susceptible to the influence of sweet sounds, and would sit quite contentedly for an hour listening to the expert performances of a couple of coloured gentlemen on the guitar and the concertina. She weaved romances around the weird music and sickly sentimental songs, and

dreamed of *Ebb Tide* and Attwater, and of poor Billy the tramp, who had introduced her to her hero, and who was now buried in a corner of the little *begraaf-plaats* on the farm.

She enjoyed to the full all that Cape Town had to give her, but was conscientious with it all in regard to her studies. Her very simplicity of mind and character was the keynote, and she revelled in the enjoyment of small pleasures. She joined lustily in the chorus of the South African College song, bawled by iron-lunged football victors at the seminary gates, but found it in her heart to pity the vanquished. The lame, the blind, and the halt in Adderley Street found her ever their best patron, and she bought in pity from the old *koesijster* seller blinking over her sticky wares in Church Square, and surreptitiously transferred her purchases to an epileptic match-vender who plied his trade in the vicinity. She was never embarrassed, because she was never self-conscious; and one of her greatest charms, which appealed to teachers and friends alike, was her clear-eyed innocence.

It was as if the purity and simplicity of the veld had taken possession of her personality, disarming the sophisticated and strengthening the pure.

Her one trouble was her brother Gert. His letters to her plainly showed that theology palled on him. He told her that he was not 'cut out' for a minister of the Gospel, and that he thought 'the Service' was more in his line. To that end he was preparing for the next Civil Service examination, which, he intimated, he hoped to pass before she left school. She thought of poor Ta'antje and her ambition, and worried about it; and of her father, who had sacrificed the dearest wish of his heart, only to lose the son who should have farmed, in the ordinary course of nature, his thousands of *morgen*. Who would farm at Koodooskop when Oom Jan Kloppe was laid with his fathers? She urged upon Gert to go home and take up their father's burden. Would he like to see the old farm pass to a stranger? But Gert was obdurate. The high collar and the cigarette of modernism had fastened themselves upon him, and he scorned the farm.

Later she heard that he had passed the examination, and had been appointed clerk to the Civil Commissioner of Vaalbos. She was thankful, in her simple way, for this one mark of the favour of Providence. He would, she thought, be near the old people, which fact would serve partly to blunt the disappointment she conceived they had both experienced.

Then her turn came. She was twenty, and must homewards. The freckled, diffident veld child was another creature now. The glorious eyes had gathered knowledge which had left the heart pure and undefiled. The freckles about the cheekbones were but so many emphases of beauty, and the bright hair, capricious of shade,

reflected more intensely the early nursing of her splendid karoo sun.

'I am going home, yet away from home,' she said to her teachers at parting, and so she left them, loved and regretted, with the farewell cheers of her friends in her ears, and tears of regret in her eyes that blurred the last glimpse of the seminary gates which had sheltered and fended her for four happy years.

CHAPTER IV.

OLD Jan Kloppe of Koodooskop was seated, one warm afternoon of December, in an ancient arm-chair placed well within the shadow cast by a gable of his homestead. The mournful quiet of the karoo oppressed the house, and the veld, burdened with the shimmering heat, stretched trembling to the distant horizon. The white road leading to Vaalbos through the atrophied bushes was partly blurred by a single cloud of dust, shifting each moment nearer to the homestead. Presently the hoof-strokes of a horse roused the old man from the lethargic state into which he had fallen. Rising reluctantly, he walked, red handkerchief in hand, round the corner of the gable to the front of the house, where he arrived simultaneously with the horse. The rider proved to be a Hottentot 'boy' who had been sent to Vaalbos for the post. The farmer, scarcely noticing his perspiring dependent, laboriously climbed the steps leading to the *stoep*, and stopping at a window, drummed an alarm on one of the panes.

'Antje,' he roared, 'the post has arrived!' He heard a movement within, and presently the upper half of the front-door was opened, disclosing the *kapje* enframed visage and exaggerated bosom of his wife, whose feelings, indexed by her face, were seemingly unruffled by the near prospect of news from the outer world.

The Hottentot handed the post-bag to his master, who extracted from its depths a solitary letter, which he offered to his wife with the air and expression of one handling a noxious thing.

'Wife, here is another of them! I can smell that it comes from Steenie. I am afraid that our poor child has departed from the ways of our dear Lord.'

Ta'antje took the pink, highly scented missive with a sniff indicative of the strongest disapproval, and turning, entered the house; while Oom Jan, after a curt dismissal of the post-rider, returned to his chair in the shade of the gable to await, with habitual patience, the news the letter contained.

The news was momentous. Ta'antje's usually stolid face showed that plainly enough.

'Jan,' she said almost breathlessly, 'she is coming home. She will be here to-morrow, and writes that the cart must meet her at the station at ten o'clock.'

They were both strangely and powerfully moved out of the solemn placidity of their usual mood. They looked at each other almost in fear. They had not seen her for some years, and how, they wondered, had time used her? Would she come back to them the same simple God-fearing child they had parted with, or had Cape Town spoiled her for the Lord?

Steenie arrived in the evening just as the herds were driving in the sheep. She called out pleasantly to the men, and they waved a welcome to her. The little native location near the homestead turned out to give her a greeting. The innumerable dogs that infested the farm raced beside the cart, and created a barking uproar which caused a lurking jackal a mile away to run, in dread, to shelter. The Hottentot driver, alive to his important duties, urged the horses into a gallop with howls and whip-strokes, and with a marvellous turn, brilliantly executed, brought the team to a standstill.

Steenie bounded up the steps leading to the *stoep*, where she showered kisses and caresses upon the two old people. She marvelled at their coldness, for she did not know that the change in her appearance had frozen them with wonder and dismay. They saw that the much-freckled, slovenly child they remembered so well had disappeared for ever, and in her place beheld one of whom they were almost afraid. They noticed that her joyful ejaculations were in the English tongue, that she dressed like the magistrate's wife, and that her hands were soft and white. The freckles had mostly disappeared, and her skin, though somewhat sallow in hue, was soft and clear like a baby's. She had grown taller, and her figure, rounded and pleasing, was yet somewhat slender, and infinitely graceful. They noticed that her teeth were white and shiny like a Kaffir's, and that her hair, beautiful in its several shades, was arranged in an outlandish fashion which the hat crowning it scarcely concealed.

She had not been long with them before her parents both fell under her influence. Steenie did things which were rank heresy in their sight, but they made no demur. She attacked the *zit kamer*, and every article which in her eyes was odd and fantastic was ruthlessly removed. Some were sacred in the eyes of the old couple, and had been carefully preserved since their marriage. They contented themselves with secret lamentations, but offered no opposition. The gaudy antimacassars, the knitting of which had been the old wife's sole accomplishment in early youth; the black-and-white porcelain dogs sitting on their haunches with expectant air; the worsted mats; the collection of imitation fruit which deceived nobody—all these were consigned to inglorious obscurity in the *zolder* (loft); while in their place appeared tasteful ornaments,

pictures and prints—and, above all, a piano. There had been a warm contest over the last-named article, for the introduction, or the contemplated introduction, of so worldly a thing into their home was a glaring sin in the eyes of the old Doppers; but Steenie carried her point, and it was purchased. She raided the house, and everything that was bizarre and shabby was condemned, and ousted by articles in better taste and of greater comfort, so that the neighbours wondered at the weakness of her parents. The latter, moved by the increased convenience and brightness, ceased lamenting, and soon gave all she did their secret approval, until, like the king, she could do no wrong. Their affection for her increased daily, but it was liberally mixed with reverence, for she was a creature beyond their comprehension, so that they marvelled at the goodness of the Lord in permitting them to be the parents of so wonderful a child.

Steenie had been home for three weeks when Dr Bray first called. He had chosen a bright Sunday afternoon for his visit, and he noticed, not without amusement, as he drove across the *werf*, a number of saddle-horses hitched to the blue gums and the *kat-doorns*.

The *zit kamer* was crowded with young men, silent, awkward-handed, and fantastically dressed, and in their midst a charming young woman talking animatedly in Cape Dutch! So great was the surprise and wonder called up by Steenie's appearance that the doctor's greeting was awkward and constrained; but she, with the tact of a city-born lady, had him at his ease in a moment.

'I am so glad to see you again,' she said, 'and to be able to thank you for all you did for me.'

'Any personal services deserving thanks at all,' he replied lightly, 'are those rendered by Miss Steenie Klopper to herself. My claim is so insignificant that I withdraw it in pure shame. I wonder what poor old Billy would have said had he been spared to see you as I see you to-day.'

She flushed faintly; the implied suggestion could not be mistaken. 'What would I give to see him and thank him?' she said warmly. 'To think how small a matter may seriously affect one's future! I can see him now pleading at the sheep-kraal with my father. Honourable, upright, good as gold, yet with one spot in his character which, like the flaw in a diamond, spoiled the whole. Can some men not help drinking, doctor?'

'Heaven only knows, Miss Klopper,' he replied. 'I—'

'Oh, don't call me Miss Klopper!' she exclaimed; 'it sounds strange and cold from you.'

'Well, Steenie, then;' but in saying it he felt unaccountably shy and uncomfortable. 'He loved you,' he continued, 'and from the moment

you left Koodooskop he was a changed man. The old craving came on; or was it, perhaps, that his interest in life had departed? He drank, Steenie—drank heavily; and’——

‘But how did he procure drink?’ she interrupted.

‘Well,’ he answered slowly, for her eyes, radiating truth, looked full into his, ‘I think—well, you know that your father missed some of his sheep, and signs of the slaughtering were found on the veld, and the skins traced to the dealers in Vaalbos. I regret, more than I can tell, that it was conjectured that old Billy had employed a “boy” to take in the skins and obtain brandy in exchange.’

‘Their conjectures were wrong,’ Steenie broke in heatedly. ‘He was incapable of a crime. Father has just told me that Plaatjes and his Bushmen are again in the district. Father has lost fifteen sheep lately, and two Bushmen arrows were brought in. They were the thieves, I say. Poor old Billy! You did not believe it, doctor, surely?’ she queried.

‘There is no direct evidence of it, and for your sake I should like to believe the best of him.’

‘Why for my sake?’ she questioned. ‘Because I defend his memory?’

‘No,’ he replied, ‘but because I think a man who loved you as he loved you was incapable of robbing your father. I was in at the death,’ he continued irreverently, at which her eyes flashed displeasure, ‘and his last thoughts were of you. He gave me this for you. I thought I would bring it over.’

He handed Steenie the old familiar volume, thumb-soiled and dog-eared, and tears—so many sacrifices to memory—rose in her eyes.

‘*Ebb Tide!*’ she exclaimed. ‘Dear old Billy, he knew that in my case it was the head-waters of the river of knowledge. But, doctor,’ she continued, caressing the old book, ‘you haven’t answered my question yet. Can some men not help drinking to excess? Is there such a thing as heredity? Are the sins of the fathers visited on the children?’

‘They are, I think,’ he replied. ‘If one can inherit the physical, then why not the mental, characteristics of one’s parents.’

‘How contented with life I shall be, then!’ she said. ‘Look at my parents; no trouble beyond sheep diseases or drunken herds. No problems of modern life to face; nothing but religion and contentment.’

‘The problems will come for you,’ he replied. ‘There is one;’ and he pointed to the young men who had left the room, and who were now assembled on the *werf*.

‘Time and other *nichtjes* [young women] will solve that for me,’ she answered smilingly.

‘What about the diamond-mine?’ Steenie asked, after a pause.

‘Oh, the diamond-mine! Yes, of course. You know all about it, I suppose? The last drought forced your father to look for water, and in digging a well near the little fountain by the Klip Kopje, his men struck yellow ground, and then hard rock. This rock I take to be what in Kimberley is called “blue ground.” The formation is very peculiar, and I obtained a reluctant consent from your father to take expert advice. My brother Walter is now at Klipdam. He knows all about diamondiferous ground, and I have written to ask him to come to Vaalbos. When he comes we shall be enlightened.’

Bray went frequently to Koodooskop after this visit—so frequently that it became evident, even to himself, that he was setting Steenie a problem to solve. She looked forward to his visits. He was clever, and a gentleman, and his society brightened the dull monotony of her daily round. When he asked her to be his wife she consented, but without any outward display of emotion. Love had not touched her; but of this she was apparently in ignorance. Her liking and respect for Bray were deep and sincere enough; and as her parents approved, and her world applauded, she was moderately content and happy.

(Continued on page 522.)

POWER OVER FIRE.

By REGINALD B. SPAN.

I.

IN the Biblical records we read of an instance of miraculous delivery from a fiery furnace of three men who were cast therein. Not only did they come out alive and uninjured, but not a hair of their heads was singed nor a thread of their garments burnt. In these days such an occurrence would sound incredible—nay, impossible. Comparatively few people are aware that many of the miraculous feats recorded in the Bible

have in a (perhaps) lesser degree been performed in modern times, and that power over the forces of Nature has not been confined to any one period of the world’s history. Faith—absolute, implicit faith—is the great essential for all magical operations. To possess this faith one must first obtain knowledge of a particular kind; one must learn something of the tremendous forces which lie behind nature—latent and dormant, but ever ready to be called into action by an application of the proper means. Moses, before he became a

miracle-worker, was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,' and *that* knowledge was power indeed.

Power over fire was exhibited by the saintly martyrs to a remarkable degree. It is questionable whether the flames which consumed their frail bodies caused any suffering, so implicit was their sublime faith in their spiritual Master. Cranmer, who placed his right arm in the flames until it was entirely consumed, apparently endured but little suffering. Dr Boissarie, in his work on 'Lourdes,' tells how Dr Dozous saw Bernadette, the 'Seeress of Lourdes,' hold her hands in a flame for fifteen minutes without the slightest pain or scorching; nor did the fire mark the flesh in any way. He took an exact record of the time by his watch. This miracle is known at Lourdes as 'Le Miracle du Cierge.' Mr Daniel Dunglas Home, the famous Scottish medium, one of the greatest wonder-workers of modern times, who was an adept in many ways where magic is concerned, possessed this power of averting the natural consequences of fire on material substances. His remarkable experiments in power over fire were witnessed by many well-known people, amongst whom were Sir William Crookes (the eminent scientist, and late President of the Royal Society), Mr S. C. Hall (writer and lecturer), Dr Robert Chambers (the well-known *littérateur*, and joint founder of the firm of W. & R. Chambers), the Earl of Dunraven, and Lord Crawford and Balcarres. At many meetings were these exhibitions of power over fire manifested by Mr Home—generally at the houses of his friends—and no preparation whatever was necessary, nor were any chemicals or drugs resorted to to render the operator immune, Home always claiming that the protecting agency was psychical, or spiritual.

The following is a typical instance. On the 9th of May 1871, at the house of Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., Home gave a special exhibition for the benefit of the great scientist, who had proclaimed his intention of giving the matter a thorough scientific investigation, in the presence of the most expert and reliable witnesses, amongst whom were Dr Wilkinson, Messrs S. C. Hall and H. Jencken, the Earl of Crawford, and Lord Dunraven.

Home's hands were first carefully examined by Sir W. Crookes, who was perfectly satisfied that they had not been chemically 'prepared;' then, a large and blazing fire having been made up, Home, without the slightest hesitation, plunged his hands into the centre of it, and after holding them there for a few moments, began to stir the red-hot coals until his hands were well into the hottest part and the flames licked his wrists. He then selected a red-hot piece of coal as large as an orange, and almost enclosing it in his bare hands, blew into the small furnace thus formed until it was white-hot (like a blacksmith's fire)

and little flames flickered over and licked his fingers.

Coming into the centre of the group of witnesses, he extended his hands for them all to examine closely, and exclaimed in a voice of rapt reverence, 'Is not God good? Are not His laws wonderful?'

Home then handed red-hot coals to some of those present, promising them immunity from scorching, and none of them was burned. This feat of handing on the 'power over fire' to others did not, however, *always* succeed, as Mr Andrew Lang related an instance of a friend of his, a clergyman, whose hand was badly blistered after receiving a red-hot coal from Home. Probably on that occasion the 'conditions' were not good, and consequently the 'power' was inefficient; or the fault may have lain in the mental attitude of the clergyman, at the back of whose mind there probably existed the idea of 'diabolical agency.'

Home concluded that *séance* by taking handkerchiefs from those present and wrapping red-hot coals in them. On being examined afterwards the handkerchiefs showed not the slightest sign of burning or scorching. Sir William Crookes took them at once into his laboratory in the adjoining apartment, and after carefully testing them, found that 'they had not been chemically prepared to resist the action of fire.'

The instance of Mr Home taking some blazing coals from a fire, placing them on the head of Mr S. C. Hall, and drawing that gentleman's long silvery locks over them is very well known, but may bear brief repetition here. Mr Hall was seated near the fire, and was unaware of Home's intention, until he heard him say, 'Keep perfectly still, and don't be afraid; it won't hurt you.' Home then placed some red-hot coals he had just picked from the centre of the fire on the crown of the old gentleman's head, and quickly covered them with the long gray hair. Not a hair was singed, nor was there any trace of scorching, and all that Mr Hall felt was a pleasant sense of warmth.

Home was a remarkable man, and his 'power over fire' was but one of many wonderful powers. He was born near Edinburgh in 1833, was educated in the United States, travelled over a great part of the world giving exhibitions of his powers, and died at Auteuil, in France in, 1886.

II.

Though 'power over fire' is exceedingly rare amongst civilised nations, it is not so amongst the natives of those countries which have not come under the control or influence of European civilisation—'savages,' in other words. The Fijians, the Maoris, the Hindoos, the Malays, the natives of Polynesia, and the less civilised Japanese are all acquainted with the 'power over fire,' which forms one of their religious

rites. The Red Indians of North America, when in their primitive natural state, were experts in this line, but they have long since lost all their old powers and tastes. They are a broken race, apathetic and indolent, caring for nothing so much as 'fire-water' and cards—which tastes they acquired from their white brothers—and are quite content to sit for hours basking in the sun, smoking, wrapped in gaudy blankets and gloomy meditation. So different from the old times when they were a high-spirited race, of tireless energy, indomitable courage, and stoical endurance—and, we may add, relentless cruelty! Then they lived very close to nature, fully cognisant of its occult powers, and acquiring somewhat of those powers in their own natures. It was a common occurrence for these men to walk on red-hot stones and pass naked through fiery furnaces without manifesting any sign of pain, or indeed being burned by the fire. The writer has come much in contact with the Red Indians of the Far West during expeditions in quest of the precious metals in Colorado, Arizona, and California, and has conversed with the few who had some knowledge of English. An old chief once told him that the secret of the marvellous stoicism, or indifference to pain, of the Red Indians lay in a peculiar mental condition which, by constant practice, could be brought to a high state of perfection, being induced, at any time, by a kind of self-hypnosis. The seat of all sensation lying in the brain, it is the brain, therefore, which must be numbed to annul the sensation of pain, and this can be done by a certain mental process known only to the 'adepts.' When this condition was induced, red-hot irons could be applied to the body without any unpleasant sensation being produced. The face of the adept at such times took on a stone-like rigidity, due to the absence of life and feeling in the brain.

In the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (Wellington, New Zealand, March 1899) Colonel Gudgeon, British Resident at Rarotonga, gives an account of a Fire-Walking ceremony which took place amongst the natives of Rarotonga, and in which he and three other Englishmen participated. The performance consisted in walking through an 'oven,' over a number of flat stones (twelve feet in diameter) which had been heated for hours in a furnace. The distance to be traversed was twenty feet, and it had to be done barefooted. The furnace was lighted at 5 A.M. on 20th January, and at 2 P.M. the *tohunga* (or priest) told Colonel Gudgeon that everything was ready for the ceremony, and they accordingly proceeded to the oven. The *tohunga* and his *taura* (pupil) began by chanting a short invocation; then the priest took a branch of the ti-tree shrub and struck the edge of the oven three times, and, followed by his pupil, deliberately stepped bare-

footed on to the scorching stones and walked slowly across. The two men then walked back again. The *tohunga* next approached the Englishmen, and handing the ti-tree branch which he carried (like a magician's wand) to Mr Goodwin, said shortly, 'I hand my *mana* [power] over to you; lead your friends across.' They did not 'half like' it, but could not show the white feather before the natives, so sat down and took off their boots and socks, and otherwise prepared themselves for a 'hot reception.' Mr Goodwin, armed with the magic ti-branch, led the way, followed by Colonel Gudgeon, Dr George Craig, and Dr William Craig. They stepped out boldly—though Colonel Gudgeon had considerable qualms, as the soles of his feet were particularly tender. They all got across safe and uninjured except Dr W. Craig, who disobeyed one of the injunctions, and (like Lot's wife) looked behind him. He was badly burned, and was laid up for a long time after. Colonel Gudgeon, in speaking of this experience, stated: 'I can hardly give you my sensations, but I can say this, that I knew quite well I was walking on red-hot stones and could feel the heat, yet I was not burned. I felt something resembling slight electric shocks both at the time and afterwards, but that is all.' To test the heat of the stones, half-an-hour afterwards Colonel Gudgeon threw a branch on to them, and in a few seconds it caught fire. Later on two hundred natives (who had been given the 'power') walked across with bare feet, and not one was burned, though the stones were still intensely hot.

III.

Interesting accounts of the Fire-Walking ceremony are given in Mr Basil Thompson's *South Sea Yarns*; and in *The Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, vol. xxxi., there is a remarkable account of a Fiji Fire-Walking ceremony by Dr T. M. Hocken, F.L.S., which was read by him before the Institute of Otago in May 1898. The performance, which took place on the tropical island of Fiji, was witnessed by Dr and Mrs Hocken, Dr Colquhoun, and the Hon. Mr A. Duncan (a member of the Fijian legislature). In this case the natives took three days to make preparations for the affair. The furnace for heating the stones was kept burning fiercely for forty hours before the ceremony, so as to have the stones at a white heat; and large supplies of food were collected for the great feast which always comes after the fire-walking. The almost nude Fijians walked the white-hot basaltic stones without any previous incantation or religious rite. They passed round the oven in single file, leaving by the way they came in, the leader being in the furnace just thirty seconds. Directly the last man had emerged, great bundles of hibiscus-leaves were thrown on to the stones, and the

oven was at once filled with steam from the burning vegetation. A native magistrate named Jonathan, on being questioned about the matter by Mr Walter Carew, the English stipendiary magistrate at Fiji, stated that he had done fire-walking, but had no idea how it was effected, and that he never felt any heat. Mr Carew considers that *faith* in an extraordinary degree has some sort of magical influence over the fire-walker. In the *Polynesian Journal* it is stated that an Englishwoman—Lady Thurston—laid her handkerchief on the shoulder of one of the fire-walkers. It was there only a moment or two before being withdrawn by means of a long stick, but it was scorched through. On another occasion an English magistrate, who was looking on, threw a handkerchief on to one of the stones in the oven just as the first of the native performers was stepping in. The natives proceeded unscathed, but the handkerchief was burned before the last man had crossed the pit—and yet they stepped on or over it.

Some of these ovens, or pits (in which lies the fiery furnace), are described as being four feet deep, circular in form, like a great dish or basin, gradually sloping down to the centre, the bridge of stones across the centre being about thirty or thirty-five feet long. The bottom of the pit is filled with firewood and great logs; the stones are fixed above; the fuel is ignited and the fire kept burning for from twelve to forty hours; and then, when the flames are blazing up through the cracks between the stones and all is red-hot, the natives pass over. Photographs of the Fire ceremony in the South Sea Islands have been taken by Lieutenant Morné of the French Navy. Miss Tenira Henry, a resident of Honolulu, in a letter to *The Polynesian Society's Journal*, stated that her sister and her sister's child walked over the hot stones at a Fire ceremony in the Uum-Ti (an account of which was published in that journal, vol. ii. p. 108). This was the only instance on record of a woman (and a white woman, too!) having performed this feat. It is a well-known fact amongst fire-walkers that to hold the hand of one of the performers acts like a charm, giving absolute protection from burning.

The Prince of Wied, in his work *Reise in das innere Nordamerika* (Coblenz, 1839), describes the Fire ceremony amongst the Red Indians of the Far West, as he had himself witnessed it in the early times of American settlement. Heated stones were not used at those performances, but great fires were built, and the Indians rushed into the midst of the flames and danced on the glowing embers.

In India and Japan the secret of 'power over fire' has been preserved in certain families (being handed down from father to son) through many generations. In the nineteenth century there was a family of this kind in

Spain which possessed the power of walking through fire uninjured. The secret of how it was done had been carefully kept for generations, the initiated one being obliged to take a sacred vow not to reveal it to any one outside the family.

In *Les Annales des Sciences Psychiques* for July 1899 there is a paper by Dr Pascal, entitled 'Les Dompteurs du Feu,' in which he describes the Fire ceremony as he had seen it at Benares, India, in October 1898 and February 1899. The performance was of the nature of a religious rite, as prayers were uttered and holy water was used. The natives passed over red-hot stones above a fiery furnace. On one occasion (in February 1899) three of the Hindoos came into collision through one of the stones giving way, and they fell into the fire, but came out unharmed—not even their garments being singed. Mr Basil Thompson, in *South Sea Yarns*, describes the pit through which the Fijians passed as being 'filled with a white-hot mass shooting out little tongues of white flame,' and says that a bridge of evenly laid hot stones spanned the centre, on either side of which little flames shot up and played round the feet of the performers. The feet of the natives were examined directly after their exit from the pit, and were found to be cool and unscorched; nor were the fringes of dried ti-tree worn round their ankles affected by the fire—though, as a rule, it catches fire at once. The fiery 'pit' at Fiji was very similar to that used at Benares—at the other side of the world.

Fire-walking originated in India, and is an extremely ancient rite. A case is recorded in the *Tāndya Brāhmana* of the *Samaveda*, of two Brahmin priests who exhibited their superior sanctity by 'power over fire,' and walked through fiery furnaces without being burned or having a hair singed. That story dates back to 800 B.C. There are still earlier records than that in India, probably surpassing in antiquity the Bible narrative of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

DAWN BY THE ROADSIDE.

O WE have climbed the highway
That winds by the ringing seas,
And we have tramped the byway
That skirts the woodland trees.
There little birds awaken
On boughs by breezes shaken,
When earth by night's forsaken
At the rising of the sun.

We'll break the backs of mountains,
And haunt their purling streams;
By sleepy courts and fountains
We'll weave our morning dreams.
When clouds of night to westward fly,
And we to eastward day descry;
When dawn creeps up the saffron sky,
Then our wayside joy's begun.

W. M. PARKER.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

OUT OF THE BOLSHEVIKS' CLUTCHES.

By LYDIA YAVORSKA (PRINCESS BARIATINSKY).

PART I.

I.
I WAS playing Bernard Shaw's *How He Lied to Her Husband* in a theatre on the Nevsky Prospect. The applause had not yet died away when I saw in the wings the figure of a well-known Bolshevik. He was not in a typical Bolshevik turn-out—that is, high boots, *sovdepka* (a khaki blouse cut in a specially modish way), and leather belt—and anywhere in civilised Europe you would not have taken him for a Bolshevik, for he was small, quiet, and dressed in an ordinary tweed suit. Nevertheless, he was a well-known, indeed a noted, Bolshevik, being the director of the eastern department of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs in Moscow, and a member of the 'Central College,' or group of three, that manages all the business of that institution.

I had known the man before the revolution as organising secretary of a society formed with the object of combating German influence in Russia, under the name of the 'Society of the Year 1914.' Strangely enough, after the revolution he declared that the society had been only a mask under which to attack the monarchy, that the war must be stopped, and that the Germans were our best friends; and he attempted to convert the society into a republican club exclusively for soldiers and workmen, since, according to him, the *bourgeois* and the *intelligentsia* must be eliminated from consideration altogether.

The subsequent history of the society was brief but exciting. Its president and his supporters, who had been busy in counterming the Hun for the two preceding years, were resolute not to allow it now to be twisted into a jumping-board for his benefit, as was the obvious intention of our former colleague, V., so suddenly converted into a Boche-Bolshevik; and at a series of general meetings we put up the stiffest fight we could. This was not easy, for V. called in outside aid, packing the meetings with Bolshevik agents, and even once ejecting a committee meeting with the help of bayonets. By dint of energy, however, beating up every member we could, and talking-out the patience of the professional meeting-breakers, we won through, to the extent of driving V. and his Germanophil supporters out of the society; but, as every one

who knew Petrograd in the summer of 1917 is aware, to combat German influence was in the given circumstances an impossibility, short of spending millions; and the people who had millions to spend had not the faintest notion of how the millions ought to be spent. As an example of this, it may be mentioned that while the sailors of Cronstadt had their pockets stuffed with German money, and Bolshevik agents were distributing roubles, cigars, and vodka at the front with lavish hand, the Allies pinned their faith to a pictorial Easter card, sent for distribution from England—and several weeks late at that. The card, it is true, was pretty, and pleased the soldiers; but what chance had it against our enemies' more practical persuasions?

At the last general meeting of the Society of the Year 1914 I had applied a very hard word to V., and I confess to experiencing a slight tremor when he now came forward to greet me. I had, of course, followed his career on its upward path, and had seen him one or twice in the street in Moscow; but here we were now, face to face. Would he remember? That he remembered I have no doubt, for his intelligence is above the ordinary; and if he determined to seem to forget, it was probably to impress me with his magnanimity, and to pose as the benevolent despot. As the result will show, I have reason to be grateful to him, and I shall always follow his career with interest. He is a man of real ability, and may make his mark in the world—if he is not first shot.

However this may be, V. was for the moment wreathed in smiles, came to my dressing-room, complimented me on the success of the play, on the staging, on my performance, and remarked on the joy of having an evening's intellectual recreation after the strain of political work. 'I am really most grateful to you,' he said, in excellent English. 'What can I do to show it?' Without an instant's hesitation I answered, 'Get me a passport for abroad.' 'You shall have it to-morrow,' he replied.

II.

A passport for abroad. It does not seem so much to ask. Time was when to apply for and obtain your passport was a matter of simple

formality and a few days; but times had changed. Since June I had been on the watch how to get mine, but without avail. I was far too much tarred with the brush of British sympathies to be allowed through Finland by the Germans, and the Bolsheviks knew me for too good an opponent of theirs to let me out by Murman or Archangel while they were in possession. For a Russian even to get to those places, let alone have a passport to leave from them, a special pass was required, and I was warned by a friend 'in the know' that it would certainly be refused. Better, therefore, not apply, since application would give notice that I wished to leave the country.

I had got word sent to the theatre at Archangel that I was willing to play a short season there, believing that it might be possible to get away thence without a passport. This was arranged. But when the theatre applied for a pass for me and my baggage to go to Archangel, we found ourselves up against the brick wall once more. And thereby hangs a tale; for the manager, disappointed of my visit, wired to Davydov, the *doyen* of the Imperial (now State) Petrograd theatre, who was playing in Moscow, to come instead. He went, and within ten days the British had taken the town! The Bolsheviks were distressed at losing one of the chief stars of the theatrical firmament. Appeals were made to Davydov to return, coupled, doubtless, with substantial offers; but the clever old actor (much more than clever as an actor, for since Coquelin's death he is perhaps without rival in comedy) knew too well the difference between a life of order and freedom under the protection of the British flag, and life in Bolshevism*—such as it was in July 1918—with bread at thirteen roubles a pound, cheese at twenty-seven, and eggs two roubles apiece. All the blandishments were in vain; at Archangel Davydov was, and there he stayed.

After that I had tried to get away to Czecholand (as Mr Woodhouse, the excellent British Consul at Petrograd—who, it may be said *en passant*, really knew Russia and the Russian language—dubbed the vast territories under control of the Czech-Slovak regiments), and thence by way of Vladivostok; for which purpose I got a British *visa* on my passport, knowing that once there no Bolshevik foreign passport would be needed at all. But fortune intervened in the shape of a matter where life or death hung in the balance, and held me up for hard on two months; and in the course of these two months Samara was captured by the Bolsheviks, and the waterway that I had reckoned on taking was blocked. So at the beginning of winter I journeyed back to Petrograd, and continued to watch for an opportunity to flit.

By this time everything in Russia was firmly

in the hands of the Bolsheviks. The theatre was perhaps the last of the great departments of life to be brought under the yoke. Until well into the summer at least a semblance of independence had been preserved. Some nasty reminders that the stage was essentially no more free than the press or the pulpit had indeed been given to the servants of the public, as when the popular clowns Bim and Bom were arrested in the circus at Moscow for some jest made against the rulers. They barely escaped shooting, and were so frightened that for the rest of the summer they could not again appear in cap and bells.

At the time of the Bolshevik irruption into my native Kiev, the loveliest of the cities of Russia, the celebrated comedian Sokolsky, a sort of Russian George Robey, was executed for being a counter-revolutionary—in other words, murdered for saying that he was by principle a monarchist. Then a well-known *jeune premier*, named Azanchev, with whom I had acted at Voronezh, was shot in the rising at Yaroslavl. But he was an ex-officer, and therefore, of course, could not be let live by those whose boast it is to exterminate all they cannot bribe. And recently the well-known leading actor Petitpas was shot too.

Yet, on the whole, actors were well treated, being, as it were, left a little at a distance from the turbid stream of 'nationalised' life, which, when it did not rush swirling by in a bloody torrent, sank into a horrid pool 'that some did die to look on.' The Bolsheviks had perhaps a certain respect for *the* profession as the 'abstract and brief chronicles of the time.' At all events, they knew well the value of the stage as an instrument for creating impressions on the public imagination. During the summer conciliar and communal theatres were being formed, and throughout the provinces all theatres had already been taken over by the local councils, their owners and managers being summarily turned out, and the wardrobes and all other property requisitioned. Of course, all this took place without payment or compensation; and equally of course, since there is no capital to spend on renewals, and it is no one's interest to attend to things, general deterioration is in process.

The autumn and winter saw a great change in the position of the theatre. The few private managers left were gradually squeezed out, only one in Petrograd, so far as I know, surviving under the guise of a 'collective,' or what is called on the English stage a commonwealth, in which all members of the company have a share of the profits and the losses. The majority of the theatres were either turned into 'communal theatres,' or given over to pushing young favourites of some conciliar bigwig, backed by money wrung from the unfortunate private citizen, and spent without his will or without his control. The latter was in many cases very

* Russians refuse to call the state of Russia, as it is under the Bolshevik tyranny, by the name of *Russia*, but speak of it as *Bolshevism* or *Sovdepi*.

much needed, for under communal management the theatres and the returns went from bad to worse; and at the Musical Drama, the Opéra Comique of Petrograd, where, besides opera, heavy drama was also being played, the deficit amounted to six thousand roubles nightly. The theatre on the Nevsky Prospect at which I had been invited to play was under the special protection of Madame Zinoviev, but I am glad to say I never saw her; nor had I anything to do with the conciliatory influences that ruled the management. The conditions of work, however, really belong to another story, and not to that of my escape.

III.

My Bolshevik friend had said I should get my passport next day, and when next day and the day after no word came from him, my hopes sank to zero, and I began to call him black names in my heart.

It was nearly midnight on the second day when there came a ring at the door. The lady who was living with me was scared to death. A perquisition, probably! I went to the door, and asked through it, 'Who is there?' A quiet voice answered, 'Don't be afraid; it is V.' Had he chosen midnight to make a more dramatic effect, or was he really up to the eyes in consultation with the chiefs of the 'Petrograd Commune'? I do not know. Anyhow, he came in, made a light supper of the inevitable salt herring, tea, and cigarettes; and there now being no cabs or other means of locomotion at night in Petrograd, we gave him a shake-down on the sofa.

My friend did not know who V. was, and soon brought the conversation round to the almost exclusive theme of talk throughout Russia—the Bolsheviks, their Terror, and the plight of the land. 'Nonsense,' he said; 'the fact is that the *bourgeois* live much too comfortably. Look at the sheets you are getting out for me! That's luxury. And you have a separate bathroom for a household of two or three people. It's not my fault if you are having a bad time now. Ninety per cent. of the Russian nation are peasants, and why should you live better than they do?' From the point of view of the handful of Bolshevik leaders there is, in fact, every reason why no one should be allowed to live better than the peasant, or the peasant than the beggar, seeing that it is this process of levelling down till everything has reached the bottom-point of discomfort, unculture, and brutality that assures those who play on the mob's jealousy of superiority in all its forms a continuance of fat jobs and uncontrolled power.

Next morning Comrade V. and I set out for the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where Comrade G. received us, with the *empressement* due to my companion's position. And even as V. had said, in the twinkling of an eye a passport was granted for me to leave by Belo-Ostrov—and

what was more, an order enabling me to take forty-four boxes, with a total weight of eighty poods. This was a favour almost unheard of, for be it known that no one, even leaving the country openly and of right, is allowed to take more than two poods (seventy-two pounds) of luggage with him. How I was envied my good fortune by those who saw one possession after another being robbed from them! True, I should be abandoning much of my property; but when one is escaping from bandits, he is lucky who can save anything. The only other known to have got out with a substantial amount of luggage was Marie Kuznetsova, the noted opera singer, who, three months before, after endless difficulties and months of begging, had gone by sea to Stockholm with twenty trunks. Jewels, silver, and in general articles of value are also barred, as though the Bolsheviks feared to enrich the 'capitalist' countries of the world by the contents of travellers' portmanteaux. Of money, it is allowed to take one thousand roubles, no more, and that in 'Kerenkies'—the little square brown and pink slips (of twenty and forty roubles) that are printed by every army commissar by the hundred thousand, forged in every town in Russia, and not accepted outside Russia as money at all!

Now, I had thought it imprudent to say that I was going to the home of the arch-enemy, England, and so had asked for my passport on the ground that I was going to make a tour in America. I represented that one thousand roubles was really a very small allowance on which to get to the New World. Did the Conciliar Republic want me to be stranded on the way and become a piece of ocular evidence that the Bolsheviks thus toy with poor actors, letting them go, but not leaving them the wherewithal to live? By dint of pleading, and repeated visits first to this, then to that, institution, I got the allowance raised to two thousand roubles. It was not even enough to get to the quarantine station over the Finnish frontier! Also I got a letter from Comrade G. at Petrograd to the comrade in command of the guard at Belo-Ostrov in the following terms: 'Comrade Resembal, I recommend you Comrade Yavorska, who is strongly recommended to me by Comrade V. of Moscow!'

IV.

Armed with these papers, I had my boxes loaded on three carts at the cost of a round thousand roubles, and despatched to Belo-Ostrov from the Finland station. What a change had come over this once busy terminus! Now the long platforms stood deserted: nothing but suburban traffic, carried on with the three or four engines still in tolerable repair—these working so badly that the trains were often over an hour late on a line the total length of which is some twenty miles; and once a day a train to Belo-Ostrov with the few lucky fugitives who had leave to escape from Sovdepiä. I thought of the summer night

in 1917 when Prince Kropotkin came from England, the immense enthusiastic crowd, the excited greetings, the tired, flushed face of the old revolutionary hero, dazed by the noise; and how a wounded officer fell at his feet in a fit of hysteria, shrieking, 'Save us from the Bolsheviks! Save Russia from the Bolsheviks!' I wondered where Kropotkin was now. He was reported shot, then said to be in safety with the Czecho-Slovaks, then again to be near Moscow, arrested and then released. But, unless by chance, or until his name is published in a curt list of those murdered by decree, there are no means in Bolshevikland of finding out where a friend is.

At Belo-Ostrov I received a series of shocks. In the first place, I presented my letter of recommendation.

'Ah, so you want to see Comrade Resembal, do you?'

'Yes.'

'Well, you can't.'

'Why not?'

'Because he's no longer here: been removed.'

This was awkward. Not only was the man gone, but because I had a letter to him I had evidently become an object of dislike to his successor in office. Still worse was to come when I presented my official papers.

'These are no good—not worth twopence!'

'Why not?'

'They're signed by Lordkipanidze.'

(This personage, it should be observed, is not an English peer with a fantastic name, but hails from the land of Georgia.)

'Well, what's the matter? Lordkipanidze is the commissar!'

'He *was* the commissar, but he isn't any longer; he's made off over the frontier into Finland. That's the matter.'

There was evidently nothing for it but to return to Petrograd and apply for fresh papers to be issued.

At the Petrograd Commissariat Comrade G. was charming, greatly regretted the mistake, said that there ought to have been no trouble, because, even though Lordkipanidze had disappeared, orders signed by him while in office were valid, and procured me fresh papers with a different signature, and an authorisation to take a certain amount of jewellery out of the country into the bargain.

Off I went again to Belo-Ostrov. This time the signature was good. 'But what's this? Jewellery? An order from the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs? Nonsense! Not worth a cent! We don't care a rap for your Foreign Affairs! Why, in the name of all that is holy and socialistic, the Foreign Affairs have given you a pass for your forty-four trunks without search! Ha, ha, ha! Just you try! As for your jewels, if you get an order from the Industry and Commerce section of the Petrograd Soviet we may

consider it; but luggage *without search*! Never! A fig for your Foreign Affairs!'

I was myself witness how these elegant ruffians unearthed pearls, worth (so it was said) seven hundred thousand roubles, that were sewn into the collar of a Danish lady's fur coat. 'This'll keep us going for a month or two,' was the gleeful comment. 'Sure salaries and a bonus on top!' How the division of spoils is made I do not know, but it is certain that a fat share goes to the very practical communists on the spot.

So back to Petrograd again—this time with complaint against the comrades. The Commissariat was dumbfounded and incensed at the report of such insubordination. A lively telephonic conversation ensued between Petrograd and Belo-Ostrov, ending with G.'s, 'You will please submit to the authority of the Foreign Office. If not, I'll have you sent to the Gorohovaya;' and the receiver was put down with a bang.

Next to the Industry and Commerce Comrades, where two little Polish Jewesses received me. 'Oh, you are going away,' they chorused, on learning my errand. 'How lucky you are! How gladly we would go too! It is almost impossible to exist. How we envy you!' This was all very well, but the commissar of the section, who alone could sign the order to allow valuables to pass out of the country, was not receiving. Why not? Well, too near closing-time, or perhaps he was reading the comic paper, or maybe simply thought he had done enough for his country. The assistant-commissar, also a Jew, refused to do anything. 'No jewels out of the country,' he shouted. 'Not one!'

I was in despair, for to me time was, in lawyers' language, of the essence. Even before packing my trunks, I had received warning of a coming denunciation against me, and after my first exit, as one might say, had judged it wiser not to return to my flat, but had taken refuge at friends', so that investigations of possible informers might, at all events, be delayed. But the days were slipping by, and the danger was increasing; if I did not get hold of this commissar now, it would mean another day's delay, and then— Yet to abandon my best valuables was a bitter thought.

I was debating with myself, when one of my sympathisers whispered, 'There he is, putting on his coat.'

I made a dash for the commissar, and was in time. 'I want to go to America,' I said, naming myself.

'Very sorry to hear it,' replied the young gallant. 'I wish you every success there.'

'But I can't, unless you let me take my rings and necklaces. How is it possible for an actress to appear on the stage without jewels? You can't want a Russian actress to be put hopelessly in the shade by every one else? Do give me the paper!'

'If it depends upon me, I shall certainly do everything to keep you here. But, in any case, I have no power to do what you want.'

A long argument followed, at the end of which, to my intense delight, he consented to put his signature to the paper I had from the Foreign Office, though protesting all the time

that he had no right to do so. 'But don't tell any one,' he insisted.

'Let me sign too,' fussed the assistant, fearing to be left out in the cold, now that I had got what I wanted. My relief was great. One day saved! One day nearer to freedom!

(Continued on page 542.)

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXV.—THE FIGHT FOR THE BRIDGE.

IT was nearly noon when the tired youth awoke. He looked wonderingly about, and there was a haunting fear in his light eyes, like those of a stag that dreads the hunters. From the north there came the sound of drum-fire, a weird, almost tedious rhythm of guns working at a feverish pace; and the near-by road was a mass of jumbled traffic. Ambulances, supply-wagons, field-artillery, lorries, with jingling harness or snorting engines—streams of vehicles moved slowly up and down their channel. At a reckless speed motor-cyclists, carrying urgent messages, swerved through it all; and in the ditches that ran alongside, refugees were stumbling on, fleeing from the new terror, their crouching, misshapen figures like players from a grotesque drama of the Macabre.

'The sausage-eaters,' said Mathews philosophically, 'must be feelin' their oats, sir.'

At the sound of the familiar voice the fear passed from Dick's face. Memory had returned, and he smiled, though his body trembled as if with a chill. 'I'm starved,' he said, 'and I have nothing with me. How long did I sleep, Mathews?'

'Pretty near seven hours, Mas'r Dick. Here you are, sir—feeding-time, and the bugle's went.'

He handed Durwent a sandwich, which the young man devoured ravenously, washing it down with some cold tea. Mathews also munched at a sandwich, and through the corn-stalks they watched the two currents of war-traffic eddying past each other. There was a roar of engines behind them, and, flying low, a formation of sixteen British aeroplanes made in a straight line for the battle area.

With a map which the groom had thoughtfully borrowed from an officer the previous day, they managed to gain fairly accurate information as to their position. By calculation they figured out that they had travelled seventeen or eighteen miles during the night, and identifying the main road on which they had come, saw that after two or three miles it would take a rectangular turn to the right, running parallel to the line of battle. Four miles to the north-west of the turning-point there was a river, and this the fugitives decided to reach that night.

'If we can locate that,' said Dick eagerly, 'it is bound to lead us into the French lines.'

'Werry good, sir,' said the groom, with an air of resignation. His contempt for maps and their unintelligibility was a deep-rooted one, but if his young master thought he could locate a river with one, he would keep an open mind on the subject until it had, at least, been given a fair trial.

'You see,' said Durwent, 'a great many of these troops on the road are French, so when we follow that route we must get into French territory.'

'Yezzir,' said Mathews profoundly. 'I won't go for to say as 'ow you mayn't be right. All the same, Mas'r Dick, when it comes to enterin' the ring with them sausage-eaters I'd rather 'ave a dozen Lancashire or Devon lads about me than all the Frenchies you could put in Hyde Park. It ain't that these here spec'mens don't 'ave a good sound heart as far as standing up and taking knocks is concerned, but they be too frisky and skittish for my likin'. I see 'em all waving their arms like as if a carriage and pair has run away; and talkin' all at once and together, likewise and sim'lar. Wot's more, they does it in a lingo that no one can't go for to make out, not even a Frenchy hisself, because I never see one Frog listenin' to another—did you, sir? Wot's more, sir, they gets all of a lather over things which is only fit for women-folk to worry on—such as w'ether a hen has laid its egg reg'lar; or the coffee, was it black enough? From wot I see as puts a Frog in a dither, I sez to myself that if you was to take him to a real hoss-race, he'd never a-see'd the finish. No, sir; he'd be dead o' heart-failure afore the hosses was off.'

Dick smiled at the tremendous seriousness of the old groom, and lay back wearily on the ground. 'We had better both turn in for another nap,' he said. 'We'll need all our strength to-night, and if we stay awake we're sure to get hungry.'

'Werry sound advice, Mas'r Dick,' said Mathews. 'But would I be persumin', sir, to ask you a favour? I got a letter yesterday from my old woman, and wot wi' her writing and me being nought of a scholar, I was wondering, Mas'r Dick, if you would just acquaint me with

any fac's that you might think the old girl would like me for to know.'

'Willingly,' said Dick, taking a sealed letter from the groom, who squatted solemnly on the ground, assuming an air of deep contemplation, as one who has to give an opinion on a hitherto unread masterpiece.

'It begins,' said Dick, with some difficulty making out the writing, which was extremely small in some words and very large in others, and punctuated mainly with 'blots'—"Dear Daddy"——

'That,' said Mathews, 'is conseckens o' me bein' sire to little Wellington.'

'Oh yes,' said Dick. "'Dear Daddy, ther ain't nothing to tell you Wellington has took the mumps and the cat had some more kittens"——

'That's a werry remark'ble cat,' observed Mathews. 'I never see a animal so ambitious. Wot does the old girl say Wellington has took?' 'Mumps.'

'By criky! I hope it don't go for to make his nose no bigger. Wot a infant he is! Mumps. Go on, Mas'r Dick—the old girl's doin' fine.'

"The day," resumed Dick—"the day afor Tuesday come last week"——

'Don't pull up, sir,' said Mathews as Dick paused to re-read the puzzling words. 'You has to take my old woman at a good clip to get her meanin'—but you'll find it hid somewere, Mas'r Dick. I never see the old girl come a cropper yet.'

With this to guide him, the reader found his place again with the aid of a blot, a half-inch square, which surrounded the first word. "'The day afor Tuesday,'" he went on, "'come last week Wellington and the rector's boy Charlie fit."'

'Werry good,' said Mathews approvingly.

"Wellington's nose were badly done in and he looks awful bad but the rector's boy"——

'Wot does she say about him?' asked Mathews, staring into space.

"The rector's boy could not see out of neither eye for 3 days."

Repressing a chuckle by a great effort, Mathews hastily fumbled for his corn-cob pipe, and placing it unlit in his mouth, continued to look into space with a face that was almost purple from smothered exuberance.

"Milord and Lady," resumed Dick, "'is just the same and Milord always asks how you was and will I remember him to you."'

'A thoroughbred—that's wot he is,' said Mathews, apparently addressing the distant refugees.

"Miss Elise was heer last week and is that sweet grown that all the wounded tommies fit with pillos to see who wud propos to her. There ain't no news. Bertha the skultery maid marrid a hyland soldier and they are going for to keep a sweet-shop after the war. Wellington

sprayed his ankil yesterday by clyming out of the windo where I had locked him in as he has the mumps."

'Wot a infant!' commented Mathews admiringly.

"I am sending you a parsil and a picter of me and Wellington. We are very lonesum, daddy, and I'll be reel glad when the war is over and you come back. It is awful lonesum and Wellington is to. This morning he cut his hand trying to carv our best chair into the shape of a horse. I am feeling fine and hope the reumatiz don't worry you no more. With heeps of love from me and Wellington, your wife, Maggie."

It was a strange contrast in faces as the young man folded the letter and handed it back. In the countenance of the groom there was a sturdy pride in the epistolary achievement of his wife—a pride which he made a violent but unsuccessful effort to conceal. In the pale, handsome face of the young aristocrat there was a whimsical pathos. By the picture conjured up in the crudely written letter he had seen his parents, his sister, the humble cottage of the groom, and the wife's faithfulness and cheeriness. He had seen them, not as separate things, but hallowed and unified by a common sacrifice for England.

For the first time since his escape Dick Durwent regretted it. He could see no safety ahead for Mathews, no matter how long they evaded arrest. Although a cool, fretful wind was blowing over the fields, the warm noon sun made his eyelids heavy.

Against the wish of the groom, he insisted upon spreading the greatcoat over them both, and in a few minutes master and man were resting side by side as comrades.

'Mathews,' said Dick quietly.

'Yezzir!'

'Give me your word that if you ever reach England you will never tell my family about this. They don't know I am in France, and'——

'Mum as a oyster, sir—that's the ticket. Werry good, Mas'r Dick. A oyster it is.'

Ten minutes had passed without either of them speaking, when Mathews partially raised himself on one elbow. 'If women,' he said ruminatingly, 'was to have votes, my old girl would run for parlyment, sure as skittles. I wonder, Mas'r Dick, if a feller who courted a girl in good faith, and arter a few years found she were Prime Minister of England—would that constitoot grounds for divorce?'

But Dick was asleep, and dreaming of days when happiness was in the air one breathed; when brother and sister had revelled in nature's carnival of seasons. After several minutes' contemplation of the uncertainty of married life, the old groom followed him into a slumber which was unattended by dreams, but did not lack a sonorous serenade.

II.

The night was streaked with tragedy as the fugitives stole to the road. The drum-fire of the guns had grown to a roar, through which there came the blast and the crash of siege artillery, shaking the earth to its very foundations, as if the gases of hell had ignited and were bursting through. Like lightning striking low, the night was lit with flashes illuminating the fields and the roads about; and shells were screaming and whining through the air, winged, blood-sucking monsters crying for their prey. Across a yellow moon broken clouds were driven on a gale that whipped the dust of the roads into moaning whirlpools.

Dense traffic moved sullenly on, the ghostly figures of drivers astride horses that whinnied in terror of the night. Not a light was shown. There were only the glimpses of the sickly moonlight and the flame-red flashes of the guns; and, unnoticed, Durwent and the groom followed beside a lorry.

Once, as they strode forward in the roar and horror of the dark, they heard the explosion of a shell that, by a trick of ill-luck, had found the road. There followed the shriek of wounded horses, quick commands penetrating the darkness. Corpses of men, dead horses, and shattered vehicles were drawn aside, and the long line that had been halted for four minutes closed the gap and moved on.

When they reached the turn in the road, they left the shadowy procession and made for the river by following a soft wagon-path that cut across the fields. For two hours they hurried on through the night's madness. More than once they were almost thrown to the ground by the terrific explosion of heavy guns that had taken up positions by the path; and by the flashes in the fields they could see the weird figures of the gunners toiling at their work of death.

As they came to the river they caught a glimpse of coloured flares not far ahead, and there came a momentary lull in the confused bombardment.

'Listen!' cried Dick.

From somewhere on the banks of the river there was the sound of rifle-fire, and the rat-tat-tat of machine-guns, like the rattle of riveters at work on a steel structure.

Following a tow-path which ran by the river, they appeared to be entering a zone of comparative quiet. Although the sound of rifle-fire grew more clear, the noise of the guns came from behind them, but to the right and the left. For an hour they ran rapidly forward, and it seemed that the tide of battle had swept to the north, leaving this area denuded of troops. They saw neither guns nor infantry, although a renewed burst of machine-gun fire told them they were nearing their unknown destination.

They had not started from their hiding-place

until nearly midnight, and as they reached a slight rise of the ground they could see that the darkness was slowly lifting with day's approach.

'See, sir,' said the groom, pointing ahead, 'yonder side o' the river to the right.'

'I can't see anything.'

'Look'ee, Mas'r Dick. Follow the river. I think that that there gray streak is a bridge.'

It was not until they had gone ahead a considerable distance that Durwent could make out a heavy bridge spanning the river, which ran with a swift current, and was more than two hundred feet in width. A blurring red was tinting the black clouds in the east as they crept along the path, when they heard a sharp challenge.

'Friends,' cried Dick, and halted.

'Stand still until I give you the once over.' An American corporal, who had apparently been running and was out of breath, came up to them, carrying a revolver, and looked closely into their faces.

'What are you doing here?' he asked.

'Stragglers,' answered Durwent, 'separated from our unit.'

'Where in Samhill is the rest of your army?'

'There are no troops back here for ten miles,' answered Dick.

The American took off his helmet and wiped his brow.

'Jumping Jehosaphat!' he exclaimed ruefully, 'do I have to marathon ten miles and back? They sure are generous with exercise in the army. Say, you guys—if you're on the level about being stragglers, and want a real honest-to-God show-down scrap, you hike over that bridge. Do you see that big tree over in the bush—can you make it out? Well, when you get across the river, just line your lamps on that tree, and after half a mile or so you'll come to a sunken road. Report to Major Van Derwater, and tell him you're the only army M'Goorty—that's me—has found so far. And tell him I'll discover the French admiral who is supposed to be bringing up reinforcements, if I have to search this whole one-horse country for him. You'd better get a move on before the light comes up, for, believe me, Lizzie, those Boches can shoot, and if ever they see you coming across that bridge you may as well kiss yourselves good-bye.'

Having delivered himself of this expressive monologue, the corporal replaced the revolver in its holster and took a seaman's hitch in his breeches. Again the machine-guns spat out, the sound seeming to be borne on the wind as the barrels traversed the air.

'Gosh!' said the corporal, 'but I'd give a year's tips to see that scrap out. They had the bulge on us by about three to one, and we had to back up to keep the line straight, but now we're holding them great. Say—we've got a bunch of bowhunks there who could shoot the wart off a snail. Some scrap—believe me. Well, so long.'

He had just started off at a run, when he stopped and turned around. 'If you ever come to New York, look me up at the "Belmont." I'm a waiter there, and I can put you wise to a lot of things. Chin, Chin!'

'Cheerio!' answered Dick, as the energetic corporal disappeared.

'I'm getting hard o' hearing,' said the old groom. 'Leastways I ain't sure I heerd him correct. Wot did he say?'

'Mathews!'—Dick turned to his servant, and his voice shook with excitement—'there's a battle going on the other side of the river, and we're to report to Major Van Derwater. By heavens, Mathews! I feel half-mad with joy. They didn't get us after all, did they? We sha'n't be shot like curs, at any rate. Think of it, old man—we've won out! They can't stop us now'—His words stopped suddenly. 'Mathews,' he said, 'you must not come. Stay here and join the reinforcements when they turn up. You have to consider your wife and little Wellington.'

For answer the groom started along the path towards the bridge, and Durwent was forced to break into a run before he could head him off.

'Mathews!' he said sternly.

'Mas'r Dick,' replied the groom, snorting violently, 'you shouldn't go for to insult me. Beggin' your pardon and meaning no disrespect, this here war is as much mine as yourn. Orders or no orders, I'm agoin' to have a howd'ee with them sausage-eaters, and as that there free-spoke young gen'l'man observed, the bridge ain't exactly a chancery in the daylight. Come along, sir—argifyin' don't get nowhere.'

Realising that further expostulation was useless, Dick followed the groom to the bridge. As they crossed it he noted that it was strongly built of steel, with supports that would bear the heaviest of weights. Gaining the opposite side, they waited as Dick took his bearings by the tree; and crossing a hard, chalky field, they stole towards the sunken road. They could hear the occasional crack of a rifle, and there was the ping of a bullet passing over their heads as they pressed on through the lightening gloom.

'Halt!'

A voice rang out, and they were questioned as to their identity. On being ordered to advance

they jumped down into a sunken road which constituted an admirable trench, and were at once surrounded by American soldiers.

'I was ordered to report to Major Van Derwater,' said Durwent.

They were asked various questions, and were then escorted a few yards to the right, where an officer was looking over the bank which hid the road.

'British stragglers, sir,' said the sergeant who had taken charge of them.

'What unit are you from?' asked the officer. His voice was calm and deep, but gave no indication as to how he felt disposed towards the two fugitives. In answer to his question Dick gave the name of his battalion, and Mathews did the same.

'How did you know my name?'

'We met your corporal, sir,' said Durwent.

'Where are your rifles?'

'Lost them, sir.'

'In what engagement were you cut off from your units?'

Dick tried to reply, but not only was he ignorant of the locality through which he had travelled, but his soul burned with resentment at being forced into lying. Mathews said nothing, and seemed quite untroubled. He was prepared to accept his young master's choice of engagements for his own, no matter where or when it might have taken place.

'I don't like this,' said the officer. 'These men are a long way from the British lines, and are either deserters or worse. Guard them closely, and if things get hot, tie their arms together so they will give no trouble.'

'Very good, sir,' answered the sergeant, preparing to lead them away; but Durwent, whose blood had run cold with dismay at the officer's words, struggled forward.

'Sir,' he cried, 'if you think I'm not to be trusted, give me a dirty job—anything. A bombing-raid, or a patrol—I'll do anything at all, sir, if you'll only give me a chance.'

'Well spoke, Mas'r Dick,' said Mathews proudly. 'Werry well spoke indeed.'

The officer, who had been about to issue a peremptory order, stopped at the sturdy honesty of the groom's voice. 'Send for Captain Selwyn,' he said. 'You will find him at the creek.'

(Continued on page 532.)

ON A 'SEA-TROUT' RIVER IN NORDLAND.

THE sun is already well 'abune the lift,' and is bathing in yellow light the dark pine-forests and surrounding mountains; but its rays have not yet entirely dispelled the sea of mist which, since eleven o'clock last night, has enveloped the river and its immediate precincts. In filmy clouds and columns, however, the vapour is

wreathing up into the blue of the sky, and ere long the roar of the foss will again be plainly audible. A 'Norskmand,' who is interested in timber, has come in from the upper valley, and brought the welcome intelligence that rain has been falling on the Swedish frontier; the first run, moreover, of sea-trout and bull-trout is due.

This Nordland river is a clean, sweet mountain stream. Unsoiled by the clay banks which so often interfere with sport on the lower Namsen and other Norwegian water-systems, it passes from source to sea down a rocky channel, interspersed here and there with deposits of gravel only.

Its formation at the mouth is singular. The river proper discharges at a right angle into a broad channel some three hundred yards in length, at one end of which there is a large brackish lake, and at the other a narrow rocky passage about half a mile long. Up through this passage the salt water from the fjord passes, filling the lake, and incidentally bringing up the migratory fish; but when the tide turns, the water accumulated in both river and lake rushes down it with great violence and renders it impassable by boats. About a mile farther up, and close to where our comfortable farmhouse stands, is the first obstacle to the ascent of the *Salmonidae*, in the shape of a foss. Here, separated from one another by a small rocky islet, are two parallel pools, which, from the middle of June onwards, always hold fish. The fall at the head of the smaller of these pools is perpendicular, and cannot be negotiated; by way of the other, although it is very rugged, all the salmon and trout bound for the upper spawning-beds pass.

A fair number of salmon ascend the river annually, but the bulk of the migrants consist of bull-trout and sea-trout, which begin to run at the end of June, accompanied by a good many grilse.

Although our season's bag—to two rods—rarely exceeds 2000 lb., the sport is most enjoyable. Practically all the fishing is from the bank, and there is always a pleasing uncertainty as to whether the next 'swirl' at the fly will be caused by a lively little sea-trout, a 'bullie' of 8 or 10 lb., or a 25-lb. salmon, its silvery coat decked with sea-lice.

To revert, however. The mantle of vapour has at length been completely removed, and the song of the river is clearly heard, the roar of the foss, the rippling murmur of the rapids; it is quite time to make a start. Among the rocks and pine-scrub that border the near side of the river there is a spot from which one can look down, without being seen, into the crystal-clear depths of the Little Foss pool. It is at first difficult to make out anything distinctly, but as the eye grows accustomed to lights and shadows, to the patches of foam which keep passing down from the fall at frequent intervals, and to the swirls and eddies of the rapid current, the forms of the fish become traceable. In two ranks, at the extreme head of the pool, lie twelve to fourteen salmon of from 15 lb. to 25 lb. apiece; they simply maintain their position and balance in the water, save when one of them, exasperated beyond control at being thus brought up all standing, so to speak, on its way to the spawning-grounds, wallows up to the surface or throws

itself wildly in the air. Over these fish the angler may throw, with all the skill at his command, every fly in his book, but he will not succeed in making one of them stir. It is otherwise, however, with the more recently arrived occupants of the pool, many of whom will, no doubt, show themselves open to conviction when a small Jock Scott, a Silver Doctor, or some such tempting confection makes its appearance in their neighbourhood.

Their behaviour, as we stare down at them, is prophetic of sport. Only the big bull-trout remain comparatively stationary; the grilse and the sea-trout are in constant motion, flitting from one place to another, or rising at some tiny object on the surface.

Close to the little indentation in the turf, formed by an eddy, where the boat lies, there is a good spot for salmon, but owing to the set of the current it is impossible to make a fly dwell over it except from the island. Thither, therefore, we row, and at the first cast after stepping ashore I hook a lively fish in very rapid water. Down-stream, of course, it goes, we following in the boat, and just as it seems about to descend the effluent rapid, it slants across to the Big Foss pool, where it is ultimately gaffed—a 23-pounder straight from the sea.

The rain announced as having been falling among the Swedish frontier mountains now begins to affect the river; there is a 'tightness,' so to speak, of the water on the rocks and stones, showing that it is rising. Clouds, moreover, coming up before a south-west breeze, are obscuring the sun, and there is, therefore, every likelihood of a good day's sport.

A heavy salmon takes the fly close by the black rock in the middle of the Big Foss pool. As soon as it feels the prick of the steel it rushes part of the way up the foss itself, as if with the intention of surmounting that formidable obstacle, comes tumbling back again through the foaming water, shakes the hook out of its jaw, and is free!

Within a yard of the same spot another salmon seizes the Durham Ranger, and, after ten minutes' hard fighting, is gaffed by Otto from the boat—a risky proceeding with no one at the oars.

The next three hours are devoted to the smaller fish, and with a 12-foot rod I secure eighteen sea-trout, averaging $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb., three grilse, and a 'bullie' of 10 lb. Considerable excitement attaches to the capture of the last-named, as, while it is being played, a lively sea-trout seizes the large Black Palmer which has been attached to the casting-line as dropper. Great is the turmoil which at once arises, each fish doing its best to get away from its fellow-victim as well as from the hook. The strain upon the tackle is severe. But Otto is equal to the occasion. Lying *perdu* alongside a big stone, he manages, with the assistance of his *tollekniv*, to sever the

dropper from the cast, so that the temporarily released fish falls into the extended landing-net, and the big bull-trout on the tail fly is left to fight his battle out in accordance with his own sweet will.

The pangs of hunger now begin to be insistent, and making our way to a favourite spot immediately above the fall, we settle down to the consumption of luncheon and tobacco. After the hard morning's work, moreover, we consider ourselves entitled to a *Middags Hvile* (post-prandial rest), and one pipe succeeds another before we make a fresh start. There are two more pools within the limits of my beat for the day, both of which seem sacred to bull-trout, but before passing up to them there is some very rough and broken water close to our feet, which, in the present state of the river, is worth trying.

The grilse are evidently running up from the fjord, as three of these lively little fish come at the fly in quick succession—but without touching the hook; then, in the middle of a foaming rapid, a salmon makes a perfectly beautiful head-and-tail rise. Without a moment's hesitation, and before I am able to exercise any restraining influence on its movements, the fish rushes downstream, and is promptly involved in the boulder-strewn torrent which constitutes the foss. Of course, the only thing to do is to follow as best I can down the ice-scoured rocks alongside, and,

although the line is slack throughout the passage, connection is maintained until, in the big pool below, some ten minutes later, Otto slips the gaff into a fine clean-run 14-pounder.

Where the river forms what is called the narrows there are always fish lying, but to get a fly to dwell over them from the bank is an impossibility. Of course, as usual, I try; and, equally of course, I miss a good sea-trout, which makes a determined effort to appropriate the 'Jock' as it is being swept out of its reach by the strong current.

There now remain unfished only the two bull-trout pools above mentioned, and donning a pair of waders, I get to work at the upper of these. It yields two fish of 4 and 6 lb., while a third breaks away with fly and cast in a snag of recent formation. At the head of the lower pool, beneath the shadow of the great cliff known as the Hawk's Rock, I hook a big 'bullie' of 15 lb., which is ultimately landed; but its struggles for freedom and peregrinations generally have been so violent and extensive as to destroy all chance of further sport, so I finish for the day.

When we reach the house, pretty well tired out, the bag is displayed for the public benefit. It consists of three salmon scaling 55 lb., three grilse weighing 10 lb., eighteen sea-trout totalling 47 lb., and four 'bullies,' 35 lb.—in all, 147 lb., from less than half a mile of water.

A DAUGHTER OF THE DOPPERS.

CHAPTER V.

THE last thunder-storm of the depressingly hot summer had growled itself into oblivion; but the pleasing effects to which—in common with its numberless predecessors—it had contributed were still apparent in the gay and 'dressy' appearance of the karoo veld.

Steenie had ridden out early one morning, the keen and bracing air filling her with such joy of life as she had never before experienced. The old, old sight of the *meerkats*, erect, like miniature kangaroos, watching her with unmistakable contempt, flushed her face with laughter. She gave the danger-signal, in the shape of a wild halloo, to a steenbok half-hidden, with extended ears, behind a neighbouring bush, and sent it in headlong flight towards the sheltering Klip Kopje. The secretary-bird, stalking along like a dismounted dragoon, gave her a wide berth, resentful of her boisterous intrusion. She galloped round the Klip Kopje, struck the Vaalbos road, and swept on towards the homestead, leaving a streaming comet's tail of white dust behind her.

She noticed several horses hitched to the trees on the *werf*, and scenting visitors, rode round to the stables and handed over her steaming animal to a waiting *Tottie* (Hottentot). With a few deft

touches she subdued her hair to order, and shaking the dust from her riding-habit, entered the *zit kamer*. Dr Bray was there, also her father—and a big, upstanding man in riding-breeches.

'Steenie,' said the doctor, 'let me introduce to you my brother Walter. He is the diamond-finder, you know.'

'I am pleased to know Miss Klopper, but the necessity for searching for diamonds is not so apparent to me now,' put in Walter Bray easily, looking into her bright eyes.

The implication made her blush, while the questionable taste, not to say impertinence, of such a speech on meeting her for the first time set her wondering. She was displeased with herself, however, on finding that no feeling of anger or annoyance rose within her; but she answered him quietly enough.

'Father will be delighted to hear that. He looks upon the indications as a misfortune, and dreads the influx of all sorts and conditions of men that would follow the discovery of a mine. There are things for which no wealth can compensate. The simple life he has always led is the best for him, and any change would bring unhappiness.'

'But it would bring wealth,' said Walter Bray.

'and the choice of the best farms in the colony would be his.'

She shrugged her shoulders. 'He is rooted here, and to uproot him is impossible. He was born on the farm'—

'What does the man say?' interrupted Oom Jan in Dutch.

Steenie told him.

'I don't want a diamond-mine,' he burst out; 'I want to live as my father did before me. That man with the false eyes is up to no good. I don't like him. Tell him to go back home.'

Steenie's eyes met Walter Bray's. The look thrilled her as no man's look had ever done. The noble figure and handsome face belonged to the hero of her dreams. She recalled *Ebb Tide*, and then Attwater. The romantic fancy for a fictitious character which had taken possession of her childhood's thoughts seemed, to her quickened senses, to transfer itself to Bray. Her fiancé dwindled into nothingness in the presence of this man, and the doctor's plainness of feature and awkward looseness of figure now came home to her for the first time.

'I cannot do it, father,' she said in Dutch. 'Would you have us known as the most inhospitable people in the district? After all, nothing may be found—so why worry?'

Dr Bray was vaguely uneasy. He could not tell why Steenie had scarcely noticed him since she entered the room. His brother seemed to absorb all her attention; but this, he consoled himself, was quite natural, as Walter was a stranger, and her evident desire was to please the new-comer and create a favourable impression. In spite of this consolatory thought, he kept watching her every look and movement—putting an unfavourable construction on each—until he found himself wishing for the end of the disturbing meeting, which, he could not but own, had been brought about by himself.

Oom Jan, after his outburst, had subsided into the listlessness which was part of his nature; but his keen eyes were watching Walter Bray as if he were sizing up an enemy. The cool effrontery of manner and the easy insouciance of carriage irritated the old farmer beyond endurance. The man's bearing was so different from the almost reverent respect accorded him by the young men of the district. He noticed that Steenie and the stranger were already on good terms. They were chatting and laughing quite like old friends, and he thought he had never seen her so animated. What kind of man was this whose words made her eyes sparkle and her cheeks redden?

'Steenie!' he called peremptorily.

She turned with a start. 'What is it, father?'

'That man must leave the farm. I don't want him here,' he answered.

'Oh, hush, father; perhaps he understands Dutch.'

'I don't care,' roared Oom Jan. 'He must go.'

'But, pappie darling, why should you be so unkind? He was invited here at your request. Let the man finish his inspection, and then he will go.'

She placed her arms around the old man's neck and tapped his lips with her soft fingers. He looked up at her. The influence of those eyes was too strong for him.

'Let him stay,' he said shortly, and relapsed into moodiness.

Nothing in Walter Bray's demeanour during this little scene betrayed in the slightest degree whether he understood what was being said. His calm assurance was undisturbed, so that when Steenie looked at him her fears were stilled, and she smiled. His predatory instincts were, however, already alive. Here was something which Providence had thrown in his way. A pretty, vivacious girl, and an only daughter; and behind that—wealth. She was betrothed to his brother, but what of that? His brother would have to take his chances in the game; and all was fair in love and war! Fraternal love was all bosh. It didn't exist where the love of money and power reigned. Animals ignored their brothers in later life, so why should not humans?

Just as his philosophy had carried him to these conclusions Ta'antje's voice was heard loudly calling for her husband. She entered the room flushed, and in an unusual state of excitement. 'Jan,' she called, 'the remains of three more sheep were found near the out-station this morning. You must go to the village and report the matter. Are you going to allow Plaatjes and his dirty Bushmen to ruin you? The vermin must be got rid of; otherwise we shall not have a fat sheep left.'

'The police have been told long ago, but they do nothing,' replied the old man. 'I must hunt Plaatjes out of my veld myself.'

'I will mention it again to the chief constable,' said Dr Bray, rising to go. 'Come on, Walter.'

Walter Bray was standing at the window, cool and erect, with his hands in his jacket-pockets. Steenie glanced at him and said hesitatingly, 'I—I think your brother had better remain here. He wishes to look at the mine early to-morrow morning, and to assist in finding Plaatjes and his men.'

'Very well,' replied the doctor curtly. 'Good-bye!'

His cart had been inspanned before she appeared on the *stoep*, followed by Walter Bray. The doctor could see that the easy self-possession of his brother and Steenie's animation spoke of anything but regret for his departure. It struck him that they looked like a married pair seeing a guest off, and the sight fretted him. Walter Bray's hands were still in his jacket-pockets, and he stood behind the girl, legs apart, with an assumed or an unconscious air of proprietorship which only served further to increase the doctor's

uneasiness, as he sat in the cart looking at them, trying to suppress the feeling of admiration which the sight called up. They were a handsome couple, and in spite of the disquiet of mind he laboured under, Dr Bray could not but admit to himself that, from a physical point of view, his brother was much his superior, and from that standpoint a more suitable mate for the girl. He remembered that she never called him anything but 'Doctor,' and that their relations as an engaged couple had been of the mildest character, so that he could not shake off the impression that she was slipping away from him.

'*Pas op* for the Bushmen, Walter,' he said, gathering up the reins.

'The Bushmen!' returned the other. 'Don't fear, old man; we shall know how to deal with them.'

The doctor's vexed mind rebelled against the term 'old man.' He imagined that it was not so much a familiar expression commonly used in regard to men of all ages, but a sly reference to his gray hairs. He repressed the feeling of annoyance, however, and said lightly enough, 'No doubt you will know how to deal with them, but take care that they don't deal out a couple of their arrows to you, for then you will have to go spades.'

'Does that imply the digging of my grave? No, thank you,' replied Walter pleasantly; 'I think I shall go diamonds, and then—hearts;' and he glanced at Steenie.

Dr Bray whipped up the horses, and left them—the girl composed and undemonstrative, save for the rich colour which instantly flooded her face at the man's speech; the man cool and equally undemonstrative, but with a gathering light in his steel-blue eyes.

Oom Jan had no opportunity of objecting to the presence of the stranger at his supper-table, but his stern and unbending demeanour during the meal plainly showed his repugnance; while his wife, adapting her line of conduct to the mood of her husband, as was her custom, was equally stiff and unbending. This did not seem to affect the conduct of the younger people—both gay and animated—whose conversation, sustained and unflagging, was proof against the ominous silence and implied disapproval of the old couple.

The morning came bright and bracing, with little cold gusts, as if the winter, with impatient fingers, laboured to thrust the summer aside. All hands were early astir preparing for the little expedition against the marauders, *Plaatjes* and his Bushmen. The early morning had seen the arrival of a small reinforcement in the shape of the two Cape policemen stationed at *Vaalbos*, whose presence the doctor's representations had secured, so that they looked quite a formidable band as they took to the veld to the left of the *Klip Kopje*, Oom Jan leading, and Walter Bray bringing up the rear, armed with a double-barrelled shot-gun. They spoorred carefully in

the direction of *Oude Post*, making a wide *détour* so as to get into the hills enclosing the out-station, near which the sheep had been slaughtered. They camped for lunch in a small kloof; but the Hottentot tracker, intent on the quarry, continued his search. The meal had scarcely ended when he returned, his flat features working with excitement. He had seen them, he said. They had started a little fire at the top of the kloof, and he had heard them talking.

'Another of my sheep, I suppose,' said Oom Jan stolidly. 'Let us trek and catch the scoundrels.'

Bray and a policeman took one side of the kloof, while Oom Jan and the second policeman proceeded up the other side, the tracker and the farm 'boys' stalking the quarry in the centre. They advanced in this order up to a point near the top of the kloof, when, as Bray and the constable issued from the bushes, a buzzing arrow passed between them. They rushed forward, and immediately the Bushmen broke cover, scuttling across the clearing like a *klompje* of alarmed guinea-fowl. Before the policeman could stop him, Bray had fired, and a gray object dropped. The rest gathered round the recumbent figure with the clicking and chattering and fantastic gestures of a troop of alarmed monkeys, but at the sight of the advancing white men scampered off into the bush.

When Bray and the policeman arrived on the scene Oom Jan and the rest were already there. In their midst a miserable object was lying, shrunken and dirty, and gasping as if to expel the reluctant spirit which still animated it. Nothing was clearer, however, than the fact that it was past praying for. Pathetically miserable the wretched creature looked, the poor head dotted here and there with an archipelago of little balls of hair, with heaving chest, clutching hands, and strange cries and clicks as of some wild animal in the presence of mortal enemies; but Bray appeared to be unmoved. Oom Jan, on the other hand, was in a state of unusual excitement.

'*Die is een vrouwe*,' he exclaimed. '*Ik is oud gewoord op mijn plaats maar zoe een elendige ding het nog nooit ge beur nie*.'

'What does he say?' inquired Bray of the policeman.

'He says,' replied the man, 'that it is a woman, and that such a thing as this has never happened on his farm before.'

'Well, what will he have?' returned Bray callously. 'If you want to exterminate a breed, you must kill the females.'

'Be careful of your words, Mr Bray. There will be an inquest,' said the constable coldly. 'It is a fortunate thing for you that *Plaatjes* shot first.'

'But I did not fire with the intention of killing this woman,' remonstrated Bray.

'That is true, perhaps; but the display of a little feeling on your part would not be out of place under the circumstances.'

Bray turned away with a shrug. Oom Jan had gone on ahead, so that when Bray arrived at the camp he found one of the 'boys' waiting to guide him back to the homestead. He rode along, wondering the while in what manner Steenie would judge him.

She was on the *stoep* when Oom Jan arrived, and ran down to meet him.

'Where is Mr Bray?' she inquired anxiously, 'and what has happened?'

'Don't talk of him,' replied the old man. 'He is an unlucky *schepseel*. He shot one of the Bushwomen. Plaatjes must have seen him with the smoking gun in his hands, and his reward will be a poisoned arrow if he does not leave the district.'

'Shot a Bushwoman! Leave the district!' exclaimed Steenie. 'But surely, father, you did not leave him alone in the veld to be murdered by Plaatjes!'

Thus was Bray judged. No thought of the wretched creature lying dead on the veld. Her concern, her fears, all her thoughts were for the slayer.

'One of the constables is with the dead woman. The other has gone to Vaalbos to report the matter. It is lucky for the Englishman that the Bushman shot at him first.'

'Dead woman,' she repeated slowly, touched for a moment; but no thought of hers could blame him. He was already blameless in her

eyes. She was blinded by a first great love, and her hero could do no wrong.

Presently he rode in, and the fine air of dejection he had assumed sat well on him. One glance at the girl and he was reassured.

'You have heard the news, Miss Kloppe! I have been terribly unfortunate. I had no idea there was a woman among them; and they began the shooting.'

'I don't blame you, Mr Bray,' she said, lifting her eyes to his. 'You were the one at whom the arrow was aimed, and your impulse to return the shot was quite a natural one. But what of the consequences? Will it be a serious matter for you?'

'I think not,' he replied, his natural air of jauntiness ousting the assumed humility. 'An inquest, you know; an inquiry before the R.M.; papers transmitted to the Attorney-General; said papers returned, stopping further proceedings on the grounds that the woman was killed by a shot provoked by attempted murder, and while she was engaged in the commission of a crime; and so on, and so on.'

And so (it may here be said) it proved. Bray suffered no inconvenience that involved anything worse than the making of two or three trips to Vaalbos; and it came about that the death of the woman was dismissed from the minds of all but one—Plaatjes, her husband.

(Continued on page 538.)

CURIOSITIES OF NATURE.

FISHES LIKE WITHERED LEAVES OR BUNCHES OF SEAWEED.

MIMICRY among animals is one of the most interesting of natural phenomena. Insects resembling bits of stick and withered leaves are familiar to all. Naturalists are acquainted with flies and beetles sufficiently like wasps and bees to deceive the inexperienced. Certain predatory insects, again, resemble flowers, and thus attract within their range flower-haunting species.

Here are two interesting examples of mimicry among fish. The first, found in Ceylon, is shaped and coloured like a withered leaf. A certain naturalist, Dr A. Willey, describes his experience of this curious fish. He was walking along the reef with a fisherman, when the latter attempted to catch a fish for him. The naturalist could not see at first what it was. The fish dodged about, and the fisherman failed to net it. Seizing the net himself, he saw what seemed to be a yellow jak-leaf gently and inertly sinking to the bottom. This being a common occurrence, he was about to turn away, when the supposed leaf righted itself, and darted off. It was finally secured, and was found to be one of those fishes commonly known as sea-bats.

The second example is furnished by the very curious fishes called sea-horses. Many long, irregular filaments proceed from their bodies, and give them a striking resemblance to bunches of seaweed. When the fish anchors itself—as it frequently does—by the tail to a plant of seaweed it seems like a part of it, and is not easily detected.

HOW THE BEETLE HELPS TO MAKE A FLUTE.

Beetles in the early stage of their existence are often great borers. They live in their food-supply, and hollow it out as they feed. In this way they drive tunnels in the trunks and branches of trees. Some of those wood-borers have been pressed into the service of man in the making of flutes and pipe-stems. It is the Sioux Indians of America who have found out that the beetle can be used in this way. Selecting a suitable stick from a tree, they remove about three inches of the pith at one end. Then they capture a beetle larva, and imprison it in this hollow. The beetle does the rest by eating its way right through, and the completion of the flute is thereafter a simple matter. A pipe-stem can be made in the same way.

THE DISCOMFITURE OF MRS JOPE.

By RICHARD CALDER.

I.

WHEN Mrs Jope recovered from what she afterwards called her 'peetrification,' she felt at once that she must not confer with flesh and blood. She must not, for example, tell Mrs Hastie, her sister-in-law—although she was quite a sensible woman—and she must certainly not breathe the matter to her bosom friend Mrs Dickie, because Mrs Dickie would contrive by hook or by crook to be at the manse before her.

'No,' as she said to herself, 'it's one o' thae things you've tae bear yer lane—of course, leavin' the minister oot o' accoot.'

When she got home and sat down by the fireside, she had to ask herself if, after all, she had actually passed through the experience. Let us see what had really happened. Mrs Jope was passing John Chalmers's door. John Chalmers's door opened almost directly into the kitchen, and John had a good voice, for he was a member of the Deacons' Court, and was in the habit of 'takin' pairt' in meetings. The words had come forth from the door with ominous distinctness. Mrs Jope positively shivered as she recalled them. There was no other way for it; her first visit must be to the manse.

Like a good Churchwoman, Mrs Jope was well acquainted with the ways of the manse, and the ways of its mistress, Christina; for the Rev. J. Anderson Philip, B.D., M.C., had not, as yet, visited the altar. She knew that he could be seen about half-an-hour before his evening meal and after his afternoon's visiting. She knew also that he could have been seen about ten minutes to one; but she knew further that by six o'clock it was the darkening, and that, therefore, there was a sporting chance of her reaching the manse without being seen by Mrs Dickie.

The click of the iron gate, some forty or fifty yards from the front-door of the manse, and the appearance of a female figure moving rapidly among the bushes, were something of a shock to the young minister, who was enjoying the twilight, in prospect of his evening meal and what he had hoped was going to be a night of quiet study. The discovery that the visitor was Mrs Jope did not mend matters. She was not exactly one of his favourites.

The Rev. J. Anderson Philip, B.D., M.C. (known to his intimates as 'Andy'), minister of the United Free Church of Cheggs, in the Presbytery of Cluthaside, was in many respects a man to be envied. As to age, he was nearer thirty than forty; he enjoyed vigorous health and the friendship of a large circle of friends. His outward appearance took the eye favourably. Although not tall, and even spare and somewhat

pale, he was quite obviously something of an athlete. As a matter of fact, in his golf club, which was a good one, his handicap was three, and it was not an uncommon thing for him to come in in the seventies, a fact which must always entitle a man to our respect. His dark-brown hair lay abundantly on a good forehead; his eyes had a glint; he had a well-shaped nose and a serviceable mouth and chin. There were ladies in Mr Philip's congregation who held that, groomed, banned, and gowned, he was the best-looking man who appeared in the Cheggs United Free Church pulpit. It is needless to add that the ladies regarded him as worthy of their most enthusiastic support in the various forms of Christian enterprise.

Mrs Jope found her minister in excellent spirits. He had done a good afternoon's visiting among people glad to see him, and he had the feeling that he had been able to render some human help to certain men and women. His forenoon's work had also been of the kind that pleased him, and, as we have seen, the prospects for the evening were favourable. If Peter Nisbet, the schoolmaster, came in for his last pipe, that would be all the better—for the minister and the schoolmaster were secure cronies. So Mr Philip had a real feeling of well-being as he took the air in the garden that autumn evening. And—who knew?—maybe Christina, in the back regions, was dealing with a 'finnan' such as his soul desired.

The forenoon's work came back very pleasantly to his mind. Mr Philip was an honours man in Hebrew, and a member of the Scottish Semitic Society. He was writing a paper on an aspect of *Deuteronomy* that was hidden even from the minds of most ministers and revealed only to critical babes. If he could show that D^r stood in a certain relation to Pⁱ, he would make even some of the members of the Semitic sit up. And he had good hope of success. So that the essay on 'Some Neglected Relations of the Deuteronomic Problem' might open up the way to—well, one never knew.

And now here was Mrs Jope—not exactly in her Sunday clothes, but in such an approximation thereto as indicated that the business was serious.

'Good-evening, Mrs Jope,' Mr Philip's voice rang out pleasantly in the gloaming as he shook hands with his visitor. 'Delightful evening, isn't it? And so mild.'

'You're right, Mr Philip; it's a fine evening,' replied the lady; 'maybe, if anything, a wee bit too mild, but we'll pay for that later on.'

'Won't you come in?'

'Thank ye; I was thinking I would like tae see ye.'

Mr Philip showed the way into the lobby,

where some golf-clubs stood accusingly in a corner, and throwing open the door on the left, ushered Mrs Jope into the darkened study, where in a moment the illuminated mantel revealed the kind of room dear to the heart of every rightly constituted cleric. The walls were lined with bookshelves. There were books on the study table in the centre of the floor; there were books filling and overflowing a revolving bookcase, books on the mantelpiece, and books on the hearthrug beside the minister's easy-chair. Expensive pictures were, of course, absent, but there were well-selected photographs, with some etchings: heads of soldiers, from Alexander and Julius Cæsar to Foch; heads of poets, from Homer and Dante to Matthew Arnold; heads of Churchmen, from Augustine to Chalmers, Norman Macleod, and Rainy; heads of great men of letters—Newman, with Carlyle in the vicinity to keep the balance true.

'Well, Mrs Jope, what can I do for you to-night?' said the minister in a tone of kindly inquiry. 'I hope that there is nothing wrong.'

'There's naething whit ye wad ca' specially wrang,' replied Mrs Jope—'at least amang oorsel's. Jope's gettin' plenty o' wark, and the young yins are steerin' aboot as usual. But there's richts and wrangs, and wrangs and richts, nane the less.'

At this stage Mrs Jope gazed with such concentrated pensiveness into the fireplace that Mr Philip concluded that the problem about to be presented to him, whatever its nature was, was on the moral plane.

'I aye said,' continued Mrs Jope, turning a dark glance on the minister's face, 'that thae folk were put forrit owre quickly. It's no that I'm jealous aboot Jope, because he's got a mant [stammer], and would rather rin awa' frae folk than see them; but wha was tae ken onything aboot folk that cam' a' the way frae Portobello? An' yet before we kent whaur we were he wis a deacon, an' she wis aye ready tae sing or recite without e'en bein' asked.'

'Excuse me, Mrs Jope,' interrupted the minister; 'of whom, may I ask, are you speakin'?'

'Of whom am I speakin'?' replied Mrs Jope. 'I'm speakin' o' the Chalmerses, of course.'

'Oh, the Chalmerses,' said Mr Philip in a musing voice—'the Chalmerses. My impression is that they are very decent people, and are certainly very willing to help in the congregation.'

'Aye, that's just it,' responded the visitor; 'they're aye ready enough tae come forrit, but I'm just here this very night tae tell you what I heard wi' my ain ears yesterday as I passed their hoose. Mr Philip,' proceeded Mrs Jope in a solemn tone, 'ye ken the laigh hoose whaur the Chalmerses bide in the Main Street. Weel, as I wis passin' there yesterday aboot hauf-past twelve, gaun hame efter seein' ma sister awa' at the station, I heard John Chalmers cry oot, "— ye, wumman, wad ye murder me?" an'

just wi' that there wis a great smash o' a plate on the kitchen floor.'

This shattering and portentous statement was followed by at least a minute's silence in the Cheggs U.F. study. It is not to be denied that Mr Philip received the words with something of a shock, for Mrs Jope, whatever she was, was reliable and intelligent.

'Are you quite sure, Mrs Jope, that you'—

'Quite sure!' interrupted Mrs Jope. 'Mr Philip, ye ken the Chalmerses' hoose as weel as I dae. Ye ken hoo the kitchen door opens at the fore-en' o' the through-gaun passage? I simply couldna hae made a mistake—an' sorry I am tae say that that's ma message to you the night, and you're the first tae hear it.'

'Well, I'm glad, at any rate, to hear you say that,' said the minister. 'You and I will keep this matter quiet until we see what is best to be done.'

At this point the gong sounded for the minister's evening meal.

II.

The sound from the gong was caused by the hand of Christina Walker, who for five minutes had been making a praiseworthy effort to discover who had been able to enter the study without her knowledge. Christina's curiosity was stimulated by the fact that the voice in the study was that of a woman, but as it went on in the flat and toneless method of the district, it did nothing to reveal Mrs Jope, so at last the lamp was lit in the lobby and the gong struck, and in a moment Mrs Jope stood on the threshold.

'Oh, Mrs Jope, it's yoursel'!' said Christina, as Mr Philip crossed the lobby and went into the dining-room. 'I didna hear ye come in. What a fine nicht it is!'

'Aye, it's a fine evenin', Miss Walker. Ye couldna ken it wis me, for the minister wis takin' the air at the door as I came up.'

There were people in Cheggs who always addressed Christina as 'Miss Walker,' and Mrs Jope was one of them. The minister encouraged the practice in a place where the use of Christian names was the rule, and where they appeared in all sorts of crude contractions. Christina herself had no objection to being called by her Christian name by Mr Nisbet, the schoolmaster; John Nith, the session-clerk; and certain ladies of an assured social status. For it would be a great mistake to suppose that Cheggs, with all its crudities and fierce democratic enthusiasms, was without a social sense.

'I hope there's nothing wrong, Mrs Jope,' said Christina.

'Oh, there's naething ye could maybe ca' wrang. But time will tell. In ony case, I had tae see the minister. Good-evening, Miss Walker.'

Mrs Jope vanished in the shadows of the garden, knowing well that she had scored on the mystery side.

In ordinary circumstances she and Christina

would have adjourned to the kitchen, but in view of the minister's pledge to silence, she felt that that would not be fitting. When Christina returned to the dining-room, she found the minister somewhat perplexed and absorbed, and disinclined to converse. The matter, therefore, had to rest so far as Christina was concerned.

Mr Philip really was perplexed, although, perhaps, not very seriously. If the Chalmerses were quarrelling in the early part of the day, was it possible to leave the factor of drink out of account? One never knew. Your victim of drink turned up in odd places. But the difficulty was increased by the fact that the Chalmerses were strong supporters of the temperance movement, and Chalmers had always seemed a very decent man.

Later, as Peter Nisbet and the minister filled their pipes for the last smoke of the day, Mr Philip spoke of the matter cautiously to the schoolmaster. At the mention of Mrs Joep's name Peter sniffed loudly. She was evidently no favourite of his.

'The whole business is very likely a delusion.'

'Perhaps,' admitted Mr Philip. 'But Mrs Joep is not an unintelligent woman, and, although a bit gossipy, is not a malicious woman; and you know the Chalmerses' house, and how the kitchen sounds could be easily heard in the street.'

The schoolmaster quite plainly was not satisfied.

'A decent man, Chalmers. He does repairs for me about the school, and he is the last man in Cheggs of whom I would say that he was fighting with a violent wife. Why, he is one of the most cheerful men in town.'

'Ah well,' said the minister, 'we can make nothing more of it to-night. It is a worry I suppose that, in due time, will resolve itself.'

All this took place on a Thursday, and on the two following days the minister had to be at his desk. He resolved that not a syllable would escape him on Sunday that would indicate the existence of any special difficulty. He must, at all costs, keep himself free from the slightest suspicion of what in Cheggs is known as a 'dig.'

The Scottish 'dig' is a highly interesting topic, if one had time to deal with it. As a matter of fact, not 3 per cent. of Scottish ministers ever dream of administering 'digs.' Nevertheless, there is a type of mind whose faith in the pulpit 'dig' as an essential part of ministerial activity cannot be shaken.

A curious thing, the 'dig.' The man who is unanimously regarded as having received it is usually quite unconscious of the fact. On the other hand, let a man receive what he regards as a 'dig,' and it will take a visit of the minister and two elders to convince him that he is under a delusion.

But there was no suspicion of 'digs' in the U.F. church in Cheggs on the Sunday of which we write. Even the sermon-tasters were more

than satisfied; while an intimation announcing a social meeting under the auspices of the British Women's Temperance Association was felt to be quite fitting, since Mr Philip himself was to preside.

Cheggs has more than its share of public-houses, and is more than generous in its support of them. Nevertheless, there is a strong temperance sentiment. It expresses itself chiefly through female activity, and nowhere with more ardour than in the meetings of the B.W.T.A. So that Mr Philip, who had been asked to preside, and a well-known temperance orator from Glasgow were faced by a huge audience when they mounted the platform of the town-hall.

People might wonder for whom the chairman was looking so carefully after perusing his programme, but fortunately no one knew. The programme certainly administered a shock. It announced that Mr and Mrs Chalmers would give a dialogue entitled 'The Clouded Home.'

'By Jove,' said the minister to himself, 'how I wish Peter Nisbet were here to-night!' But Peter Nisbet sedulously avoided temperance meetings.

Everything went swimmingly. The tea and cakes were speedily consumed, and the chairman's remarks were well received. The musical efforts were all vigorously encored, while the orator from Glasgow fairly brought down the house.

Then the chairman announced that their friends Mr and Mrs Chalmers would present a temperance dialogue entitled 'The Clouded Home.' For one instant his eye met Mrs Joep's, and he saw her start.

The Chalmerses, who seemed to express the very ideal of connubial bliss, came forward to the front of the hall amid thunderous applause. When the minister noticed that Mrs Chalmers carried something in a piece of brown paper, he knew that his moral problem was no longer in existence.

The dialogue went off with great *éclat*. It soon became obvious that the story was that of a man who was seeking to save his wife from the power of strong drink, and that the wife refused to be rescued. As the passions of the performers rose, the joy of the audience increased.

Tumultuous applause greeted the tenser passages. At last, when speech seemed almost to have failed, Mr Philip noticed Mrs Chalmers's hand go out towards the brown-paper parcel, and knew by instinct what was about to happen. Raising an old and very cracked plate in both hands, she threw it with great care, so as to strike her husband's shoulder, and then to clatter in fragments on the floor. It was the crowning moment of the evening; and when Chalmers, starting back, exclaimed in horror-stricken tones, 'Deil tak' us, wumman! wad ye murder me?' it was felt that the force of the dramatic could no further go.

Before the applause had subsided the chairman noticed Mrs Joep make for the door. She had mistaken a fragment of a rehearsal for the heart of a tragedy.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

SHOOTING ACCIDENTS.

By Lieut.-Colonel Sir HENRY SMITH, K.C.B.

I.

MY grandfather was the minister of Galston, on the Loudoun estate in Ayrshire, where my father was born. The head gamekeeper answered to the name of Mike M'Cubbin, and his distinguishing characteristic was an abhorrence of haste in every shape or form. 'Plenty o' time,' he would mutter to himself—'plenty o' time.' Mike was an inveterate snuffer, but he carried no box. He had snuff loose in his waistcoat-pocket.

Loudoun was a low-country shooting—no grouse or blackgame, but partridges were swarming. When a covey rose in front of him Mike would put his hand into his waistcoat-pocket, treat one nostril, then another, to a pinch, and then kill a brace splendidly, right and left. 'An I had been in a hurry, I wad hae missed them baith,' he would chuckle to himself.

Mike never went out without a 'jeely piece,' or something more substantial in the shape of a ham or beef sandwich. 'Three or fower men cooks cairryin' on a' day, and they canna gie me ma bit sandwich, and let me oot efter the birds. Do they ever wan through their work, I wonder?' Mike would soliloquise as he sat in the servants' hall. Such was Mike in the days when my father was a boy of fifteen.

Mike's delight was to get my father to play truant from school and go out shooting with him. 'C'way, Maister Geordie,' he would shout—even as the old herd on the Pentlands would shout to R. L. S.—'c'way. The minister's at the ither end o' the pairish—we'll be back or he gets hame.'

But now we must leave Galston and Mike and go farther afield.

My father was sent to Glasgow College, where he met many boys of his own age from Ayrshire and Renfrewshire, and where he made many friendships which lasted his lifetime and were continued to me, his son.

My father was keen as ever on shooting, and used to get invitations from neighbouring proprietors; but when he became a 'placed' minister, and was appointed to the second charge of Kilmarnock, he found that to shoot was a deadly sin in the eyes of the good folks of the town in

general, and of his own parishioners in particular. He instantly resolved to abandon shooting, and never fired another shot. I was not intended for the Church, and though perhaps not a sinner beyond redemption, yet the old adage frequently holds true that 'the Lord gets the goose, but the Devil gets the goslings.'

Compelled to abandon his favourite sport, my father was still deeply interested in it and everything connected with it, and frequently of a Saturday evening it was his delight to revert to the happy days of his boyhood when, in company with old Mike, he was trudging over the heather or across the stubbles. Those reminiscences were not meant solely for my amusement—they were always leavened with some useful instructions in view of the day when I was to be entrusted with a gun.

My father, as I have already mentioned, was 'weel acquaint' with 'Glesca' and its inhabitants—notably with the Gairdner family, one of whom eventually became general manager of the Union Bank of Scotland, and another—Davie, the youngest—died this year or last, I am not sure which. Two of the Gairdners, with four friends—all wealthy men and keen on shooting—formed themselves into a 'syndicate' (the word 'syndicate' had not been popularised in those prehistoric days, needless to say), and took a long lease of 'Burnhead,' a moor on the estate of Lanfine, some twelve or fourteen miles from Glasgow. Being men of substance, who stipulated for no alterations or additions to the farmhouse by the proprietor, but undertook to do everything necessary for their comfort themselves, they were very welcome tenants.

The house formed three sides of a square. The ground floor was occupied by the farmer and his family. The first floor consisted of two rooms. The partition in the middle was removed; and eight bachelor bedrooms were built out on the heather at right angles to the house. Since those days I have been in many a shooting-lodge, but, for comfort and convenience, Burnhead I have found unapproachable. When you awoke in the morning you could hear the grouse calling under your very window. You might have crawled downstairs and shot them in your night-shirt—even as Jack Mytton crawled on

his stomach and shot wild-duck on the ice by moonlight.

I should mention that butts—constructed on the most improved design—eight in number, had already been placed within two hundred yards of the farmhouse. They were well drained (I have often stood in butts for half-an-hour or even longer up to the ankles in slush and half-frozen snow), and had a seat inside, so that the shooter could sit comfortably should the birds be long in coming up. The season I have in mind was a very forward one. Grouse had already begun to 'pack,' so it was decided to begin driving on the very first lawful day—12th of August.

All these preparations for filling bags to the brim made me a little uneasy. I'll tell you why. Some weeks before I had met a man who had spent nearly all his life in Australia. He was a first-rate shot over dogs—to that I can testify—but when stationed in a butt he fired away from morn till dewy eve, and didn't succeed in stopping one solitary bird. 'It isn't sport,' he said to me. 'Take my advice—have nothing to do with it.' I did not take his advice. Next day, with sore misgivings, I took my place in a butt on the left of the line. I was like unto the man from Australia, for I expended some sixty or seventy cartridges and never touched a feather. Next day Charles Gairdner, certainly the best shot at Burnhead—he had heard of my ghastly performance, as who hadn't?—made up to me as I was marching on, looking as happy as if I were going to the scaffold. 'Look here, boy,' he said very kindly; 'd'ye see that young chap there?' indicating a youth of some five-and-twenty summers, who, I discovered subsequently, was the tenant-farmer of the moor. 'You can't do better than have a talk with him before you take up your position.' This gave me some comfort. I said to the farmer, 'I'm blessed' (I fear the expression was stronger) 'if I understand how to stop those infernal birds. I suppose you let them pass, and then fire as they are flying away behind you.' 'No, no, no,' he replied; 'you'll never kill them that way. Look them straight in the face and shoot as they fly towards you. You're a quick shot, you tell me. Well, you ought to get in four or five rights and lefts here. Good luck to you;' and he doubled back just in time to take up his place. Before I was five minutes older I had six and a half brace—thirteen birds—lying at my feet. From that day to this I have never looked back; and now, in my eighty-fifth year, not one bird that gives me anything like a chance gets past me.

And now are we any nearer 'shooting accidents'? Vastly nearer, gentle reader.

II.

King James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England introduced the game of golf south

of the Tweed, so we are told, to civilise the savages he had annexed; and in like manner 'driving'—a pastime unknown south of Berwick-on-Tweed—was introduced into England to teach the Sassenach to shoot, for a driving shot is generally a good shot.

But *revenons à nos moutons*. Some thirty or thirty-five years ago, when driving was recognised as the way to make big bags, four men were dining together at 'The Rag'—that is, the Army and Navy Club in Pall Mall. Oliver Montague, colonel of 'The Blues'—no more popular officer in the British Army—was one. The other three were Lord Dunmore, Colonel Heneage, and—I cannot call to mind the name of the fourth, if I ever knew it. Four men should have eight eyes, but these gallant soldiers had only four—each had lost an eye in the butts. 'Poor fellows!' Well, I'm not so sure of that. It was a broad hint to them to visit the butts no more. Better stop. To lose one eye is a mere trifle compared to losing both.

Forfarshire, when you look at its position on the map, lies fairly far north; still, it is nearly all what is called low-ground shooting. It is seldom that grouse or blackgame are met with. Partridges, on the contrary, are swarming, and the 1st of September is the great festival, when friends from north, south, east, and west are invited annually for the driving. I had the following true tale on one such occasion from a Northumberland squire, an intimate friend of mine, and a most splendid and safe shot. One year, when he was standing in his butt, the long line of beaters, some two hundred yards distant, was halted by command of the head keeper. There was evidently much excitement. A crowd gathered together, and on going forward to ascertain what was the matter, my friend discovered that an old man, rejoicing in the euphonious name of Andrew Carnegie, had been shot in the left eye, the sight being totally destroyed. 'Did you find out who shot him?' 'Ah, yes; he owned up to it like a man. It was Sir Blank'—naming a well-known baronet from the county of Kent. 'Is he going to do anything for the poor old chap?' 'Well, he has given him five-and-twenty pounds, and Anra is quite delighted.' 'Sir,' said a keeper once, advancing on a sportsman in a menacing way, 'ye hev shotten a man.' 'Good God! what shall I do?' 'Gie um a shullin',' was the reply. No wonder that 'Anra' was pleased!

But to resume. Next year, on the 1st of September, my Northumbrian friend was once more standing in his butt. The line was halted, a crowd collected, and it was found that old 'Anra' had been shot again—providentially in the blind eye! The hint was sufficient for 'Anra.' He, like a sensible man, took it. 'Nae mair shüttin for me; A's had enough;' and he would sit in his

comfortable cottage from the 1st of September till every sportsman had returned to 'his own place.'

Yet another accident.

J. W. P., a banker in Newcastle-on-Tyne, rented a moor in Aberdeenshire—Corndavon, if I mistake not, was the name of the place. There were four or five butts, and an intimate friend was told off to occupy the one on the host's left. In two or three minutes grouse began to come over in great numbers. Turning round to learn how his friend on the left was getting on, J. W. P. was horrified to see him pointing his gun straight at his (the banker's) head. 'Why didn't you drop flat down on the heather?' I asked. 'Well,' he replied, 'I was fascinated or hypnotised—you know how a snake fascinates its victim before striking. I never thought he would pull the trigger.' But pull it he did, and one eye was totally destroyed, the other narrowly escaping a similar fate. By the advice of his friends, the injured man travelled straight up to London that night, and went to an oculist on his arrival. That practitioner removed the sightless eye from its socket, filling its place with a glass one; but whether it was the shock, or whether it was the discomfort caused by the glass eye, the banker never had a day's health thereafter, and passed peacefully away, by a singular coincidence, on the very first anniversary of what might almost be called his fatal accident.

Pigeon-shooting (I think I am correct in saying) was first brought into notice at Nice and Monte Carlo, large sums of money staked on the gun or the bird respectively changing hands. The late David Hope Johnstone and others greatly distinguished themselves, killing occasionally some four or five and twenty 'Blue Rocks' without a miss. But it fell to the lot of a Perthshire man, the son and heir of a member of the Upper House, to eclipse the deeds of every one, and transfer cup after cup and medal after medal to adorn the sideboard in the dining-room of his ancestral home. As a pigeon-shot he was without rival; and on the open moor, with grouse rising as fast as he could load, he was equally quick and reliable. This unrivalled sportsman, to whose skill at the traps and on the moor I have just borne testimony, was out one day to get some birds to send off to the south. His sole attendant was the head keeper, who was walking in line with him some five-and-twenty yards higher up the hill.

To make the incident still more incomprehensible, it was broad daylight—about two o'clock in the afternoon. Some eight or ten birds rose in front, but one, instead of flying forward with the rest of the covey, turned back. Raising his gun, this most reliable of all reliable shots followed it round till it came in line with the keeper's head, and then drew the trigger. One heart-rending

shriek, and the unfortunate man bounded forward down the hill, and lay silent and motionless, stone-dead. This story I had from Henry Michie, my head keeper for twelve or fourteen years. He told me the name of the man who met with his death, and also that his widow was in receipt of a large pension for the loss of her husband.

How could a shriek emanate from a man whose head was literally blown to pieces? I know of a somewhat similar case. An officer of the Rifle Brigade—Captain Blank—was shooting with our late King, Edward VII. On stopping for lunch Captain Blank handed his gun to a keeper, pushing it towards the man, butt foremost, the muzzle being pointed straight at himself. The gun went off, presumably coming in contact with something that caused it to explode, and the whole charge entered Captain Blank's chest. 'How was I shot with an empty gun?' he exclaimed, and, tumbling down on the heather, he lay—like the unfortunate Perthshire keeper—stone-dead.

III.

And now I am coming to my last 'accident,' and as I write I cannot keep the tears from my eyes, for, sad and tragic as some of my tales undoubtedly have been, this is incomparably more sad and tragic than any of its predecessors.

A boy of seventeen—we will call him Macdonald—volunteered for the front immediately on the outbreak of war in August 1914. He presented himself to Colonel W., commanding a Highland battalion, to whom he and his family were personally known, on the eve of the regiment's departure for Flanders. Colonel W., though greatly pleased with the boy's patriotic enthusiasm, felt compelled to refuse his request. 'You are too young. Go home again. This war—or I am much mistaken—will last for years. Stick to your drill, render implicit obedience to your superior officers, and come back, say, when you are nineteen or twenty. You will be in plenty of time to have a turn at the Huns then; there will be lots left for you, depend upon it.' A year afterwards the boy crossed the Channel and presented himself to Colonel W. 'Ah! you'll do now,' said the colonel; 'come along and I'll introduce you to your brother-officers, and show you what a "dug-out" is like. And mind you duck your head when I do, for snipers are unpleasantly active hereabouts.'

Young Macdonald soon made a name for himself. In any 'scrap' he was always up and doing, and so well did he behave that he was awarded the D.S.O. and the Croix-de-Guerre as well.

One bright morning he was lying in his dug-out, when he jumped to his feet excitedly. 'Next week is "The Twelfth,"' he said to himself; 'shouldn't I like to be in a butt once

more? I wonder if the colonel would give me some days' leave?' The colonel, whom he found reading the *Evening Dispatch*, fell in with his wish most readily. 'Well, my boy,' he said, 'you deserve leave—you've done uncommonly well. How long will you be away? We want you back again. There are heaps of Hun-shooting for you here yet.' 'Five or six days will be ample, and the first birds I shoot I will send over here, sir. They will remind you of home.' 'Well, then, that's settled; the sooner you're off the better.'

No happier boy ever landed on the pier at Dover than the young soldier. 'I shall soon be in a butt,' he said to himself as he jumped into the dining-saloon of the boat-train. Reaching the moor in Renfrewshire in good time, he was cordially welcomed by his friends, who had everything ready for him; and though his mother and sister lived hard by—his father was dead—he decided upon killing some grouse for the colonel before walking down to see them. Entering a butt, he stood looking out, watching eagerly for the first birds coming over him. Not one thought of danger, not one thought of misfortune, entered his head. After what he had escaped at the front, what evil could befall him here?

A shot rang out. It met him full in the face, and the gallant young boy collapsed on the heather, both eyes completely and hopelessly destroyed.

Meantime his mother and sister sat intently listening for the light, firm step they knew so well. The door opened, and a poor, helpless, blind creature was led in. 'Where are you, mother dearest? Alas! I cannot see you. I will try to be brave like Mr Fawcett, who was shot in both eyes by his father. "This must make no difference," we are told he said, and he kept his word to the end of his days. He was a young man like me, mother, and I must try to copy him. But yet I am afraid;' and the poor boy broke down and wept bitterly. But Almighty God intervened. The sightless boy caught a chill; pneumonia set in; and he was dead in twenty-four hours, a merciful release to himself and to those who loved him.

And now my 'shooting accidents' are done—my tale is told—and if a perusal of what I have written convinces only one sportsman that it is better that thousands of birds should escape than that a rash shot should imperil the life or the eyesight of a human being, I have not written in vain.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXV.—continued.

III.

BY a creek that trickled across the road, Captain Austin Selwyn was watching the brushwood which concealed the enemy. Beside him, lining the bank, every available man was on the alert, waiting the developments which would follow the raising of night's curtain. In the misty gray of dawn they looked fabulous in size, and indistinct.

The night in January at the University Club in New York had marked a reconciliation between Selwyn and Van Derwater. With the issue between America and Germany so clearly defined, they had both lent their voices to the insistent demand for war. At first people had been incredulous, and hazarded the guess that the young author was endeavouring to cover his own tracks; but when he enlisted in the ranks at the outbreak of hostilities, they made a popular hero of him. They spoke of him as the Spirit of the Cause—but he paid little attention to the clamour. His joy in the prospect of action, and the release from all his mental tortures, had produced in him a kind of frenzy, that crystallised into an intense hatred of Germany.

The pendulum had swung to its extreme.

Once a man animated with a passionate humanitarianism, in whom the spirit of universal brotherhood burned with an inextinguishable force, he had become a creature drunk with lust for revenge. Patriotism, Justice, Freedom—they were all catch-words to hide the brutal, primeval instinct to kill.

In the little thought which he permitted himself, Selwyn argued that the ignorance of many nations had made war possible, but only Germany had been vile enough to try to exploit it for the achievement of world-power. For that reason alone she was a thing of detestation.

His enthusiasm and quickly acquired knowledge of army routine marked him for promotion. He was given a commission, and at the request of Van Derwater was attached to the same regiment as himself. Together they had crossed to France, and were among the first American troops in action.

In the months that followed, Selwyn had revelled in the carnage and the excitement of war. He was reckless to the point of bravado, and his keen dramatic instinct drove him into unnecessary escapades where his senses could enjoy a thrill not far removed from insanity. Only when out of the line, when the

mockery and the hideousness of the whole thing demanded his mind's solution, would the mood of despondency return. But in the trenches he knew neither pity nor fear. Men fought for the privilege of serving under him, and with their instinct of euphony and love of the bizarre gave him the name of 'Hell-fire.' He gloried in the physical ascendancy of it all—in the dangers—in the discomforts. He was an instrument of revenge, a weapon without feeling.

On the other hand, Van Derwater had undergone no appreciable change. He carried himself with the same dignity and formality as in his days at Washington—except when emergency would scatter the wits of his fellow-officers, and he would suddenly become a dynamic force, vigorous in conception and swift of action. Yet success or failure left him unmoved, once a crisis had passed. His men respected but did not understand him. They wove a legend about his name. They said he had come to France wanting to be killed, but that no bullet could touch him. And even those who scoffed, when they saw him, unruffled and strangely solitary, moving about with almost ironic contempt of danger, wondered if there might not be some truth in the story.

'Major Van Derwater would like to speak to you right away, sir.'

Telling a non-commissioned officer to take his place, Selwyn followed the messenger along the road until they came to the spot which Van Derwater had chosen for his headquarters. Daylight was emerging from its retreat, and there was the promise of a warm day in the glowing east.

'You sent for me, sir?' he said.

'Yes. You might question these two British stragglers. Their story is not straight, but they seem decent enough fellows. If you are not satisfied'—

He was interrupted by an exclamation of astonishment from Selwyn, who had noticed the Englishmen for the first time.

'Great Scott!' gasped Selwyn. 'Dick Durwent!'

Dick looked up, and at the sight of the American's face he uttered a cry of relief. 'Is that really you, Selwyn? What luck! You remember Mathews at Roselawn, don't you? You can say'—

'Good-morning, sir,' said the unperturbed groom. 'This is a werry pleasant surprise, to be sure. How are you, sir?'

'Van,' said Selwyn, after shaking hands with them both, 'this is Lord Durwent's son, and the other is his groom, Mathews. I will vouch for them absolutely.'

'Good!' Van Derwater slightly inclined his head as an indication that he was satisfied. 'We need every man. You had better take them in your section and equip them with rifles from casualties.'

IV.

A few minutes later, after he had procured food for the two men, who were growing weak with hunger, Selwyn resumed his post. The heavy grass fringing the bank made it possible to keep watch without being directly exposed as a target; but beyond a desultory rifle-fire about a mile on their right, there was no indication of enemy activity.

When Durwent had been equipped with a steel helmet and a rifle, Selwyn called him over to his side, and as concisely as possible explained the military situation. In the German attack against the French forces (with which the Americans were brigaded) the line had been swept back. Deep salients had been driven in on both their flanks, but they had received orders to hold the bridge at all costs, as, if a counter-attack could be launched, it would be an enfilading one made by troops brought across the river. Relying on their machine-gun and rifle fire to overcome the Americans' resistance, the enemy's artillery had been drawn into the deepening salients; but in spite of all-day fighting the straggling line had held.

After a few questions from Durwent they relapsed into silence, gazing at the undulating expanse of country revealed by the ascending sun.

'Selwyn.' Dick cleared his throat nervously. 'I must tell you the truth. You were decent enough to stand sponsor for Mathews and me, and I want you to know everything. The major was right. We're not stragglers—we're deserters.'

Selwyn made no comment, and both men stared fixedly through the long grass that drooped with heavy dew.

'Yesterday morning,' said Durwent dully, 'I was to have been shot. I was drunk in the line, and deserved it. It's no use trying to excuse myself. I fancy my nerves were a bit gone after what we'd been through the last few months, but . . . Well, I suppose I am simply a failure, as that chap said in London—there isn't much more to it than that. By a queer deal of the cards, Mathews was on guard, and helped me to escape. It was rotten of me to let him take the chance; but it's been that way all through. Even at the end of everything—after being a waster and a rotter since I was a kid—I have to drag this poor chap down with me. Promise, Selwyn, if you come out of this alive, that you'll fight his case for him.'

Selwyn murmured assent, but he was trying to shake off a haunting feeling that was enveloping him like a mist—a feeling that everything the young Englishman was saying he had heard before. It left him dazed, and made Durwent's voice sound far away. He tried to dismiss it as an illogical prank of the mind, but

the thing was relentless. He could not rid himself of the thought that sometime in the past—months, years, perhaps centuries ago—this pitiful scene had been enacted before.

It chilled his soul with its presage of disaster. He saw the hand of destiny, and everything in him rebelled against the inexorable cruelty of it all. It was infamous that any life should be dominated by a whim of the Fates; that any creature should enter this world with a silken cord about his throat. Destiny. Does it mould our lives; or do our lives, inundated with the forces of heredity, mould our destinies? He tried to grapple with the thought; but through the pain and confusion of his mind he could only feel the presence of unseen fingers spelling out the words written in a hidden past.

'I wonder,' said Durwent, after a pause of several minutes, during which neither had spoken, 'what happens when this is finished.'

'Do you mean—after death?' said Selwyn, forcing his mind clear of its clouds.

Durwent nodded and leaned wearily with his arms on the bank. 'I tried to think it out the night before I was to be shot,' he said. 'I can't just say what I did think—but I know there's something after this world. Selwyn, is there a God? I wonder if there will be another chance for the men who have made a mess of things here.'

The American turned towards the young fellow, whose pale face looked singularly boyish, and had a wistfulness that touched him to his very heart. Durwent was gazing over the grass into the distance, oblivious of everything about him, and in the blue of his eyes, which borrowed lustre from the sun-strewn morning, there was the mysticism of one who is search-

ing for the land which lies beyond this life's horizon.

'I wonder,' repeated Durwent dreamily.

Selwyn tried to frame words for a reply, but skilled as he was in the interpretation of thought, he was dumb in confession of his faith. He longed to speak the things which might have brought comfort to the lad's harassed soul, but everything which came to him, echoing from his former years, was so inadequate, so tinctured with smug complacency. Was there a God?

The question left him mute.

'There are times,' went on Durwent, almost to himself, 'when my head is full of strange fancies—when I'm listening to music—or at dawn like this. While I was under arrest, a little French girl who had heard I was to die brought some flowers she had picked for me. When I think of that girl, and her flowers, and Elise, and the faithfulness of old Mathews, I do believe there is some kind of a God. . . . Selwyn'—unconsciously his hands stretched forward supplicatingly, and there was a deep yearning in the softness of his voice—'surely these things can't die? I haven't heard enough music. . . . There's been so much that's ugly and lonely in my life. . . . Don't you believe that we fellows who have failed will be able to have a little of the things we've missed down here?'

'Dick,' said Selwyn, hoarsely, 'I believe'—

The words faltered on his lips, and in silence the two men stood together in the presence of the day's birth. There was a strange calm in the air. The dew on the grass caught a faint sparkle from a ray of sunlight that penetrated the eastern skies.

(Continued on page 554.)

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

IV.—THE HEDGEHOG OR URCHIN.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

WHAT boy who has ever camped out is unfamiliar with Milord the Hedgehog? Who has never heard his nocturnal rustling in the leaves, his loud sniffs of inquiry; and, above all, who has never experienced his unwavering partiality for the frying-pan? Have we not always to hang this universal piece of culinary equipment high in the trees, or bring it into the tent? Otherwise he will spend half the night climbing in and out of it, and skilfully contriving to mix a maximum amount of the soot of the exterior with the thin grease of the interior.

A hedgehog will eat almost anything of animal origin. Slugs of all varieties, many of which birds will not touch, are perhaps its staple diet, accompanied by every species of beetle and insect that flies or runs.

In Upper Wharfedale, near Burnsall village, I possessed a unique opportunity of studying the feeding habits of the urchin. A picturesque wood, particularly rich in animal life, extends from the moorland heights to the river-level, and is bordered on its lower boundary by a wide belt of sand, deposited by the main stream, which every creature passing between the wood and the lowland meadow must cross, thereby leaving the record of its passing.

The belt of sand is dotted over with pebbles large and small, and here black beetles of several varieties are particularly abundant, hiding during the heat of day under the shelter of the stones, so that, crossing the sand-bed, one is certain to send dozens of them scuttling in different directions.

From the signs left by hedgehogs it was clearly evident that they hunted these beetles by scent, running the trail of an individual beetle just as a hound runs the trail of a fox. When fishing at night-time I have seen as many as three hedgehogs hunting the sand-bed together, while others could be heard not far distant in the darkness. If, however, one trod out on to the gravel-stretch, where a silent approach was impossible, every hedgehog would scuttle into the wood almost with the alacrity of a rabbit. The hedgehog is, indeed, more fleet of foot than is generally thought. If one be surprised it merely twitches into a ball, making no attempt at escape, but trusting to its quills for defence; but if, on the other hand, it hears the approach of danger in the distance, and knows that there is time to flee, it will make off quite speedily to some familiar cover.

As a rule, the hedgehog is not a creature of fixed runways. It has a strictly defined home-range, which extends, probably, not more than a hundred yards in any direction from its recognised sleeping-quarters. It is entirely a creature of the night. In the day-time it ventures abroad only when warm showers disturb vast numbers of insects, causing them to creep forth into the foliage. A hedgehog will then sally out to take advantage of the feast. The only other times when it is to be seen abroad by day are when food is scarce during frosty weather and the animal is hard put to it to pick up a living, and when it is suffering from the effects of an injury.

The hedgehog's method of hunting is most remarkable for its entire lack of systematic quartering. Hither and thither the creature goes, as regardless of direction as a clockwork mouse. Now he heads north at quite a sprint, then turns west for no apparent reason at all; veering south, he noses under a dock, then continues east till his progress is barred by a wall. All the time he is munching steadily and noisily, consuming an enormous number of insects; and in this way he rids the land of many troublesome pests.

II.

A hedgehog will eat anything it can catch and hold, nor is it particular as to its method of killing. It is regularly guilty of robbing the rabbit-catcher's snares, and thereby often brings destruction upon its own head.

Hedgehogs destroy quite a considerable number of young rabbits; but I think the animal's love of warmth, and its habit of creeping into any warm and cosy nook that presents itself, is in

the first place the cause of the mischief. Finding a rabbit-stop during the absence of the mother, the hedgehog creeps in to enjoy the warmth of the nest at the end of the shallow hole. Whether or not he eats the young makes little difference. Their chances of a healthy survival are small with a hedgehog as temporary bed-mate. His first intention is not, probably, to destroy. He may already have fed, and is merely in search of warmth and sleep. The idea of eating the youngsters presumably occurs to him as an afterthought; and having gorged, he sleeps again, in all probability occupying the stop for three days or so. He may even finally make his home there.

Having once profited in this manner by the discovery of a rabbit-nest, a hedgehog quickly acquires the habit of hunting for such places. Thus a single hedgehog may make enormous inroads into the rabbit population of a given area during spring and summer. In Upper Wharfedale hedgehogs are particularly numerous, and times without number I have thrust my hand into a stop presumably containing young rabbits, to find a hedgehog occupying it. Indeed, it was the exception rather than otherwise for a rabbit nesting on a certain sandy hillside to bring off her brood successfully; usually she was victimised by the hedgehogs a day or two after her young were born, and on numerous occasions we have caught the murderer walking about with a litter of rabbit-down and other nesting materials entangled in his quills.

From the point of view of the farmer the hedgehog is of unquestionable service to man; but, unhappily, the activities of this creature are not limited to the destruction of mice, insects, and rabbits. On the game-reserve the hedgehog does little good, while it is capable of doing a great deal of harm.

So far as my own experience goes, I have never found striking evidence of the hedgehog's destructiveness to game-birds, but weightier opinions than mine amply warrant the condemnation. It is conceivable that a hedgehog, finding a pheasant's nest, would be attracted to it in just the same way as it is attracted to a rabbit's nest. The idea of devouring the clutch would not necessarily be the initial impulse; the hedgehog would first be attracted by the warmth and comfort suggested by the nest, and from this it is but a short step to the discovery of the waiting feast. And, having once feasted, the animal would undoubtedly profit by the experience, and thereafter search diligently for similar repasts.

Many naturalists are of the opinion that hedgehogs feed largely on the eggs of ground-breeding birds during the spring of the year, but this is evidently a case of individual acquirement. Where many ground-birds nest, the hedgehogs soon discover that nest-hunting is a

profitable business, but where such nests are comparatively rare the animals do not seem to learn their value.

Hedgehogs are supposed to kill snakes, but here again we have another example of the creature's tendency to try to eat anything it finds. The hedgehog does not begin with the idea of killing; it sets out merely with the idea of eating, and whether it happens to come across a worm, a snared rabbit, a snake, or a dead kitten, the result is the same. If the creature proves troublesome, the hedgehog advances its bayonets and quietly persists; and no matter what the encounter in which the animal finds itself involved, there is no ferocity or malice on the hedgehog's part. Its intention is to eat, and the creature that objects to being eaten must either defend itself adequately or get out of the way.

III.

It has been said that the hedgehog is a far more active creature than is generally supposed. One kept imprisoned in a garden was fond of climbing up the trellis-work that supported a dense creeper on the sunny side of the boundary-wall. Several times it was found there, seven or eight feet from the ground, and there in a bower of leaves it had its day-time nest. Unfortunately it died ere winter came, or in all probability it would have hibernated in the creeper.

Again, hedgehogs are prone to climb into honeysuckle or some other flowering creeper in pursuit of the bees that are attracted by the honey and the sweet perfume of the flowers.

The hedgehog's coat of spines is designed not only to protect the creature from bird and animal foes, but also as a safeguard against the effects of falls. A hedgehog has no fear of falling. A twelve-foot drop on to a bed of decaying leaves causes the animal no discomfort whatever, and may be undertaken as the ordinary course of travel. Just as a black bear, feeding in a tree, will loose its hold and drop fifteen or twenty feet, striking the earth as a closed-up ball and rebounding into safety ere its disturber has time to realise anything, so a hedgehog, finding in its route a twelve-foot drop into a quarry or over a boundary-wall, will unhesitatingly topple over, striking the earth like a ball, and remaining rolled up till it comes to rest, when it coolly uncurls and trots off in search of insects. Hedgehogs are, indeed, fond of rolling and tumbling, and their spines are so designed that even a heavy blow delivered on the business extremity does not cause them to penetrate at the roots.

I have, when rabbit-shooting, seen a hedgehog roll down from the top of the hedge-bank to the bottom—presumably as the quickest and easiest way of getting there; and doubtless, by

rolling, running, and dodging through the densest thickets, a hedgehog can cover a considerable amount of ground during its evening rambles.

The quills of the urchin are subject to the perfect control of the muscles of the skin. The skin can be moved forward so that the quills, pointing in a forward direction, protect the animal's face and head from assault while it is eating. In this way it is able calmly to devour the young of a desperate woodland mother, while the bereft parent merely brings injury upon herself by her attacks.

Apparently the hedgehog has no fixed moulting season; new quills are always growing and old ones being shed. As the animal gets old the quills become very stiff and strong, and turn grayish in colour. A young hedgehog is generally brown; an old one yellowish-gray, the quills being more distinctly barred than in youth.

Other than man and his dogs, the hedgehog's enemies are few. Among the birds of the air it has none, which appears to be amply proved by the fact that it seems quite incapable of looking up. Foxes destroy a few hedgehogs, but not many. During a hard winter a fox will scratch out a hibernating hedgehog and devour it, leaving only the skin; but such is the discomfort of the proceeding that Reynard leaves the urchin alone unless the stern alternatives be urchin or starvation. The pine-marten, though rare, is, with the polecat, the most deadly of the hedgehog's animal foes, and it is said that the polecat not only goes out of its way to destroy these creatures, but having destroyed them, eats bones and even quills without ill effects.

But the keeper with a club and with a *penchant* for killing every four-footed creature he sees, the gipsy boy, and the terrier are the hedgehog's only foes that count for anything.

IV.

By early autumn the hedgehog has become fat and lubberly, and as the weather turns colder, and the russet leaves come drifting to earth, the animal grows more and more torpid each day. Its quills are not very adequate for keeping out the wind; but its skin is strong and thick and not very sensitive to cold, and under the skin is the hedgehog's real overcoat—a thick layer of fat which resists the cold, and on which the animal subsists during its winter sleep.

I have repeatedly noticed a curious and interesting habit of this creature during the days of autumn. As soon as the wind becomes cold, the hedgehog begins to acquire an overcoat of leaves. It may be said that this is purely accidental, that it would be quite impossible for such a ball of prickles to move about when the woods are adrift with leaves without acquiring such an overcoat; but at all events, accidental or not on the hedgehog's part, it would appear to be one of

nature's provisions. As the cold weather comes, the hedgehog is to be seen running hither and thither in its coat of leaves, making as much noise as a team of foresters. Then, as the days pass and the weather becomes still colder, the hedgehog collects a second coating, and yet a third, each new covering ramming the previous one farther home, till the leaves are impaled to the very base of the quills. The work is done so thoroughly that it could not very well be due entirely to chance; and it needs to be borne in mind that such an overcoat resists not only the cold wind, but also the rain. Moreover, during the autumn, a hedgehog has been watched purposely rolling down a leaf-strewn bank, ascending, and rolling again, apparently with no other object than that of collecting leaves.

It would seem that the habit plays an important part in the history of the hedgehog's hibernation. It is the first step in the direction of denning-up. Equipped with an efficient, though artificial, overcoat, the animal very soon becomes sluggish in its habits. Its den is probably lined with leaves, and the covering of leaves on its body lessens the contrast in temperature when at intervals the animal quits its nest.

By late October the hedgehog is seldom seen abroad and is difficult to find. It remains nocturnal in its habits, but is abroad only for a short time during the night. The drowsiness of winter is taking a firmer and firmer hold; but if the earth be frost-bound, and the days bright and sunny, it may steal out for a little during the warmth of midday, though more probably it does not venture out at all.

Thereafter, till the middle of March, the life of the urchin is more or less of a closed book. Whether or not its sleep is generally unbroken throughout the long winter is difficult to say. If so, the hedgehog is rather an exception. Bats, mice, squirrels, &c., which are supposed to hibernate, take their hibernation less seriously than is generally thought. If the conditions are in any way favourable, they are up and abroad for a brief spell of activity; but certainly it would seem that the hedgehog is the most truly hibernating of all our mammals, and I am inclined to think that if a hedgehog is abroad during the winter, it was in such poor condition when it denned up that it finds itself unable to stand the long drainage on its strength. A healthy hedgehog, in perfect condition when it denned, probably does not emerge till the joyous spring calls it back to the world of activity.

v.

A rabbit-stop generally serves as the hedgehog's winter den. Into the den an immense quantity of leaves is dragged, not only forming the nest, but effectively excluding all draught by filling up the passage. On one occasion we unearthed a hibernating hedgehog. The mouth of

the small hole was so filled and made up with decaying leaves that one could never have told a hole existed there. Out of the passage we dragged at least a sackful of leaves, and when the hedgehog himself was removed he lay perfectly still, partly uncurling, making no effort at self-defence, and apparently still sleeping a deep, untroubled sleep.

A decayed tree-root may be used, and grass may function as bedding material instead of leaves. Even sheep's wool may be dragged into the nest—anything, in fact, that suggests the desirable warmth of covering. A hedgehog will hibernate in thick ivy, perhaps a few feet from the ground; and one took possession of some sacks in a corner of my motor-house, and there settled quite contentedly, though the house was in frequent use. Its habits, however, were so unclean that ultimately we were compelled to eject it. Curiously enough, it appeared in midwinter, so evidently it had been compelled to abandon its previous den.

No doubt the first call of spring finds the hedgehog community sadly reduced in numbers. Some have chosen their nesting-sites unwisely, and simply do not waken; while others, with the torpor of winter still upon them, have fallen victims to their foes.

Those that successfully sally forth with the spring, however, do so in a feeble and half-entranced condition. Nature's wakening, like nature's falling asleep, comes by degrees. The first journey forth is slow and short, for the creature is sorely handicapped by the softness of its paws. This is nature's safeguard against overloading of the stomach, the muscles of which have become weak by long inaction. A few mouthfuls of food gathered near the den, and the tenderness of its feet sends it back to cover, where its stomach has ample time to recover ere again it sallies forth—this time a little farther; and so on till its normal condition is regained.

The hedgehog does not lay up a winter store, as do mice and squirrels. Its store is on its back, and serves not only as sustenance during the foodless days of sleep, but also to exclude cold. The storage habit does not seem to exist in the case of this creature. There is no reason to think that it ever resorts to stowing food in its den or elsewhere; its method of going through life is to gorge to repletion, sleep, then gorge again. Its food is generally abundant; it will feast on carrion apart from the varieties of fresh food which are generally at hand; and, if astir during the lean nights of winter, it will visit village garbage-heaps, eat its fill, and den behind the open kitchen door if such shelter be undisputed. Normally it has little fear of man; in midwinter it has none; but, as previously stated, hedgehogs that are astir at this time are probably sick, or they denned up in poor condition.

VI.

Hedgehogs possess a fairly wide range of vocal powers. When searching for food, a hedgehog sniffs and grunts in a most fearless manner as it walks about, and if in distress, it utters a wailing sound not unlike the cry of a hare. It can sometimes be made to utter this sound, when rolled up, by turning it over and tickling its hind-feet with a twig. Also, when several are abroad together at night, they occasionally utter a bleating call of peculiar cadence; it appears to be done partly as a challenge and partly as an expostulation.

The best authorities state that gestation occupies seven weeks. The young number from four to eight, and the first litter may be born as early as the end of March. The first mating season, then, must be early in February, as soon as the creatures begin to move from their winter quarters. A second litter is produced between the middle of August and the middle of September.

According to Gilbert White, the young are born blind, and the quills, though present, are flexible and white. At the age of eight days or so the young begin to sally forth with their mother. They are then more or less at the mercy of their foes, for their quills are still so soft as to afford little protection. So far

as one can ascertain, they remain with their mother till full-grown; and even after that they probably do not wander far from the locality of their birth, as the whole family, now composed of adults, may be seen together throughout the season.

The weight does not appear to vary so much with the seasons as might be expected, though I have never had the opportunity of weighing one early in the spring. The male that denned up in my garage weighed only 1 lb. 5 oz. in midwinter. Another specimen, taken in midsummer, tipped the beam at 2 lb. 7 oz. This appeared rather a big hedgehog, and the average weight in midsummer is probably about 2 lb.

Considering the sedentary and sheltered life it leads, the hedgehog is not a long-living creature. One that had spent the major portion of its life in captivity seemed to be showing signs of old age in its fifth year; unfortunately its fondness for water ended its well-meaning, ill-doing career ere the hand of Time struck the inevitable hour. Five or six years would appear to be the hedgehog's allotted span. A hardy specimen may still be flourishing at seven, and may live to see eight. Unfortunately, hedgehogs kept in captivity usually contrive to come to an untimely end ere old age steps in, with the result that it is difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion.

A DAUGHTER OF THE DOPPERS.

CHAPTER VI.

THE fortnight that succeeded saw Bray busily engaged in testing the ground taken from the well at the Klip Kopje, which ground he pronounced promising. Accompanied by two 'boys,' he went farther afield, pitting the veld here and there with prospecting-holes, until he was startled once more by the droning hum of a Bushman arrow. This occurred near the drift of the Rhenoster River, but a prolonged search by all the farm-people failed to locate Plaatjes and his men. Bray was not wanting in courage; but a sudden, or at best a lingering, death by means of a poisoned arrow—he knew that a mere scratch would be fatal—was not a part of his Koodooskop programme. So in future he went warily.

He was now completely the master of Steenie's affections. He influenced every thought, impulse, and wish of hers, and he used his power with the unscrupulousness of a bird of prey.

Through her undying belief in him, he exploited Oom Jan to an extent others had long believed to be impossible—in despite of the frequent tears and remonstrances of the old wife. An expensive washing-machine and gear were ordered, and other costly arrangements were entered into for the purpose of testing the

ground. A fence enclosing the Klip Kopje was erected as a barrier against intruders, and negotiations with a Kimberley syndicate for flotation of the mine were initiated. Under all these inflictions Oom Jan bore himself as meekly as one of his own merino lambs, because Steenie had pleaded and Steenie had won.

Gert, her brother, who was now clerk to the Civil Commissioner of Vaalbos, was on the most intimate terms with Bray, for he could not but realise that the discovery of a diamond-mine on the farm would be to his material benefit. He therefore backed Bray in all the latter's undertakings, and went the length of lending the prospector sums of money for the ostensible purpose of procuring means necessary to the successful issue of the venture. He could ill afford it, as his salary was small and his father parsimonious to a degree, but his belief in the brilliant impostor was at least equal to Steenie's, while actuated by a different motive.

Dr Bray's visits to Koodooskop had ceased, because he had realised that the romance of his life had ended. There had not been any formal exchange of words or letters on the subject. The fact of Steenie's defection was too plain, the entire surrender of her love to his

brother too evident to need explanation. He was crushed by his loss, for his affection had the depth which is reached only in such cases as his, middle-aged and serious-minded as he was. But while his resentment of his brother's treachery was of the deepest, he yet had excuses for Steenie. He was too old for her, he told himself, and such as he could not satisfy a nature at once deep and romantic. It was impossible for her to weave a romance around his homely exterior and unresponsive manner.

His brilliant brother—outwardly, at least—satisfied her glowing imagination, which, in its turn, blinded her to the meanness and treachery of that brother's conduct. And so it was. Steenie, pure-minded and upright, incapable of wounding the feelings of a Hottentot brat, had yet wrecked the happiness of a good man, because her love so warped her judgment that she was unable to discriminate between a paste substitute and a pure stone.

'My old friend, Flinty Beck, will arrive from Kimberley with the plant next Thursday morning,' Walter Bray announced at breakfast one morning. 'You might ask your father whether he will allow the wagon to go to the station on that day.'

'What is Flinty Beck?' inquired the girl.

'An old digger from Klipdam,' replied Bray; 'a man, moreover, who fully understands diamond-mining. He will assist in putting up and working the plant. Son of a parson, fallen a little on evil days perhaps, but straight as an assegai. I was lucky to get him, as he is in great demand for jobs of this sort.'

They rode out to meet Flinty Beck, and found the wagon outspanned at the Rhenoster River drift. Steenie's first impression of this 'son of a parson' was anything but favourable to that individual, who, as they rode up, was sitting on the *disselboom* (shaft) smoking a long, dirty Kaffir-pipe. Disgust of the man was strong within her. She suppressed the feeling because there was a suggestion of disloyalty to her lover in it, but she left Walter to do the talking. The leering, loose-skinned man was too repulsive to be near to, so she dismounted and perched herself on the round-backed tortoise-stone near the water, awaiting the last trek of the wagon for home.

No man who looked at Flinty could do so without a strong feeling of aversion. One of his eyes squinted inwards, while what remained of the other protruded through the half-closed lids like a shrivelled grape. With every puff of smoke he exhaled, with every word he uttered, the Adam's-apple moved up and down beneath the loose folds of the skin of his scraggy throat like some live thing trying to break through.

There was something incongruous in the relations which so evidently existed between the two men, and Steenie was perplexed, because she judged Flinty's mental qualities by his

exterior, and to her mind, therefore, he was as imperfect in both respects as her lover was perfect.

'No ripples on our pond, I suppose?' she heard Flinty inquire.

'None at all,' responded Bray, with a glance at her; 'smooth as a pane of glass.'

Presently they spanned in and proceeded towards the farm, Flinty recumbent on the wagon, while Bray and Steenie rode in rear. They stopped at the Klip Kopje.

'What does that awful man mean by ripples on your pond?' she asked Bray.

'Oh, nothing, darling. It's a way these diggers have of expressing themselves. Evidently, my Steenie, you are not too favourably impressed with Flinty.'

'One must know him better, I suppose,' she replied. 'I will love him before I have done with him,' she continued lightly, 'for your dear sake.'

Walter Bray looked at her, and was surprised to feel the faint throb of a long-dormant conscience. He dismounted before replying, and then said, 'A heart of gold, darling; a heart of gold inside that rough casing—that's old Flinty. Now you had better ride off home. We are going to unload the wagon.' He smiled and kissed her gloved hand with studied grace, and waved to her as she rode off.

Meanwhile the oxen had been outspanned, and were grazing on the scanty herbage in the charge of the leader, so that Bray and Flinty had the ground to themselves. The latter proceeded to examine the indications, carefully scrutinising the yellow ground at the mouth of the shaft, and the gravel from the *sluit* near by. He whistled.

'What is it?' said Bray.

'No diamonds in this ground—not a carat, nor the fraction of a carat,' returned the other. 'I have seen this sort of false indication before, and therefore, friend Wally, I provided for eventualities. I brought down four sacks of gravel from Kimberley. They are in the wagon.'

'You're not handsome, Flinty, as I have more than once told you, but you have got something better than mere beauty—a damn good head on top of your scraggy neck. You have, by gad!'

'Well, Wally, old friend, when a fellow has been, as the poet puts it, everything by turns and nothing long, it spoils the outward man, but improves the inward wonderfully, Wally—wonderfully. It's the reverse with you; you have been consistently one thing all your life—a damned rogue, and so your body has not suffered much, but your brain has, and'—

'Never mind all that, Flinty,' interrupted Bray. 'What stuff have you brought?'

'About thirty carats of Kimberley stones from one-half to two carats in weight each.

Enough to salt a bigger thing than this, so that we'll have no ripples on our pond, Wally—not one. Come along, give us a hand.'

They unloaded the wagon, and in doing so deposited the parts belonging to the washing-machine on a level piece of ground midway between the shaft and the little *fonteintje* from which the reluctant water oozed; but the sacks of Kimberley gravel were carefully concealed among the bushes at the base of the kopje.

Flinty's reception by Oom Jan and Ta'antje was anything but cordial; but Flinty was clever, insidious in manner, and unscrupulous; and Flinty spoke Dutch. Long before bed-time he had overcome their hostile attitude, and had reconciled the old man to the project of diamond-mining and its promises of additional wealth. He painted the prospects in shining colours, and prophesied boldly, if mendaciously, unqualified success for the venture.

Before sun-up the next morning the two men were at work. They hauled the bags from where they had concealed them, and thoroughly mixed the contents with the mass of yellow ground near the shaft, and, after tumbling a goodly portion into the hole, proceeded to erect the washing-gear. This work took several days, and so well had Flinty's glib tongue performed its duty that Oom Jan put the seal of his approval on their operations, and appeared daily for several hours to assist and advise. A trench was dug leading from the *fonteintje* to the wash-pan, so that sufficient water was obtained for their needs.

The morning appointed for the trial washing broke clear and bright. The sun, flooding the expanse with brilliant light, drew out the subtle odour of the veld—sweet and exhilarating—so that all but the two schemers felt its influence, and thanked God for the joy of living. The whole farm had turned out to witness the operation. A washing-machine was a novelty, and the revolving rakes appeared a wonderful contrivance; so they stood open-mouthed, wondering at the cleverness of the *rooi-neks*. The 'boys' sweated at the windlass, the machine clanked and groaned, the water gurgled and splashed, and Flinty, ever on the move, paused here and paused there like a bee, passing from the windlass to the pan, and then back again, never idle, now and then winking his damaged eye at Bray with evident satisfaction. With infinite slyness he dropped something into the pan, and commanded the 'boys' to stop the windlass. The water was turned off, the gravel collected, and then all was ready for the next process.

Steenie had seated herself at the sorting-table, and looked in the action so fair and sweet that the lesser blackguard—Flinty, to wit—was for the moment flooded with thoughts of a lost home and of a sorrowing, indulgent wife. It was but for a moment, however, for his activity

once more asserted itself, and he piled the clean gravel on the table with the dexterity of an expert. She proceeded to sort the stuff with a little three-cornered piece of tin, laughingly and awkwardly glancing at Bray now and again with a swift sweep of her beautiful eyes, mutely asking for approval, and receiving it in the shape of encouraging nods; until, with a little cry of pleasure, she held a white atom in her hand for Flinty's inspection.

'Only a piece of crystal,' he said encouragingly, 'but a good sign; you're on the track of that diamond, sure enough.'

She continued her task, and presently, after consulting the man, she held a fragment aloft between her fingers and thumb, crying excitedly, 'I have found a diamond, a beautiful white stone!'

The nondescript crowd cheered so lustily that a *klompje* of springbok grazing near the kopje, startled by the unwonted sound, sprang simultaneously away, and jumped the sandy road with gigantic leaps, fleeing in dismay towards the distant rise.

Congratulations were showered on the girl, but her eyes were for one man only, and when he approached and took her hand, her complete happiness was so apparent that Flinty, observing it, once again experienced the faint, elusive feeling as of home-longing that had previously surprised him.

He relieved Steenie at the sorting-table, and found several stones, so that at the end of the process a little collection of diamonds of different sizes glinted in the rough and dirty palm of his hand. He went round exposing the spoil for the inspection of the gathering, whose delight culminated in cheers by the whites and an uproarious *jula-pijp* by the Hottentots, who speedily danced themselves into malodorous perspiration and exhaustion. Oom Jan himself was affected by the general rejoicing. He threw off the gravity of deportment which usually characterised his movements, and shouted with the rest most lustily, to the evident amazement of his Hottentot dependents, who whispered to each other, 'The old *baas* is bedondered. The stones have bewitched him.'

That night, after supper, Oom Jan, whose buoyancy of spirits had not left him, sat with Flinty on the *stoep*. After smoking for some time in silence, the latter said quietly, 'You're the richest man in the district now, Mr Kloppe. You can get sixty thousand pounds for the farm.'

'And sell it I will,' replied the farmer. 'I cannot stop here to see the place overrun with rascals and money-grubbers. I shall sell, and then buy Uitkomst, Piet van Zyl's farm of sixteen thousand *morgen*.'

'But, excuse me, Mr Kloppe,' interrupted Flinty, 'where do we come in?'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean Bray and myself; we discovered the mine for you, and all the arrangements were made by us. We must have our share, you know. It is but fair that we should. Besides, the difficulties are only just starting. You will be cheated if we do not assist you.'

Oom Jan smoked in silence for a moment. He realised that Steenie and Gert would both support Bray, so he judged it best to settle the matter without further trouble. 'How much do you expect to get from me?' he asked at last.

'Well,' replied Flinty slowly, 'do you think one-half would be too much?'

'One-half!' exclaimed the old man. 'One-half! You must be mad. One would think that you owned half the farm. No, that is not possible.'

'Say twenty thousand pounds, then, providing you sell for sixty thousand pounds,' urged Flinty. 'Only one-third of the price. You are rich, and will be richer still. Remember that you can get Van Zyl's place for six thousand.'

'Well, let it be so, in God's name,' sighed Oom Jan, rising. 'I will now go to bed.'

Flinty was unusually grave when Bray joined him on the *stoep*. 'Well?' said the new-comer interrogatively.

'It's settled, Wally,' replied Flinty slowly. 'Twenty thousand pounds for us. No ripples on that pond, but'—

'But what?' inquired the other.

'This, Wally. What is the old man going to do when the cloud bursts? You are going off with the girl, and I shall make for the Old Country. Think of the racket when the shareholders of the Koodooskop Diamond-Mining Company (that is to be) discover the real state of affairs. The old people have been good to us, Bray; we have lived on the fat'—

'Stop, man; stop!' Bray broke in. 'You amaze me, Flinty, developing a conscience at your time of life! Be easy; the old people will not stay here a day after I am married. I'll cart the whole biling lot to the coast, and farther, if necessary. Besides, how many mines, think you, have busted in the same way? Genuine ones, too. A few diamonds near the surface, and nothing below. Don't worry, Flinty; look after yourself. I'll take care of the rest.'

'But in any case there will be trouble of some sort, Wally. I see it quite clearly. The old man'—

'Oh, dry up, Flinty,' interrupted the other. 'Your mental and physical visions are about on a par. Besides, here comes the girl.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE diamonds were registered at the Civil Commissioner's office in proper form. Advices were subsequently received that the

Government had decided to send an inspector of mines for the purpose of examination and report as to the advisability of declaring the mine a public diggings. This took some time; but meanwhile the news had spread, and the fortune-seekers began to swarm to Vaalbos. Singly, in twos and threes, and then in large parties they arrived, like *aasvogels* (vultures) gathering for the feast. Sam Zastron was turning them away in scores from his hotel. Every householder became a boarding-house keeper, and when no more could be accommodated, the late-comers had to content themselves with wagons, and tents, and cheerless bivouacs under the thorn-trees lining the banks of the dry river.

Flinty did all the work, while Bray contented himself with riding about the farm in Steenie's company. The first-named interviewed innumerable people, until at last he was able to announce that a strong syndicate had been formed for the purpose of buying up all Oom Jan's rights, inclusive of the farm property, for sixty thousand pounds, to be paid immediately the mine was declared.

The day after this deal was concluded Bray and Flinty rode into Vaalbos. The former had to take out his licence; and when the pair arrived at the village, they found themselves unable to break through the thousands who were crowding round the Civil Commissioner's office. When it was understood that the original prospector wished to enter the building, way was made for the great man, because the veriest tyro at the game knew that he could not sign the list and so obtain a claim until Bray had secured his licence.

A man was talking to the Civil Commissioner as they entered the office. He turned to look at them.

'Braine, Wally, by all that's holy!' whispered Flinty.

'How are you, Mr Braine?' said Bray, advancing cordially with outstretched hand.

The man took Bray's hand with evident reluctance. 'I am well,' he said quietly. 'And the great Flinty too!' he continued.

'Yes, it's old Flinty, Mr Braine,' returned that individual. 'Once more on the war-path.'

'I hope it's a straighter one than the last,' said Braine. 'The "Vanity Prospect" was not a creditable affair, and Klipdam is not a place I should recommend you to return to at present.'

'Well, sir, what can one say?' spoke Flinty coolly. 'Prospects are the same all over the world. We think they are good, but somehow or other they never come up to our expectations. I have seen all sorts. When I was younger I prospected to be several things—a doctor, a lawyer, engineer, and what not; but I was disappointed. Mining prospects are the same. The bad are never good, the good sometimes

bad, and the moderate both, and sometimes indifferent.'

'Quite the old style, Flinty—the old style,' said Braine. 'Let me hope, however, that this particular one is in advance of the "Vanity Prospect."'

Mr Braine, the Government inspector, was a careful, prying little man of great experience. He knew every rogue on the fields, and his knowledge of diamonds was unique and complete. The demon of doubt possessed him when he saw that Bray and Flinty were the moving spirits in the affair. It may be said that his experience of their methods in the past amply justified his attitude. His immobile face, however, hung out no signals to the watching men.

'Let me see the stones, please.'

Flinty produced them. Braine made a careful examination, employing in his task a powerful magnifier. 'So! so!' he muttered. Flinty

and Bray were visibly uneasy, and they both watched Braine with anxious and perturbed countenances—in Bray's case sadly out of keeping with his assumed air of jauntiness.

'Fair stuff!' was all the comment that Braine made when he handed the stones back.

In the meantime the motley crowd of Gentiles, Jews, and heathens outside was having an uncomfortable time, and signified its impatience in various ways. Huge Klipdamers, belted and slouch-hatted, battled (with the tactics born of numberless similar experiences) for places in the front rank, bonneting well-dressed Jewish diamond-buyers and prosperous-looking storekeepers in the process. Little men, crushed almost out of shape, were shrieking expostulations to deaf ears; while a horde of natives on the outskirts of the crowd droned their deep-throated notes to the accompaniment of clashing sticks and stamping feet.

(Continued on page 549.)

OUT OF THE BOLSHEVIKS' CLUTCHES.

PART II.

v.

NEXT morning I started for Belo-Ostrov for the third time, and this time very nervous indeed. Four days had now gone by since I first set out, and a further warning had come that the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution would soon receive a denunciation against me for harbouring agents in a British plot. At any moment their emissaries might be set on my track. I looked anxiously at the station and in the train for signs of spies, but the train leaving at 1.15 arrived without incident at the frontier by three o'clock. On the platform I noticed the stationmaster, evidently waiting for something. A soldier who had been in the train went up to him, and put a packet into his hand with the words, 'From the Gorohovaya.' The stationmaster turned with a very serious face, and went into his office. Now, No. 2 Gorohovaya Street (in English, Pea Street), come to be known familiarly as the Gorohovaya, is the side-entrance of the former Prefecture of Petrograd, and the headquarters of the said Commission, which is the most dreaded body in all Sovdepiä. It looked unpleasantly likely that the packet contained something about me.

All I could do was to hasten my business as much as possible. This, however, was no easy matter. My luggage had been left in the charge of the stationmaster, a willing and intelligent man, as are almost all railwaymen in Russia. For will it be credited that at Belo-Ostrov, whence travellers are sent back over and over again, first on one excuse, then on another, no cloak-room provision at all is made for their luggage!

(For instance, a Swiss in my train was turned back because half of his thousand roubles was in so-called 'Duma money'—that is, the notes of larger values printed by authority of the Duma after the revolution, instead of in 'Kerenkies.') In consequence of this, luggage frequently vanishes altogether. On inspection, mine now proved to be intact.

Three friends had accompanied me to Belo-Ostrov—the lady with whom I had been staying, my cousin, and a bright lad, an ex-Boy-Scout, who had worked for me as assistant stage-manager. By our joint exertions we persuaded some porters, at the much-reduced charge of two hundred roubles (they wanted four hundred), to transfer the luggage from the shed. It had been locked in the former Customs House, where it would be searched by the 'comrades,' who had not even deigned to take notice of the injunctions and reprimands received from Petrograd. What master these Ariels owned I never discovered. That they had an intimate connection with the Gorohovaya was certain; they acknowledged some shadowy authority of the Industry and Commerce section, and some of the Military section of the Petrograd Soviet; but for the most part they seemed to lead a delightfully independent existence—an example, perhaps, of the principle of 'self-determination,' or simply of what had come to be called in Russia 'power on the spot.' Of one thing I am sure, that there was a liberal sprinkling of old régime secret police among them. Most of them were in sailors' clothes, and under the lead of two assistant-commissars, one a sailor, the other a Pole, they proceeded to tackle my trunks.

The proceedings lasted three and a half hours. I have travelled all over the continent of Europe and to the borders of the Chinese Empire; I have seen hundreds of Customs searches; I have been present at perquisitions under the old régime and after the revolution; but never have I seen anything approaching the way in which my luggage was handled. Everything down to the last stitch was taken out of the boxes, pawed over, and finally hurled back in a crumpled heap. Key-labels were torn off, and keys were lost. Delicate dresses were treated like pieces of sacking. Several locks were broken. In the hurly-burly it was impossible for me to follow what was being done, and my friends had been refused admittance into the place. Under pretence that he knew better than I where everything ought to go, I got leave for my stage-manager to come in; but even so, it was impossible to keep an eye on everything. Many articles surely found their way into pockets made capacious by experience. Once when I saw this openly occur, and protested, as though by way of jest, against 'requisitions,' I was answered, 'That's not requisition. When we get to requisitioning things, we'll let you know.' Yet among them were some who evidently sympathised with me, and unostentatiously tried to make the ordeal as light as possible.

My young helper proved highly useful here, chattering to the comrades, distracting their attention, and managing to put back objects that had been neatly left out as though by accident. In the end his activity aroused the suspicions of the Pole, who told him roughly to be silent, or he would be put out. How many things were taken from me I have even now no idea. Officially the gang confiscated six pounds of sugar and four of tea (the last of my household stock in Petrograd) which I had taken, knowing both to be scarce in Finland, several pieces of soap, two travelling electric heaters for water, a large silver-gilt jug, several silver spoons and two chased silver-gilt mugs, a silver sugar-basin and tray that used to figure in the production of *The Admirable Crichton*, silver presentation wreaths, all very massive and of fine work, a writing-case with silver fittings, and a number of diaries, letters, and other papers in English and Russian, that were, of course, of no political significance at all. And first of all the letters seized was one that the Commissar of Foreign Affairs had wanted me to send to his brother in America, containing purely family news. I should like this to meet G.'s eye, so that he may have it out with the comrades.

To my inexpressible relief the list of jewels was passed, with only some murmurs, and a necklace, not in the list, was undiscovered in its hiding-place of opaque vaseline. The worst was over, I thought. But suddenly, 'What's this?' and from a pile of linen were produced two

bottles of champagne. The unexpected treasure-trove of Doyen et Cie, *cuvée réservée*, set the eyes of the comrades aglow. This, if anything, was their spoil. With a show of civic indignation, they asked how I came to have the forbidden fruit. I answered, which was the truth, that a friend had pressed it upon me as a kind of stirrup-cup, but I had felt too disturbed before my journey to think of feasting; selling wine was prohibited, they knew well, and I could not give away a gift, so there was no choice but to pack it in one of the trunks, was there? 'Let us drink it now!' So we broached one of the bottles and made nine or ten glasses out of it. But before the turn of the other could come there was a diversion of anything but a pleasant kind.

VI.

At the bottom of a big basket of costumes the Pole, not to be deterred from duty by any softening temptation of the grape, had found a small, hard satin cushion. 'What's in this?' he asked. 'It's too heavy.' And without more ado he ripped it up. My heart went into my boots. 'There?' I tried to answer casually. 'Some theatrical prop, I think.' In went his hand into the flock and extracted—an excellent Browning pistol with a number of ball cartridges. When in July house-to-house search was made in Moscow for weapons, it had been entrusted to me by a colonel of artillery who had battered down the defences of Erzerum; he had an affection for his pistol as for an old friend, and begged me to take it, if I could, to England, and return it in quieter times. It had been sewn into the cushion, and had lain there ever since. I had almost forgotten its existence. And now——

A dark crowd collected. Angry voices were raised. 'Theatrical prop, indeed! That's a fine thing for a theatre, comrades! The sort of prop that'll be very interesting at the Gorohovaya, eh, comrades?' I dared not tell the truth, and knew not what to invent. Boy Scout to the rescue again! 'What nonsense! Of course it's a prop! It's used in the play *La Marseillaise*, where the Polish girl gets the Prussian officer's pistol, and makes him let the other fellow off. We had a revolver stolen in Ekaterinoslav, and after that we always sewed it up in the cushion after each performance.'

The explanation was accepted, and the brutal repacking proceeded. All was now done, and I agreed with the porters to pay—it hardly seems credible—the sum of fifteen hundred roubles to convey my boxes from the Customs to the actual barrier, where it would pass into the hands of the Finns. Fifteen hundred roubles for wheeling three trucks about fifty yards! Sheer robbery, of course! But the traveller can only submit. And the relief of getting through the search was such that one would have been willing to

pay any sum to escape. We looked round for the other bottle of champagne, but it had vanished; the comrades were determined to keep all of this bottle for themselves. No matter. *En route!*

But dare we say *en route*? Are we through indeed? 'Stop!' It is the voice of the Pole again, a voice with the rancorous note of narrow malice, eager beyond the rest to hurt a Russian woman. 'Here's a basket that's not been sealed. Not been examined at all, I declare.' His joy was obvious. The loading is stopped, and a tremendous hunt begun among the keys, which have all been put back into their box. The right key cannot be found. 'Break the lock,' I say in desperation. What else is there to do? Soon the barrier will be shut for the night, and if I am not the other side of it there will be another day of trial and trouble and ever more pressing danger. It is unbearable. 'Break the lock!' But just as this was about to be done the key was found. The box, which was full of eighteenth-century costumes, lay open. Now, whether it was an evil genius that inspired him, or merely long experience in the arts of the despoiler, I know not, but without hesitation the Pole thrust his arm down to the bottom, and thence from its resting-place under piles of silk flounces and satin coats exhumed the sister-cushion to that he had lit upon before. 'What's here?' he shouted. Useless to pretend or temporise! 'Another,' I answered, and on the word the remnants of the cushion, cut from end to end, revealed a solid Colt-automatic with its holster and proper complement of cartridges. It was the property of an English friend who had given it to me for safe-keeping when the Red Guards were searching for him.

This time all was over, I thought. My luggage would surely be confiscated and myself arrested! The gates of the Gorohovaya already yawned, in my imagination, to receive me. But, strangely enough, the discovery of the second pistol passed almost without notice. It was not until afterwards that the small chain of circumstances that had saved me became apparent to my mind. If the luggage had been arrested—and I with it—the porters would have had to repay the fifteen hundred roubles they had received, and as they were, of course, 'in' with the comrades, the latter would have suffered too. Then there would have had to be a protocol, which is Russian for a *procès-verbal*, and there would have been questions about the silver, which was worth at least nine thousand roubles. And, perhaps yet more important, the pistols would have had to be accounted for and handed over to authority; whereas if no trouble were made they would remain as the perquisites of my friends at the frontier, and two first-class automatic pistols are a gift of Providence not to be sneezed at when there is no chance of getting them from abroad, and no Russian factory that

can make them. So it fell out that the basket was repacked in silence, and the trucks of luggage were quietly wheeled off, and on to the bridge across the river Sestra, the boundary between Russia and Finland.

My friends accompanied me to the very barrier, on the other side of which were clean soldiers in neat uniforms, and a well-lit little station that seemed to promise cake and sandwiches; for, though I hardly knew it, I had had nothing to eat since breakfast. And now I had passed the barrier. I was free! It was only afterwards that I learned how narrow had been my escape. Nearly, indeed, had my fears been realised. The very next day the denunciation of which I had had warning materialised, and agents of the Gorohovaya were sent to arrest me at my flat in Petrograd. When they found I was not there, one may be sure their first step was to telephone to Belo-Ostrov to have the cage shut upon me. But they were one day too late.

As I said good-bye to my friends, my heart swelled till I seemed to choke. When should I see them again, when feel again the soil of Russia under my feet? I was going away to safety and freedom, but they must return to Heaven alone knew what fate.

'*Lasciate ogni speranza,*' all ye who remain here! That is the motto over the gate of Russia. What awaits those within it? Hunger, cold, insult, disease, discomfort, misery, grinding want, ceaseless fear; perhaps arrest, unjust imprisonment, sudden death. And no hope? Yes, there is one. One on which all educated Russia, that dying band of brothers and sisters, has fed for many a month of sickening delay. It is the hope that the Allies, for faithfulness to whose cause they have been tortured and decimated by the Germans and their agents the Bolsheviks, will at length awake and save them. But, oh, when will that day of awakening dawn?

WHEN LOVE CAME.

DID he come to me in a kingly guise,
With trappings of silver and gold?
Or came he with clatter of sabre and steel,
As a warrior brave and bold?

Did he lure me with strange, sweet melody,
In the wee, small hours of the morn?
Or came he in grief, lest my heart should refuse
A suitor so sadly forlorn?

No;—his dear strong hand took hold of my own,
His tender eyes looked into mine,
And my heart's dearest love to my love went out,
In the answer, 'Love, I am thine.'

And the touch of his hand still thrills my heart,
As it did in that bygone day,
For the love that we plighted long years ago
Is the love that will last for aye.

MARY HODKINSON.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

IT appears to be accepted as a judgment of history that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton. However that may be, in the latter days of 1914, when persons and things were brought up for new valuations, this statement was repeatedly made and emphasised, since sport appeared then to be on its defence—for the time and the effort that had been devoted to it—and to be making a plea for permission to continue. Nobody of sense and reason can doubt that sports of various kinds, more particularly games of athletic character, have served immensely for the brain, the body, the spirit, and the character of the British people, even if it is a point as to whether they have done quite so much as has been claimed, having regard to the revelations, during the recruiting periods of the war, of physical incapacity on the part of such a large section of the manhood of the nation, leading to its being declared that we are a 'C 3' people. Propaganda in its favour led to sport in various forms being permitted or tolerated during the war, even when the strain upon the country was at its greatest. But it is to be noted that, while simple games of high athletic and physical cultural value—those of a kind enormously beneficial to overstrained men and women, such as cricket, tennis, and golf—were not encouraged, even though permitted, and were often sternly discountenanced (so that those who participated in them did so in partial secrecy), full permission and really handsome encouragement were given to other 'sports,' as they were called, whose moral and physical values were not so evident.

* * *

There were three in particular of these 'sports' that were thus made exceptions to the war-rule. One of them was professional football, resulting in hundreds of thousands of people paying to stand to watch the contests between paid performers on Saturday afternoons; another was horse-racing; the third was prize-fighting, or—as those who are addicted thereto describe these fighting affairs—boxing 'contests.' In cricket, tennis, and golf no competitions of any consequence were conducted during the war

period; the communities associated with these games were in the main honestly and deeply patriotic, and sighed not over the sacrifice. In professional football there was some slight modification of matches necessitated by difficulties in travelling; horse-racing meetings, although reduced in number, were held throughout the war; and prize-fighting rose to heights of public patronage and financial encouragement it had never known before. Never was money so freely lavished on any so-called sport as on this bruising business during those five hard years of our national life. For the footballers it was said that the watching of them was the only, or the main, recreation of toiling millions who were exerting themselves to the utmost in war-work, direct or indirect. The proposition might be disputed; but let it pass at that. For the horse-racing it was put forward that such meetings were necessary to preserve the breed of horses, which otherwise would become inferior or even extinct, and that thus the mighty British Empire would be placed in danger. There must, therefore, be races at Newmarket—and not so much races as betting on them—and special trains to the scenes of these affairs when public travelling facilities were reduced to the lowest limits. A considerable arrogance was displayed by the patrons of this sport, and in the last year of the war the greatest newspapers of the land found it necessary to condemn the proposals of the high authorities of racing—persons of exalted titular distinction among them—for want of national understanding and even want of patriotism in that at the tensest crisis they would continue with their races. The authorities, amidst a howl of condemnation, had to withdraw from their position. For the prize-fighters it was said that theirs was the manliest of all sports, that it showed the Briton at his best, that it promoted all that was good in man, made him a noble and splendid creature, and was the very thing to help a country to win a war. During the five years, argument with persons associated with businesses that were thus encouraged was not practicable; the assessor of true values, the seeker of truth, the sincere promoter of good, was always cried down. Wondering upon the strange effects of war, such silent philosophers and critics per-

ceived points of difficulty in the propositions presented to them, in that, for example, ten thousand paid and watched and betted, while only two fought in a ring, and that these two only fought because they were paid for their day's or night's work at, sometimes, ten thousand times the rate that was paid to the soldiers in the field, who risked (and in so many cases lost) life or limb at their patriotic labour. Those gentle meditators and philosophers took note of many circumstances, such as that these prize-fighters were sheltered, so far as was possible, by the authorities from the risks of battle; and they felt that if the time should come when it would be suggested, perhaps, that the war on the Western front was won in the prize-rings of Holborn, Blackfriars, and Covent Garden, the sentiment should not be permitted to pass without opposition into the newer history.

* * *

We come this summer to the entry upon a new era in sport of every kind. In the midst of war it was prophesied by persons who looked perhaps too sadly upon possibilities, that after the bloody strife was ended there would be less time and money devoted to sport, that professionalism in every phase would be diminished, that people would play more than they would watch, that a certain asceticism would arise, and a Spartan simplicity and purity would enter into our games, but that in general we should work more and play less—as incidentally it was noted that the Germans had done. Those of the future were to be stern and terrible days. In many other matters than this of sport, however, and more important matters, too (one has heard mention of a League of Nations, and pious resolutions to have done with war and armies after a sad exhibition of human weakness during five years of bloodshed and mutilation and general destruction), it has been proved again that 'the devil sick' and 'the devil well' are two very different persons of highly contrasted mentalities. Led by the gambling fever, the madness of extravagance, the jazz-dancing, and the decline in political honesty and public morals, a general increase in the patronage of sport has broken out; the number of persons devoted to sport, the money lavished upon it, and, above all—for this is the root of the evil, if there is an evil in the business—the publicity given to it, were never so great as now. In every department sport enjoys this summer a super-boom. Something of this situation may properly be attributed to a natural and healthy reaction after the circumstances and deprivations of the war years. But it goes much further than that. It has become a grand obsession, a business to which more attention is given in the newspapers than to the most serious affairs of life, and especially it has become a grand commercial enterprise. How far any of this stuff is sport, and what it will have to do with the

winning of any future war, may be left to the individual determination of each critic of the times. But whatever that judgment may be, there is clearly a wide difference between this post-war sport in which people are indulging with so much enthusiasm, coaxed by commercial promoters and encouraged by newspapers, and the kind of thing that of old we associated with the 'playing-fields of Eton' and what we had in mind when we used to say that such a thing or some other was 'not cricket.' For, all too often, the contests we know to-day are not things for noble sentiments, high ideals, or fine standards of conduct. They are largely matters of vanity, publicity, money, commercialism, and often, to no small extent, of knavery.

* * *

Pure sport is simple effort with an aim and an ideal. Those who practise it, and who are the only true sportsmen, are those who play a game or follow some other sporting pursuit for its own sake, for the enjoyment and (non-pecuniary) benefit that they derive from it, and for no other reason. It follows that to maintain the strictest purity there should be no publicity, no money transactions, no professionalism. Such an absolute ideal may be difficult or impossible to achieve, but at least there might be some approximation to it, as indeed there was until a generation back, when sport flourished well, instead of, as now, when such ideals are openly neglected and even despised. The vulgar decadence of sport in these present times is due to a combination of causes. The first of them, in chronological order, is the strangulation by professionalism, which, from the ethical point of view, has ruined every sport to which it has fastened itself, exceeding the strict limitations that might be prescribed by those who understand the true meaning of sport. Really, sport and professionalism are contradictions in terms. There cannot be professionalism in any absolute sport—at least, no professionalism that goes beyond the simple necessities of instruction and assistance. The moment the professional becomes a greater, more important figure in any sport than the amateur, that sport is ended, and a simple business is established in its stead. Instead of a means of relaxation, a system for the mental, moral, and physical improvement of a community, which is an assistance and not a hindrance to the important affairs of life, there is a business to which various persons for the sake of gain are wholly and entirely devoted, which is obviously bad for the community, both economically and morally; and, on the other hand, there is a new community of idle, inert watchers established, persons who stiffen physically and become stultified mentally by concentration upon professionally performed physical feats that, from the point of view of human welfare, the betterment of the com-

munity, mentally, morally, or physically, are not of the slightest importance. Experience has proved that this watching of professional performers breeds many complaints that are opposed to the welfare of the nation.

* * *

Next among the causes of the decadence of sport come commercialism and publicity, which go hand-in-hand. Immediately upon anything gaining publicity it receives an enhanced commercial value, and it is the custom of the times to exploit that commercial value without delay by a repeating process of more publicity. The mistake is that the publicity, in the first place, is not sincere, in that it is exaggerated and exploited in a semi-sensational manner for the sake of private gain. One may freely subscribe to the declaration that in many respects the British press is the finest in the world, without suppressing the fact that there is none that perpetrates more gross and vulgar absurdities in the extensive space given to pseudo-sporting news and in its manner of treating such news. We find that even in sober journals, and in such as have the largest circulations, the prize-fighters, their doings, their thoughts, their words, even the details of their private lives, are treated more fully and more intimately than those of other personages. Artists, writers, great men of science, others of splendid achievement, may be ignored, but the people must be told what the prize-fighter eats and what are his predilections in poetry. Thus this business of bruising and blood-letting is exalted in a false and ridiculous atmosphere, and commercialism leaps to the advantage. One has found even 'the gravest journals commenting in a manner of approval and satisfaction upon the fact that 'ladies' have been seen at the ringside on these occasions, and even, at the time of a recent fight, that a large proportion of the on-lookers were 'ladies.' Those who rejoice that their mothers were not of the womanly stuff that yearned to see these fights might, if necessary, dissuade their sisters and their daughters from patronising the 'ring.' We find in the case of this 'sport' that before a fight can come to pass there must be prolonged negotiations; the cables of the world are kept engaged with the transmission of offers of 'purses,' arguments, and barterings. Eventually the fight is sold to the highest bidder, on terms that will yield many thousands of pounds to the winner, and nearly as many to the loser. In the case of a projected fight between the Frenchman, Carpentier, and the American, Dempsey, for which the negotiations have been keen and protracted, purses of more than £100,000 (one has lately seen the figure of £155,000 quoted) have been considered. For a few minutes of brutality (granted freely that much skill is also needed) the prize-fighter earns more than most clever scientists, artists, writers,

men who labour with fine intellects and honest hearts for the welfare of the community—even the most successful of them—earn in a lifetime.

* * *

And see the human and manly quality of men who are the heroes of this sport so much commended by leaders of public opinion. It is notorious that some of them shirked their war obligations in the most callous and cowardly manner. An American newspaper, referring to this forthcoming fight between Dempsey and Carpentier for the championship of the world, printed the following concerning Dempsey: 'America's greatest fighter—the hero of a few weeks in a shipyard, the hero of a few minutes in a battle with Jess Willard, the hero with fur overcoat and fat banking account, the hero of moving pictures at several thousand dollars a week, the hero of two peaceful, profitable years in the United States, while the greatest world's championship was being fought several thousand miles away! America's greatest fighter—not by several millions! The suggestion that he go to France is an insult to those old laddies of ours who, not so many kilometres from Paris, lie row on row, through rain and sunshine, never to fight or to speak again.' Other accusations have been laid against this Dempsey, further reflecting on his manly worth; but still the newspapers do not cease to advertise him and add to his commercial value. Can nothing be done to stifle this publicity and this commercialism committed falsely in the name of sport, and thoughtlessly linked with such glorious sport as that which has helped to make Britain great, such as was conducted on those playing-fields of Eton? The American newspaper from which I have quoted strikes the true note; it is a sad thing to know that the most serious, most conscientious newspapers in our country do not follow the example. Let us take an extract from a daily journal which would be regarded as the foremost of those in such a class, and one for which most thinkers have a high respect. Thus: 'M'Goorty managed by supreme skill in defence to survive this terrible round, but he took a bleeding mouth and very wearied limbs to his chair when the bell rang. Now for the thirteenth, and the most gory, round of the fight. Beckett landed four lefts on the face, and M'Goorty smashed a left to Beckett's nose, but he had to withstand a terrible battery afterwards, and was covered in blood. Just at the finish of the round Beckett dropped him on the ropes with a left, and before he could rise floored him with a right, and the bell saved the American probably from being counted out.' All this in enthusiasm and with approval! Not long ago I was travelling in Spain, and one day in Madrid read in a daily newspaper, *La Tribuna*, a long article, occupying the whole of the front page, on 'The Prestige of the Brute,' which was just an extended expression of wonder and

amazement that in the most civilised countries prize-fighters should be so much exalted. And, strangely, the same day I read another trouncing article on the same subject, and with the same point of view, in another Spanish journal of importance, which did not hesitate to link the name of the favourite *espada* of the bull-fighting ring with that of the boxers in its general condemnation, and pointed out that, while the world was doing homage to these persons, brilliant leaders of thought and literature in Spain and elsewhere were passing away to their final rest with scarcely a word of national recognition. Real, pure amateur boxing is sport, and may promote fine qualities like the others. Nothing, indeed, is said against it; but what has the commercial show and the hundred-thousand-pound fight to do with this? What have the spectators who merely watch and scream to do with this? If it be said that this prize-fighting is good for Britain, and stiffens her back, strengthens her muscle and courage, helps to make her strong in war, then sportsmen, in the name of sport, answer that such declaration is a lie.

* * *

But some may ask what is the use of making protests now, and may suggest that there is no feasible remedy. None, indeed, until Governments become conscientious, and have, besides sincerity and honest desire to do their duty, such measure of imagination and initiative as is expected from controllers in other departments of life and work. Is not the sport of a nation, good or bad, a very big factor in its life, one of great importance, involving the expenditure of an appreciable portion of the living hours of the people, much of their effort and thought, and vast sums of their money? If this is so, how comes it to be a matter that is considered too trivial—outside the scope of a Government department, even though Government controls so many things which people wish it did not control? It is in the manner and custom of thoughtless convention that it would be answered that, of course, a Ministry of Sport would be absurd. Yet, with proper ideals, and well and energetically directed (agreed that in these days of government these are impossible conditions), it might work more good for a people than half-a-dozen other departments mainly concerned in adding to expenditure and waste. Besides, we may yet find the example set us abroad. It is discovered even now that some foreign nations decide that it is unnecessary to copy Britain in all matters appertaining to sport, or even to wait for her initiative, perceiving that there is something the matter with British sport. I have seen in foreign countries how at the beginning they are fighting, as best they can, the canker of professionalism introduced into new games of theirs, the infection coming, as they say, from England. I have found

that they are playing Association football quite enthusiastically and even well in the south of Spain and in Portugal (and it is marvellous to see how much alike are all civilised men of the world when you put them into athletic garb and place them on a football-field!), but that at the very outset almost they have had certain small difficulties in the matter of attempted professionalism, which they have dealt with rigorously.

* * *

Now, some little time ago France, feeling that her newly acquired love for games of the British kind was doing her good, and had helped her in the war, determined to pursue them more thoroughly in the future, and early this year the Government voted a large sum of money for the training of French athletes and their participation at the Olympic Games. The like has been done on a smaller scale by other nations. And according to a Bill just submitted to the French Senate, having for its object the physical training and well-being of the youth of France, sport is to be made compulsory in that country. This Bill, before the Senate at the moment of writing, provides that every French child shall be equipped with a book on 'Physical Education' similar to that issued to every recruit joining the army, and all children at school must take part in sport. Such action is not many degrees removed from the establishment of a Ministry of Sport. But it is well that a Ministry of this sort should not come to establishment now. It were better that it should rise when present fevers have passed away, and life and work and government are cleaner than to-day, for such a Ministry brought into being now would go the way of others, and be but one more centre of bureaucracy. It would be opportunist, materialist, and commercial; it would praise prize-fighting, and perhaps promote it; it would encourage professionalism and all that is bad. Indeed, as some would say, evidently the men who comprise a modern Government, masters of intrigue and something worse, are the last in the world to understand the meaning of sport. They would be mystified by such a definition as that one propounded by Oliver Wendell Holmes in this wise: 'To bray little, to show well, to crow gently if in luck, to pay up, to own up, to buck up, and to shut up if beaten, are the virtues of a sporting man.' But despite the disadvantages and the discouragements, one may yet anticipate with a good hope a future of sport both clean and pure. For sport arises from nature, from the instincts, good and simple, in man. There may be strayings for a time, national escapades, contamination with foul influences of a special period, but nature has a kindly care for sport, and while there is a wind on the heath she will bring it back to its saving simplicity.

A DAUGHTER OF THE DOPPERS.

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

BRAY and Flinty were uneasy. The presence of Braine was disconcerting, and in spite of the fact that the negotiations for the sale of the farm had been concluded—on certain specified conditions—they felt anything but secure; so that even Bray failed to display that perfect self-possession of manner and easy grace of carriage which had so consistently assisted him in keeping (outwardly at least) the little worries of life at bay. They spanned in and drove away to Koodooskop amid the cheers of the crowd in the main street, cheerfully waving their hands in response until the thorn-trees hid them from view.

‘I don’t know what it is, Wally, but I have got Braine on the nerves,’ remarked Flinty, as they crossed the dry river.

‘And on the brain as well, I take it. But why?’ asked Bray.

‘Didn’t you notice how he looked at the stones? If he had only said something. He is the cutest beggar out. Looks like a *meerkat* with his fine-drawn snout and prying eyes. Why should he demand a trial washing, think you? Another inspector would have been satisfied with the stones we exhibited. The whole crowd will be down at the mine to see the trial, and what if’—

‘Oh, dry up,’ snapped Bray; ‘you’re getting ratty. What can he find but diamonds and decent-looking gravel? He is not infallible, let me tell you. Take that Juvenna case, for instance.’

‘What was that?’ inquired Flinty, anxious for a diversion.

‘Not heard of it? I recollect now, you were not on the fields when the affair happened. You remember Juvenna, of course, and what a mysterious bounder he was. Lived on the fat of the land without any visible means of subsistence. I.D.B., I take it; but they couldn’t trap him, and not from want of trying either. He was suspected also of illicit gold-buying at Jo’burg, through a confederate there, so that when the Kimberley police received a wire from the Jo’burg authorities that a box had been despatched from there addressed to Juvenna, they promptly sent old Braine up the line to receive it. It proved to be a biggish soap-box, heavy as blazes, and Braine, no doubt, shook hands with himself; but it was necessary that Juvenna should receive it. Braine therefore arranged by wire with the railway people to deliver the box to Juvenna at Kimberley. Sure enough, the old beggar applied for it, and took it away in a cab. Braine followed in another, and three minutes after Juvenna had entered his room, the detective followed. Old Juvy was lying on his bed.

“Where is that box, Juvenna?” said Braine quietly.

“What box?”

“The box you removed from the railway-station.”

“You are mistaken, Mr Braine,” the beggar had the cheek to say.

Braine started a search, and examined every corner and every single thing the room contained, including the bed, and found nothing.

“Go it, Braine, boy; don’t give up. A box isn’t difficult to find,” jeered Juvenna.

Suddenly Braine stooped and lifted the carpet. Juvenna rushed at him, but too late; old Braine had already covered him with a revolver.

To cut it short, Flinty, the box was found concealed under a trap-door in the floor, and on its being opened at the police-station the detective discovered the contents to be gold bars, and a good many of them. So Juvenna was lagged at last.

The evidence was conclusive, and no doubt the old scamp prepared himself for five years of the Table Bay breakwater. At the preliminary examination before the beak the facts were trotted out, with one exception—the prosecution had not proved that stolen gold had been received. A jeweller was sent for. He struck one of the bars with a hammer, and it broke into two pieces. Every bar was nothing but common brass, Flinty, neatly covered with gold paint. They say old Braine’s face was a sight. As the prosecution had not maintained their charge of receiving stolen gold, Juvenna was discharged, and Braine’s life for a time was an encumbrance to him. Juvenna had sent £4000 to his pal in Jo’burg, and the pal had forwarded brass instead of gold. Juvy lost the four thousand, but won his freedom. Now, old chap, I hope you won’t lose your nerve this afternoon; there is nothing to fear.’

‘But you don’t look as if you were enjoying the picnic either,’ ventured Flinty.

‘Never mind me, boy; you keep your end up. If I am bowled, it will not be because I failed to try my level best to keep the ball off my wicket.’

The crowd that assembled at the mine that afternoon scared every living thing from the Klip Kopje. The oldest and boldest inhabitant, an ancient *aardvark*, bald-bided with age, left his burrow in alarm and made for the open veld with ungainly strides, stopping only when he could no longer hear the shouts, cat-calls, and impromptu choruses of the hilarious crowd. The *aasvogels*, inhabitants of the top-most boulder, deserted their conning-tower, flying in ever-widening circles until they reached their other haunt, the Doornberg.

Below, the crowd had stationed themselves in a dense pack around the washing-machine, near which Bray and Flinty were ostentatiously busy, heaping up the ground and filling up the pan. A sturdy Klipdamer—champion sorter of the fields—was seated at the table, awaiting the gravel with steady imperturbability; Braine, near him, characteristically silent and watchful.

A sieveful of washed gravel was thrown on the table, and the Klipdamer, with marvellous rapidity, proceeded to separate the sheep from the goats, now and then stopping to drop a stone into a little tin at his side. Presently he arose, shook the diamonds into Braine's outstretched hand, and shouted for all to hear, 'Two carats to the load, bullies, d'ye hear? Two carats to the load, nothing less!'

'Yes,' agreed Braine quietly, 'that's what it about pans out.'

'It's all over. I am going to tell Steenie the news,' said Bray to Flinty.

'And leave me to clean up? You're a nice one. Pardon my saying so, Wally, but I thought the girl was but a secondary consideration. Is it acute "amoritis," after all?'

'It might be, Flinty, but the disease I dread most is chronic "moneyitis." Braine is now bound,' continued Bray, 'to declare the mine. Our troubles are over, thank God! Clear the rabble as soon as you can, and come home. Whisky will be waiting for you, plus a cool bottle of soda.'

The *stoep* at Koodooskop commanded a wide outlook, and the stone benches flanking it were Steenie's favourite seats. Bray was frequently away, and she as frequently on the look-out for his return, scanning the long white road to Vaalbos as an island castaway looks for a sail on the horizon. She was there this particular afternoon, every baby whirlwind playing with the dust on the long road bringing the light of expectation into her eyes, until at last there was no longer cause for doubt. First a persistent cloud streaming like a ghostly veil, and then the beloved form, sitting the horse like a knight of old. One lingering kiss in the *voorhuis*, disjointed exclamations on the part of the girl, and then Bray told the momentous tidings.

'It means Cape Town, sweetheart,' he told her. 'Your first love, you know. We'll take the old people with us, and help to open their eyes. No more dust-storms, scab, locust, and drought, sweetheart; no more of these, but love and brightness only.'

When the sun had set behind the Doornberg, they retired to the *zit kamer*, where she played and sang to him, while the light waned, until darkness came upon them, so that they could not see each other. He, stretched upon the couch—callous to sentiment and indifferent to music—weaving schemes and dreaming dreams in which the girl at the piano played no part; while she, feeling his presence like some tangible

thing, was thinking only of the words he had spoken in the hall.

They were aroused by the sound of a horse galloping across the *werf*.

'Will you get a light, mate?' he said playfully. 'Flinty has arrived.'

She left the room, and presently returned with a lighted lamp. As she placed it on the table they heard Flinty's voice outside calling 'Bray! Bray!' in tones full of excitement and alarm.

Bray rose from the couch with a nervous jerk, and, followed by Steenie, ran to the front-door.

Out of the darkness came Flinty's raucous tones: 'The game's up, Wally. Clear for all you're worth.'

'What game?'

'I shall probably never see you again, dear Wally, so I might as well take the opportunity of relieving my mind. You should have been an actor, Wally—comedy for choice. I have always thought that. "What game?" you ask cheerfully. Do you think I mean croquet or tennis, or some of those easy things we used to enjoy when we were youthful and gay? I mean something worse than that. So far as we are concerned, it means'—

'Nothing, dear old Flinty,' interrupted Bray soothingly, mindful of the girl's presence.

'It means everything,' asserted the other. 'Braine spotted the thing from the first—from the time we showed him the diamonds in the Civil Commissioner's office. After you left this afternoon he had the shaft scooped out and the ground on the surface examined—pretty closely, let me tell you. When I saw how clumsily we had mixed the stuff, it dawned on me that the game was up. Afterwards he got up and addressed that meeting, giving them his views, telling them, among other things, that the stones found were Kimberley stuff, and refusing to declare the mine. I heard mutterings and cries of lynching. They passed a resolution, and I tell you, Wally—clear. That whole bally crowd of would-be miners will be here inside of an hour. I'm off to Springbok Loop; so good-bye.'

There was a moment's silence, and then they heard his voice again.

'Two carats to the load, bullies,' he called with a laugh, and with it came the sound of a galloping horse, and Flinty was gone.

'What is it, Walter? Tell me, dearest, what does the man mean? He spoke of danger. Why should those people harm you?'

'I can bear to lose everything, even my life, but you, sweetheart—you. I'—

'Tell me, what is it?' she cried. 'There is no trouble, however great, that I would not share with you—no misfortune, however overwhelming, that could drive me from your side.'

'It's a mistake, darling, and nothing more. Braine is a villain, and hopes to reap some benefit from the attitude he has taken up. He

wishes to show that our mine is no mine at all. An old trick of his; but the men are excited and worked up, and it would perhaps be better if we left to-night.'

The mine had miscarried, but Oom Jan's thousands were behind the girl! Why should he not take what was left?

'We can get away now, Steenie darling. Get ready; I'll tell Koos to span in.'

There was no thought of refusal.

'I am ready, Walter,' she said simply.

He turned without a word and went back to the *zit kamer*. She followed, and seeing his face by the light of the lamp, read in it the fear and the apprehension of imminent danger which had now taken the place of the habitual expression of suave complacency.

'You are in trouble, Walter,' she broke out impulsively. 'Let me share it with you. Who has a better right?'

'Trouble! You are right, sweetheart; it is trouble. However, I shall do them yet. But'—

'But what?'

'I can scarcely tell you. It seems such an outrageous thing to confess to you—of all people.'

'Tell me, dearest,' she cried; 'nothing is outrageous from your lips.'

'I have no money,' he all but wailed. 'The mine has swallowed up everything; and we cannot travel without that infernally necessary evil, you know. Do you think your father will?'

'He won't, Walter,' she interrupted. 'It is quite useless asking him. It would only lead to further trouble.'

'What, in God's name, am I to do, then?'

The self-assurance had now quite deserted him, and he stood before the girl a coward, trembling and unashamed, seeing with the aid of a vivid imagination, stimulated by fear, the bearded faces around him, inflamed with the hatred begotten of disappointed hopes. He saw the men dragging his struggling body to the nearest blue gum, and—

With a despairing gesture he sank upon the couch.

She looked at him for a moment with eyes full of trouble, but with a movement of her shoulders, as if she were attempting to shake off an uncomfortable garment, turned to soothe him. Placing her hand on his head, she stooped to whisper rapidly in his willing ear, the ornament in her hair scintillating in the light of the lamp. Then, with a lingering caress, she rose and left the room.

CHAPTER VIII.

OOM JAN KLOPPER had retired early, but could not sleep. The unusual excitement to which he had been subjected by the events of the day had driven the sluggishness from his

blood, and left him nervous and wakeful. He saw again the sea of faces around the washing-gear, some giving expression to the envy which possessed them; others stern, almost forbidding, waiting for the inspector's verdict with the patience of the veld philosopher. Among so many people a number of bad characters were no doubt included, and this reflection added to his restlessness. Some of these might very well have remained at the Klip Kopje with the design of robbing him, so that he blamed himself heartily for his obstinacy in resisting Steenie's repeated requests to deposit his money in a bank instead of following the old custom of hoarding it at home.

A sound came from the *zolder* (loft). He sat up in apprehension, his first impulse being to wake Ta'antje, who was soundly asleep at his side. He listened, and presently the sound came again to vex him, as if something heavy were being dragged, with infinite caution, across the floor above. He left his bed, and dressing hurriedly but silently, tiptoed, candle in hand, out of the room.

Outside, he found the night serene and beautiful, the croaking of the frogs in the dam and the bleating from the kraals coming to him with startling clearness. Cautiously he stole round the gable to the foot of the clumsy bamboo ladder, which he as cautiously ascended. Pushing the door open, he saw a figure at the farther end of the *zolder*, and beside it a candle on the floor. Feeble as the light was, he perceived that the coffin he had provided for his last refuge, in accordance with the custom of his people, had been dragged from the corner in which it had so long remained. For what purpose? he wondered—till suddenly he realised with a shock that his savings of years had been hoarded there.

Silently he climbed into the *zolder*, with jaws set and hard, and advancing a few paces, stood erect, absorbed but alert, watching the stooping figure. Presently the unknown moved from one side of the coffin to the other, and then Oom Jan saw.

'Steenie!' he cried, softly and tremblingly, as if entreating a denial—'not you, surely; not you?'

She turned swiftly, yet without the agitation of one suddenly detected in a grave offence, and advanced, candle in hand, towards her father. He stared at her, with arm uplifted as if to strike—or to curse—but before she reached him Oom Jan fell to the floor with working eyelids and jerking limbs. Steenie held the light to his face, the tears streaming from her eyes. How much had not this poor old father sacrificed for her sake? she all but cried aloud. He had cast aside the prejudices of a lifetime so that no wish of hers might remain unfulfilled, and his sacrifices had led him to this! She made as if to kneel; but the despairing figure on the couch below rose to her eyes and blotted out the white beard before her—blotted it out for ever. . . .

The rumbling of cart-wheels and the sound of trotting horses roused the sleepy location into temporary wakefulness; while the dogs, which had barked Steenie a boisterous welcome, now growled a noisy farewell, as if they knew of her sin. Gradually the rumbling ceased, and died away, leaving the usual night-sounds of the farm, temporarily eclipsed, to assert themselves once more.

The sun was well on with his daily round the next day when Dr Bray, who had been hastily summoned to attend Oom Jan, issued from the front-door of the homestead. The distress of the old couple had unnerved him, so that he wished to get away from it all—if only for a few minutes. Gazing across the *werf* towards the Vaalbos road, his eyes marked a dust-cloud, indicating the approach of a vehicle. He noted that it advanced with unusual speed, and that a jabbering and gesticulating crowd from the location had assembled near the road to watch the novel spectacle. Descending the steps to the *werf*, he proceeded towards the road; but before he reached it the little crowd of Hottentots had scattered, and were endeavouring to stop what Dr Bray now saw was an empty cart, bounding and lurching behind a pair of runaway horses. They succeeded at last, with many howls, whistlings, and waving of coats, and when Bray arrived on the scene had already pacified the trembling animals.

The indications had pointed to a tragedy, so that the sight of blood on the foot-board only caused the doctor to hasten his movements. Jumping on the cart, he called to one of the 'boys' to join him. With a wild turn and numberless lashings, they disappeared down the road in an enveloping cloud of white dust.

They found Steenie and Walter Bray at the Rhenoster drift, the man, with drawn legs and clenched hands, staring with sightless eyes at the pitiless sun. A Bushman arrow transfixed his neck, and one fleeting glance was sufficient to assure his brother that life had left him.

Steenie was reclining upon the tortoise-stone, as if, tired with a day's wanderings, she had cast herself upon it for a long, sweet rest. An arrow-scratch upon the brow, inflamed with the effects of the virulent poison, plainly showed the doctor that her case was beyond his skill.

Tenderly he drew the hair from her forehead, and at the touch she turned her eyes, obscured by delirium, until they met his own. In sweet tones, beloved and unforgotten, he heard her murmur, 'I have found a diamond—a beautiful white stone.' A tear from his overlaid eyes dropped on her cheek, but before he could wipe it away her soul had sped; while, miles to the northward, Plaatjes and his Bushman family were making for their haunts in the eastern Kalahari.

THE END.

AN ANCIENT ENGLISH PALACE.

By EDWIN L. ARNOLD, Author of *Phra the Phœnician*, &c.

THE splendid pile of Windsor Castle dates back to early days in English history. Yet, though its gray walls and dungeons, in world-wide estimation, are the very symbol of antiquity, I have lately spent an interesting morning uncovering the foundations of what may prove to be a still older castle, one which sheltered English Courts and sovereigns before the foundations of the present building were laid.

It has always been known that Edward the Confessor, who died in 1066, nine months before the battle of Hastings, possessed a palace in the neighbourhood of Windsor. Tradition and written evidence vouched for the fact, but where the structure stood no one had ever been able to guess; not a trace of it remained visible, and for more than 850 years the green Berkshire grass kept the secret to itself. Now, within the last few months, the place, in the opinion of some good antiquarians, has been identified, and I have assisted in uncovering for the first time, after all that long interval, the remains of the quaint little chambers, crooked passages, and tiled hearths of the very earliest royal home in England.

The data we had to go on were brief and

easily stated. For one thing, the manor of Old Windsor belonged to the Saxon kings from the earliest times, and according to one account Earl Godwin, the father-in-law of the Confessor, died in the neighbourhood. In his *Chronicles* Fabian records the following incident as having happened at 'the Castell of Wynsore.' One evening at supper a cup-bearer stumbled, but recovered himself quickly, so that no wine was spilt. Godwin, who sat at the table with the king, laughed and said, 'One brother hath sustained the other,' meaning that one leg had prevented the other from falling. Edward the Confessor looked at him sternly, and said, 'So my brother Alfred should have helped me had not Earl Godwin lived.' The earl saw that the king suspected him of having caused Alfred's death, so he took up a piece of bread and answered, 'I see it has been told to you that I caused your brother's death. As a proof of my innocence I will swallow this bread; may it choke me if I am guilty of the crime!' The judgment of God at once fell on the murderer, and he was choked. Whatever the foundation of this legend, Godwin did die in 1053, after a seizure while he sat at meat with the king. Only a day or two ago I

was standing on the tiled floor where this strange incident may have taken place.

Again, in another old chronicle we are told how a blind man went to Edward the Confessor's palace at Windsor and had his sight immediately restored by the saint's intercession. Still suggestive of a royal residence are the facts that an Abbot of St Augustine's was consecrated at Old Windsor in 1061, and charters were signed there in 1065. But where? Old Windsor is now a straggling hamlet on the banks of the Thames, about two miles from the present castle, which was founded by William the Conqueror. All around are green willow-fringed fields, and behind the village stretches the vast extent of Windsor Park, crowded with ancient oak-trees, thronged with deer, but bearing no trace anywhere of ancient building or ruins. This was the problem long vexing the minds of antiquarians, and only just brought to an apparent solution.

My friend Captain Vaughan-Williams, wandering in the park one day, noticed within a right-angled square of low, grassy embankments, enclosing about half an acre of land that rabbits had turned up, numerous tiles of an out-of-date appearance. This set him thinking. Ere long he was at work with half-a-dozen diggers, and every antiquarian will appreciate the delight with which he speedily found himself in contact with a perfect labyrinth of low walls and floor foundations. The soil was clay, hardened by much fine weather; but pick and shovel made steady progress, bit by bit of the tracery of this ancient home being revealed by continuous labour; and as I write the work is still proceeding. There is no chance, unfortunately, of finding any height of wall remaining, for the place has been pillaged for ready-made building material through long ages, and the present castle itself may owe a good deal of its foundations to its humble predecessor a mile away across the oak-trees; but it will be something to add to our knowledge even the ground-plan of a pre-Norman dwelling-place of the better class. Our Saxon forefathers were no great designers in stone. They built chiefly with timber, all of which has completely perished, and, saving a few church porches or doorways, next to nothing of theirs now exists above ground. For an understanding of the architecture of their homes and domestic buildings we have to trust largely to crude drawings in the illuminated Missals of the time—with due thankfulness that even these have come safely down to us. But we know how the Roman camp was arranged, and how the Normans planned their dwelling-places, and, by inference, we can decide that any structure not conforming to either of these must in all probability be Saxon. A real Saxon palace, even in skeleton, is absolutely unique; hence the great interest—over and above any association with a striking page of our national story—which

attaches to the discovery of these isolated and long-forgotten ruins.

When work was commenced in the extreme north-west corner of the ramparted enclosure, the profusion of foundations proved quite embarrassing. We were in a region of stone cupboards, rather than the banqueting-halls and spacious chambers to be looked for in a royal residence! Some of these receptacles were not more than seven feet across by ten feet long, and the passages connecting them were scarcely wide enough for a man to pass through comfortably. But the spades which disclosed the conundrum presently found a partial explanation for it when we lit upon the corner of a flooring of red tiles, set on edge close together in the clay, in a loose 'herring-bone' pattern. A wide hearth of these tiles was presently uncovered, big enough, as Captain Vaughan-Williams said to me, 'to roast two oxen at the same time.' On the hearth lay a fair quantity of wood-ashes, which, on being carefully sifted, produced bones of deer and swine (one of the deer-bones with the marks of a knife upon it), a few fragments of coarse brown pottery, and, curiously enough, a small white flint arrow-point of an age so remote that it obviously had no direct connection with the palace itself. Here we were on the great kitchen fireplace of the building, in the presence, we could imagine by a stretch of fancy, of the remains of the very supper at which Earl Godwin had dramatically choked himself.

This fireplace also indicated that the small chambers adjoining had been designed for the staff, or as store-rooms for food and household goods. 'If this is so,' said an antiquarian who visited the diggings when they were at this stage, 'there will probably be a connecting passage leading to the banqueting-hall in a distant part of the building.' An hour afterwards we found the passage suggested by this very reasonable deduction. After several days of hard digging, the chalk and flint wall foundations suddenly ended in well-faced Bagshot corner-stones; and continuing these at right angles, we uncovered, in the north-east corner of the enclosure, the outline of the most spacious chamber revealed, the undoubted dining-hall and living-room of the establishment.

What pregnant incidents may have happened within these four walls—if, indeed, the edifice is the place it is supposed to be! It was here, possibly, that the ebbing power of the Danes finally disappeared under the persuasive blandishments of one of the most astute of early English sovereigns; and it was here that he, whom the monks named the Confessor, made those first overtures to William of Normandy which opened still another new page in our story. It may have been in this very room that Eustace, Count of Boulogne, cunningly paved the way for his kinsman's accession to the English throne; that the Confessor, pacing

up and down in implacable hatred, confiscated the estates of Godwin and sent Queen Editha to life-long imprisonment in a nunnery. Where, than in this secluded home amongst the oak-trees and the red-deer, was it more likely he should bring together that great digest of laws which gave the English their earliest experience of impartial justice, or think out those schemes of gentle government which lent a romance to the last years of Saxon kingship throughout the dark period of foreign invasion which was to come? No bigger than a modern suburban parlour, this chamber may in some ways be called the most historical room in England, and every antiquarian will wait with interest to see how far further research authenticates its claims.

The little we know of Saxon architecture suggested that outside the main buildings thus uncovered lay an open courtyard, with wood-built stalls for horses and huts for followers about it, though all such erections must, of course, long ago have passed into dust. Outside the ramparts, again, may have been a village occupied by serfs and hangers-on of the Court; and though the spot was unfortunately ploughed long ago, there is still a tradition in the neighbourhood that, previous to this

temporary cultivation, it was dotted in every direction with low mounds—no doubt marking the sites of the bondsmen's dwellings. Somewhere else must be the cemetery, a place of the greatest interest, for the Saxons were buried with their arms and shields, their gold and enamelled ornaments, their beautiful glass-ware and pottery about them; and we think we have already located the spot on a low hillock, a few hundred yards from the entrenchments, where the soil is patchy, as though it had been disturbed long ago, and grass still only grows at intervals. Here, in the shadow of the oak-trees, under the purple-flowered thistles, may be lying the great Earls of Mercia and Wessex, the friends of Hardicanute and Sweyn, thanes who had crossed swords in the north with Macbeth and Malcolm Canmore, and many others of their time, amongst their fair-haired wives and children.

Much remains to be bared, but much has been done already. The King comes down to the diggings now and then; the boys of Eton College, close by, lend a hand with pick and shovel on their half-holidays; and bit by bit this forgotten palace in the wood, this unique memorial of far-away times, is rendering up its secret to the legitimate curiosity of modern research.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXV.—*continued.*

V.

'THE Boches, sir! They're coming!'

The sergeant's warning rang out, and in an instant the air was shattered with battle. Protected by the fire from a nest of machine-guns, the Germans launched a converging attack towards the bridge. Waiting until the advancing troops were too close to permit the aid of their own machine-gun fire, the Americans poured a deadly hail of bullets into their ranks. The attack broke, but fresh troops were thrown in, and the line was penetrated at several points.

Van Derwater rallied his men, directed the defence, and time after time organised or led counter-attacks which restored their position. His voice rose sonorously above everything. Hearing it, and seeing his powerful figure oblivious to the bullets which stung the air all about him, his men yelled that they could never be beaten as long as he led them.

Half-mad with excitement, Selwyn repelled the attacks on his sector, though his casualties were heavy and ammunition was running low. Durwent's mood of reverie had passed, and he fought with limitless energy. Once, when the Huns had penetrated the road, one of their officers levelled a revolver on him, but discharged the bullet into the ground as the butt of Mathews's rifle was brought smashing on his

wrist. The old groom followed his master with eyes that saw only the danger hanging over him. For his own safety he gave no care, but wherever Dick stepped or turned, the groom was by his side, with his large, rough face set in a look that was like that of a mastiff protecting its young.

As waves breaking against a rock, the Huns retreated, rallied, and attacked again and again, and each time the resistance was less formidable as the heroic little band grew smaller and the ugly story passed that ammunition was giving out.

They had just thrown back an assault, and Van Derwater had sent for his section commanders to advise an attack on the enemy in preference to waiting to be wiped out with no chance of successful resistance, when he heard a shout, and bullets spat over their heads. Turning swiftly about, they saw a tank lurching across the bridge. Amidst wild shouting from the Americans, the clumsy landship stumbled towards them, with bullets glancing harmlessly off its metal carcass. Lumbering on to the road, the tank stopped astride it.

In almost complete forgetfulness of the impending enemy attack, the jubilant Americans crowded about the machine and cheered its occupants to the echo, as a small door was opened and two French faces could be seen. In a few words Van Derwater explained the situation, receiving the discouraging information

that no troops were anywhere near the vicinity. The tank had been discovered by the ex-Belmont waiter and sent on to the bridge.

'Pass word along,' said Van Derwater crisply, 'to prepare for an attack. The tank will go first, and when it is astride their machine-gun position we will go forward and drive them out of the brushwood into the open.—Messieurs, the machine-guns are gathered there—straight across, about forty yards from the great tree.'

The Frenchmen tried to locate the spot indicated, but were obviously puzzled and too excited to listen attentively. Van Derwater was about to repeat his instructions, when Dick Durwent shouldered his way into the group. Men's voices were hushed at the sight of his eyes, blazing with a mingled yellow and blue glare.

In a bound he was on the bank, and stood exposed to the enemy's fire. With something that was like a laugh and yet had an unearthly quality about it, he threw his helmet off and stood bareheaded in the golden sunlight. '*En avant, les Alliés !*' he cried. '*Par ici. Suivez-moi, mes amis !*'

There was a grinding of the gears and a roar of machinery as the tank reared its head and lunged after him.

'Stop that man, Selwyn !'

Van Derwater's voice rang out just in time. The old groom had scrambled to the bank to follow his master, but four hands grasped him

and pulled him back. With a moan he clung to the bank, following Dick with his eyes. And his face was the colour of ashes.

With their voices almost rising to a scream, the chafing Americans watched the Englishman walk towards the enemy lines. Bullets bit the ground near his feet, but, untouched, he went on, with the metal monster following behind. Once he fell, and a hush came over the watchers; but he rose and limped on. His face pale and grim, Van Derwater moved among his men, urging them to wait; but they cursed and yelled at the delay.

Again Dick fell, and with difficulty stumbled to his feet. For a moment he swayed as if a heavy gale were blowing against him, and as his face turned towards his comrades they could see his lips parted in a strange smile. Raising his arm like one who is invoking vengeance, he staggered on, and by some miracle reached the very edge of the enemy's position. There he collapsed, but rising once more, pointed ahead, and fell forward on his face.

With a roar the American torrent burst its bounds and swept towards the enemy. Selwyn leaped in advance of his men, his voice uttering a long, pulsating cry, like a bloodhound that has found its trail.

He did not see, over towards the centre, that Van Derwater had stopped half-way and had fallen to his knees, both hands covering his eyes.

(Continued on page 567.)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE COST OF HEAT.

AS many readers of *Chambers's Journal* are aware, the amount of heat used in cooking, warming rooms, and for other purposes can be accurately measured, the consumpt being expressed in what are known as British Thermal Units. This expression is generally written B.Th.U., one B.Th.U. being the quantity of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit. Coal, petroleum, gas, and electricity are all sources of heat, and the amount that each will yield has been measured. Again, heat can be turned into power, and *vice versa*; so that, whichever we want, each of them has a certain value. If we bear these facts in mind, the cost of potential heat-energy in various forms, as given in the Report of the Fuel Research Board, is of interest to almost every one. This cost, as worked out for 100,000 B.Th.U. in each case, is as follows:

In good coal at 27s. per ton	1d.
In " " " 54s. " " "	2d.
In gas yielding 500 B.Th.U. per cubic foot	
—a good average quality—at 4s. 2d.	
per 1000 cubic feet	10d.

In kerosene (high-class paraffin) at 2s. 6d.	
per gallon	19d.
In petrol at 3s. per gallon	25d.
In electricity delivered for heating purposes at 2d. per Board of Trade unit	58d.

The above table should cause those to revise their opinion who still urge the use of electricity for cooking and heating, for which purposes it is not within measurable distance of coal, coke, or gas as an economical source of heat. That this view is supported by so high an authority on heat as Sir Dugald Clerk is evidenced by the following excerpt from the 'James Forrest' lecture given by him before the Institution of Civil Engineers. 'The Coal Conservation Committee,' he said, 'are quite wrong in considering that any advantage to conservation can arise from the use of electricity to produce heat by the existing means. In so far as electricity displaces gas for heating purposes, so far will the coal consumption of the country be increased.'

SIMPLE WATCHES POSSESSING MARVELLOUS ACCURACY.

Until wireless telegraphy came into vogue for ships, those responsible for their navigation were

entirely dependent upon chronometers for the calculation of their longitude, an accurate knowledge of which is necessary when finding a ship's position. What is wanted is the exact Greenwich time, and this can, of course, be signalled by wireless; in fact, clocks are now largely set by time-signals sent out from the Eiffel Tower in Paris. If the taking of time by wireless became universal in ships, the makers of chronometers would lose a substantial portion of their business; hence this form of competition has stimulated them to greater efforts towards accuracy. Moreover, airmen need chronometers which will maintain their accuracy in spite of the vibration and the big changes of temperature involved. In this connection important improvements in watches have been made by a Swiss chronometer-maker, Mr Paul Ditisheim, who, with a plain lever-watch, has recently obtained at the 'Kew' testing-station 96.9 marks out of a possible 100, a record which beats the previous best. This result has been achieved mainly by the use in the balance-wheel of a special nickel-iron alloy, whose modulus of elasticity increases as the temperature rises, and *vice versa*, thereby securing automatic compensation for changes of temperature. Except for their accuracy, these watches have little in common with the pocket chronometer, being as simple as the ordinary type of watch, although, of course, greater care is taken in their construction. Recently some of these watches were conveyed from Neuchâtel to Washington, by way of Bordeaux, and comparisons were made between the longitudes found by wireless time-signals and those derived from the times given by the watches. At Bordeaux the two readings were exactly the same, while at Washington the difference was only trifling.

AN ECONOMICAL PARAFFIN-LAMP.

Now that the price of paraffin has reached approximately four times its pre-war level, every device making for economy in the use of paraffin lamps and stoves is particularly welcome. Prominent among these is the 'Aladdin' incandescent paraffin-lamp. This contrivance resembles the upright incandescent gas-burner in being provided with a mantle, which is caused to glow and give light from a blue flame. In the 'Aladdin' lamp, however, the flame is produced from a mixture of paraffin vapour and air, in place of the gas and air supplied to the gas-burner. The lamp is of the central-draught type, with the usual draught-tube through the container. Outside the top of this tube is a circular wick; while fitting inside it is a short tube known as the 'generator,' open at the bottom, and having a top perforated with numerous small holes. The wick is carried in a tubular wick-raiser, operated by the usual rack and pinion. As in ordinary circular wick-burners, there is another tube outside the wick. A perforated burner-base surrounding the wick is provided with a hood,

which terminates just above the upper end of the wick, level with the top of the generator, where a ring aperture is left between the two. By these means abundant supplies of air are brought to the outside and the inside of the wick, through the burner-base and the generator respectively. A tall chimney is arranged above the burner to increase the draught. When the wick is lit, the flame soon makes the generator very hot, and the heat, being communicated to the wick, vaporises the paraffin. As given off, the vapour mixes with the air, and burns with a blue flame at the ring aperture. It only remains to hang a mantle over this flame to obtain a brilliant white light. In order to protect the mantle, and to facilitate trimming and lighting, hood, chimney, and mantle are made to lift off together, thus exposing the wick. With each lamp a special trimmer is provided, which is rotated over the wick, and trims off the charred portion evenly. The lamp is made wholly of brass, and has a handsome appearance. It gives a light of sixty candle-power at about half the cost for oil of the ordinary central-draught burner; in fact, the difference between the two is as great as that between the old-fashioned fish-tail gas-burner and the modern incandescent variety. Incandescent paraffin-lamps are by no means new, this type having been brought out some fifteen years ago. But the mantles of the earlier models were very fragile, and if they broke the lamps smoked. The mantles supplied with the 'Aladdin' lamp are of a very much tougher description. Another commendable feature is that the lamp is safe to handle, and cannot explode if knocked over.

NEW LIGHT ON THE CANCER PROBLEM.

Eminent scientists in various parts of the world are still studying cancer with a view to finding a cure for this fell disease. Among them is Professor Fibiger, of Copenhagen, who, according to the *British Medical Journal*, has apparently discovered the origin of cancer in certain rats brought to his laboratory from a particular sugar-refinery. Many of the rats had cancer of the stomach, and the results of the professor's experiments afford strong presumptive evidence that the disease arose from the eating of the cockroaches with which the refinery was infested. These insects were found to be the hosts of a parasitic worm of the nematode group, the female measuring four to five centimetres in length and about one-fifth of a millimetre in diameter, while the male is less than half this size. In a number of cases rats fed on these cockroaches or on the eggs of the worm developed inflammations, and also cancer of the stomach. A series of rats not connected with the first series were fed upon the eggs. Out of 116 suffering from gastric affections as a result of the experiment, 14 died within 30-44 days without developing cancer; but of the

102 remaining, 54 showed quite typical cancer of the *cul-de-sac* of the stomach. These all died, and it is interesting to note that the tumours increased in size according to the length of the period of survival after the disease had been detected. Many had multiple cancers, secondary tumours tending to occur in the lungs. Cancer of the tongue was also produced. The medical correspondent of *The Times*, who comments on these investigations, says: 'It has hitherto been impossible to produce cancer *de novo* artificially. On the other hand, this research is confined to rats, and what applies to a rat does not necessarily apply to a man. Are we to see in this investigation support of the popular view that houses infested by rats and mice are apt to become the seats of cancerous disease?'

MAGNETO ELECTRIC LIGHTING FOR THE CAR.

That a magneto on a motor-cycle or a motor-car generates far more electric current than is necessary to produce the ignition-sparks in the cylinder is well known to electricians; and the surplus energy, which would otherwise be wasted, is often employed to light the head-lamps of cars. A compact apparatus, known as the 'F.R.S. Magneto Lighting Set,' which can be applied to any motor-cycle or car, and serves to illuminate both head and tail lamps, has recently been placed on the market. It is carried in a small box, which is clipped to the top tube of the frame in a motor-cycle. This box contains a special coil for converting the magneto current into one suitable for lighting bulbs, a battery for keeping the lamps alight when the vehicle is stationary, and a three-way switch. When the motor is being started on the road, after lighting-up time, the switch is set to light the lamps from the battery, the connections being changed over to the magneto when the cycle or the car is well under way. Nothing else is required except the insulated wire connections, a coil-box, and adapters for the application of electricity to acetylene or oil lamps.

HUGE WATER-SUPPLY TUNNEL.

When New York's water-supply extension scheme is completed, that city should be safe from any risk of a water shortage for many years to come. One of the most interesting features of this undertaking is a tunnel, eighteen miles in length, through the Shandaken Mountains of the Catskill range, which will join up the new Schoharie Valley reservoir with Esopus Creek, whence the water will join the existing supply system at the Ashoken Reservoir. The tunnel measures 11 feet 6 inches in height, and has a width of 10 feet 3 inches. It is egg-shaped in section, as is usual in sewers and other built-up underground water-conduits. The hole that has to be blasted through the rock is considerably larger than the finished tunnel, as a

minimum thickness of concrete lining has to be provided for. This lining fills up all the irregularities of the surface caused by blasting; hence it is in contact with the rock at all points. Steel or wood moulds are being used. These ensure uniformity and a smooth inside surface, the latter being a most important feature if the tunnel is to carry the specified quantity of water. At the intake end the water enters by a shaft 14 feet in diameter and 174 feet deep. Seven other shafts of the same diameter are sunk along the course of the tunnel, these being provided with equipment for lowering and raising the workmen, &c. Through these likewise are carried the electric cables and the compressed-air pipes for lighting the workings and operating the machinery. They also contain large ventilating-pipes, through which fresh air is blown to clear the headings of the dust and the foul air arising from the blasting operations. These arrangements are supplemented by 'boosting' fans at intervals of about 2000 feet. Provision is made for dealing with any water met with during the excavation and construction of the tunnel. A huge Venturi water-meter, with a bronze piezometer casting nearly 9 feet in diameter, is to be installed at each end of the tunnel. The normal flow is expected to be about 250,000,000 gallons a day, but this may be increased to 600,000,000 should the Schoharie watershed produce this amount. Some idea of the magnitude of the work involved may be gathered from the fact that the longest Alpine railway tunnel—the Simplon—is only twelve and a half miles in length.

A PROJECT FOR SALVING THE 'LUSITANIA.'

In our issue for December 1919 two enormous concrete vessels, designed for the salvaging of sunken vessels, were described. Having been moored over a submerged ship, the salvage-vessels were made fast to it by numerous wire cables. These being tightened up at low water, the wreck was lifted as the tide rose, and the three vessels were towed into shallower water. A variation of this scheme, intended for raising the *Lusitania*, has recently been suggested by Mr George W. Hersey in a letter to *The Times Engineering Supplement*. In this case only one salvage-vessel is proposed, but she is to be of colossal dimensions, her proposed length being no less than 1028 feet, her width nearly 341 feet, and her height 66 feet. As with the salvage-craft previously described, she is to be built of hollow concrete blocks, each being hexagonal, and having walls 2 inches thick. The *Lusitania* is believed to be lying about seven miles south of Kinsale, in 270 feet of water, where the tide rises and falls from 9½ feet at neap-tides to 12 feet at spring-tides. Mr Hersey estimates the weight to be lifted at 30,000 tons, and he proposes to attach 800 wire cables, each capable of lifting 40 tons, to crossbars passing through the port-

holes of the sunken vessel. This number leaves a margin of 50 cables for contingencies. It is most important in operations of this nature that the strain on each cable should be the same. To ensure uniformity, all the cables are to be connected to the pistons of huge hydraulic cylinders, having a vertical stroke of 20 feet. It is proposed that these cylinders should be mounted in two double rows along the top of the salvage-vessel, the rows being 88 feet apart (the width of the *Lusitania*), so that they will pull vertically upwards. Two water-towers will supply water to the under sides of the pistons at a pressure of 20 lb. per square inch, which is enough to give the necessary upward pull. It is easy to understand that with this arrangement the strain on each cable will be equal, while if one end or side lifts more easily than the other, the pressure can readily be shut off from some of the cylinders so as to maintain equilibrium. It is calculated that the weight of the *Lusitania* will pull down the salvage-vessel by 4 feet; consequently the tide must rise to this height before actual lifting takes place. Hence the wreck will be raised clear from the bottom to the extent of $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet at neap-tides, and of 8 feet at spring-tides. Having been raised, she will be towed into slightly shallower water, and the process will be repeated again and again, until the hull is close up to the bottom of the salvage-ship. At this stage the submerged liner will be near enough to the surface for divers to make her sufficiently water-tight to be pumped out and refloated.

CHAMBERS'S INCOME-TAX GUIDE.

The recent fundamental changes made in the assessment of income-tax render of unique importance the fourth edition of *Chambers's Income-Tax Guide*, by John Burns, W.S., which will shortly be published by Messrs W. & R. Chambers, Ltd., in strong paper covers at 3s. 6d. net (per post 4s.), and in cloth at 4s. 6d. net (per post 5s.). The former editions of this book met with remarkable success, owing to the wonderfully lucid and simple manner in which the various aspects of this complicated subject

were dealt with. Both the author and the publishers have received numerous letters of thanks from purchasers, intimating that the information given in the volume has enabled them to recover considerable sums of money which they had unwittingly overpaid. The forthcoming edition is in substance a new book, necessitated by the numerous essential changes adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a result of the Royal Commission on Income-Tax. These changes affect both the ordinary income-tax payer and the payer of super-tax. While the standard rate of tax remains the same as before, the whole framework of its application is altered. Rights of relief, adjustment, and repayment are on altogether new lines. One leading novel feature is that no one is now liable for the full 6s. rate on his or her whole income, personal and family allowances being made, no matter how large the income may be. This book, therefore, now appeals to every taxpayer. As super-tax is to be payable on all incomes over £2000, instead of only on those exceeding £2500, the exposition of this subject, which is complete and thorough, is of importance to a greatly increased number. Among other matters dealt with in the *Guide* are the new limits of exemption; the abolition of abatements, and the substitution therefor of personal and marriage allowances; relief to earned income; graduation, or rate-relief; relief to wife's earned income; the new rates of 'children' allowances; the new regulations governing the 'housekeeper' allowance; the new rules for the allowance for dependent (not now necessarily all old or incapacitated) relatives; the entire rearrangement of the life-assurance relief; and the new remedy for double taxation within the Empire. The transition between the old and new systems is bound to be troublesome, and all income-tax payers will be well advised to supply themselves with the tested and approved guidance afforded by this money-saving manual.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE RIVAL PROFITEERS.

By E. R. PUNSHON.

I.

MR PETER PHILLIPS, O.B.E., signed to his chauffeur to stop, and leaning forward in the car, looked with a touch of wonder and of reverence down the long, narrow street of tiny box-like houses, all exactly resembling one another, in one of which on a momentous and fortunate day he had been born, and in one of which still lived Mary Giles.

He wondered curiously what she was doing and of what she was thinking. Not of him, he supposed, or of the splendour of the lot about to be hers. For, after much doubt and hesitation, Mr Peter Phillips had at last made up his mind.

In August 1914 the call had come to him, as to others, to join in the struggle for King and country and the sacred cause of civilisation. He had never regretted the decision to which he had then come, or the energy and the devotion

with which he had thrown his whole soul and his little business of a cycle-repair shop into the task of making munitions for others to fight with.

Nor in his case had patriotic zeal and virtue, one is glad to say, resembled that virtue which is its own reward; and though it is said that the people are not often grateful to those who serve them, in this case the people—presumably the people, or, at any rate, some one or some thing—had gratefully acknowledged Mr Peter Phillips's zeal by transforming him in the short space of four years from a poor man into a rich one.

He was now the managing director and largest shareholder in a flourishing factory formerly making shells, and to-day turning out a line of cheap goods at one time imported from Austria. Still patriotic, Mr Phillips never gave a thought to profits, or even hinted at them in the advertisements by which he demanded the support of fellow-patriots for his efforts to wrench from our enemies—peace or no peace, enemies were still enemies to the exalted soul of Peter Phillips—this trade which he was self-sacrificingly endeavouring to establish on British soil.

Still, though he never seemed to think of them, profits came, and now that his fellow-countrymen had rallied to his clarion cry and were gladly paying him half-a-crown for articles the treacherous Austrian, in his efforts to undermine the Empire, had once been willing to supply for fourpence halfpenny, he had begun to think of Mary Giles again.

In the early part of 1914 there had been, more or less, an understanding between them. It had not gone so far as formal walking out, but it was, more or less, an understanding. Certainly young Jim Jackson had been beginning to display an increasing tendency to hang about Mary's vicinity, but he was rather by way of being a ne'er-do-well; and then the war had swallowed him up with the rest of those whom duty had led to the trenches in France, as it had led Mr Phillips to a managing-directorship, a large size motor-car, and the O.B.E., presented to him by a grateful sovereign in recognition of efforts mere money—dross—but inadequately repaid.

From this large motor-car, to which stern duty had led him, Mr Phillips now descended in pomp and majesty.

'You will wait here,' he said briefly to his chauffeur.

Mr Phillips seldom gave an order in these days. He merely stated facts. He did not say to you, 'Do this or that.' He said, 'At such an hour you will be doing so-and-so.' And you were. It happened like that, like the workings of fate and predestination. So he never said to his chauffeur, 'Wait for me,' as an order, but 'You will wait,' as a simple fact of nature. A subtle point, and an interesting one

II.

It was an instance of the delicacy of mind one would naturally expect from a member of the Order of the British Empire that Mr Peter Phillips did not drive down the street in his car to alight at Mary's door. To have done so might have savoured of ostentation. She might have felt overwhelmed. Besides, the abominable paving of this steep and narrow street would have been hard on the tires of the car; and when one can spare one's own tires and a woman's feelings at the same time, one's course is clear. It is astonishing, by the way, how often Mr Phillips's course was clear—but, then, that is usually the case with great men whom doubts do not trouble.

Half-way down the street he passed a small fruiterer's, and frowned to observe that tomatoes were on offer there at two shillings a pound.

'Profiteering,' he muttered, for he knew his gardener grew tomatoes for him at a cost considerably less than two shillings a pound, and he had a good mind to buy some and report the case to the local anti-profiteering committee.

Almost the next house was the one at which Mary Giles lived, and when he knocked, she herself came to the door.

'Eh, Peter, lad, 'tis thee!' she exclaimed with a little gasp of astonishment, and then corrected herself hastily—'Mr Phillips, I should say.'

'No, no, lass,' he answered, well pleased; 'always Peter to you, I hope.'

He followed her into the little kitchen he remembered so well, though it was four years and more since he had entered it. How often he had sat there during the time of the 'understanding' that once or twice the fleeting presence of Jim Jackson had momentarily disturbed!

'Well, lass,' he said, looking at her critically, 'how's everything?'

He noted with approval that she looked as pretty as ever—prettier on the whole, indeed, for there was an added serenity and gravity in her expression. And the kitchen had still that same cosy and comfortable appearance he remembered so well, and that somehow Messrs Smart & Highprice, the well-known artistic furnishers, had failed to attain in the new drawing-room they had recently provided for him.

'Bit of a surprise, eh?' he said smilingly, as Mary still continued to regard him with great eyes of wonder.

'It is that,' she answered simply, and then she smiled, and her smile was a very fascinating one.

He decided that he had been right in coming to Mary. Of course, he might have had his pick in circles Mary had never even dreamed of, but he was not sure that, of the smart young ladies who had indicated more or less plainly that he and his banking account and his managing-directorship were not displeasing to

them, some did not in reality look down upon him as an inferior; and he felt it necessary that his wife should never be tempted to regard him as anything but her superior—as Mary Giles plainly did, for he could almost see the awe and reverence shining in her wide, clear eyes. It remained only to explain to her the meaning and purport of his visit, and this he was about to do, when Mary spoke herself.

'Why, it must be all of four years since you were this way last,' she said.

'Maybe,' he agreed; 'these have been busy times, and I've been doing my bit, my lass—I've been doing my bit.'

'Yes, I've heard,' she said thoughtfully; 'yes.'

'Been precious little else in my life lately but work,' he mused. 'There's times I've been hard put to it to find time for bite or sup.'

'I dare say it's been a hard time,' she answered sympathetically.

'Oh, it has,' he answered. 'Yes.' He squared his shoulders as one prepared to meet even greater tasks in the future. 'But now I've time to think of other things and look round a bit, and so I've come to you.'

'Am I other things?' she murmured.

But he was not listening; he was absorbed in his own thoughts. 'I dare say,' he remarked, 'you thought I had forgotten you. Well, I hadn't. Very likely you thought I was never coming back. But I'm here. Before the war, Mary, I think we pretty well understood each other, eh? Then it came, and I had to take my share in downing the Hun. Lord, where it's led me!'

He paused, reminiscent and amazed, and she watched him with increasing wonder.

'I'm a rich man now,' he resumed. 'But that's no matter.' He made a gesture as though, were it possible to ignore that stupendous fact, he would be quite willing to do so. 'But that cuts no odds,' he said, 'for I'm willing to pick things up, lass, just where we left 'em.'

'Meaning'—she asked.

'Meaning,' he said heartily, 'as you and me, lass, can be wed whenever you say the word.'

It was a wonder he did not say simply, 'We shall be married on such a day at such a place,' according to his use and wont, but he felt some concession was due to her weak womanishness, and when he looked at her to receive her gratitude, he perceived that she was laughing. Nerves, no doubt. He only hoped it wouldn't turn to hysterics. But he did not find it unnatural or displeasing that his announcement had been too much for her. On the whole, he thought it good taste on her part to be so visibly affected—and then the door opened and there came in a man, or, rather, the remnant of a man, for this one had no legs and swung himself along between crutches, and to him Mary waved her hand.

'My husband, Jim Jackson,' she said. 'You

remember Jim Jackson?—Jim, this is Mr Phillips, you know; he used to keep the cycle-repair shop at the corner.'

Jim swung himself deftly nearer, released one hand, and held it out to Mr Phillips. 'Glad to see you, Mr Phillips, sir, I'm sure,' he said; 'it's very kind of you to look us up like this.'

'Glad to see you—very glad,' echoed Mr Phillips mechanically, for once a trifle shaken—'er—er—I'm sorry, though.'

'Oh, I manage very well,' answered Jim cheerily. 'Some chaps are a sight worse off.'

'Yes, yes, of course,' agreed Mr Phillips; 'yes.'

'Been in munitions, haven't you?' asked Jim. 'I heard so, and I can tell you we were fair grateful at the front for the way you chaps at home kept it up.'

'We did our bit, I hope,' said Mr Phillips, recovering slightly; 'we did our bit.'

'And a good bit, too,' said Jim cordially. 'Why, at the end we could just about smother old Jerry. I was out there when he used to smother us, and I tell you it was fine when we could pay him back in his own coin.'

Mr Phillips, with an eye on Mary, whose recent mirth he was now less inclined to excuse, accepted this gratitude as graciously as his somewhat perturbed condition permitted, and, a little to Jim's disappointment, soon pleaded his waiting car and disappeared.

'Very good of him, indeed,' said Jim when he had gone, 'to run in to see us like this.'

'Very,' agreed Mary dryly. 'But he's only a profiteer; he's got a fortune out of the war. But for it he would still be in his little cycle-shop.'

Jim slipped his arm round her waist. 'If it hadn't been for the war,' he said, 'you might never have married me; so perhaps, after all it's me that's the real profiteer.'

REVERIE.

DUSK of the evening,
Shadows o'er all,
Sea gleaming silver,
Seagulls' wild call.

Moon on the waters,
Fast fading light,
Hush in the darkness,
Lo! it is night.

E. E. JACOBSEN.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

MARAZION.

By the COUNTESS OF CROMARTIE, Author of *The Golden Guard*, &c.

PART I.

I.

I HAD known the sea below the gray stone building in many moods: blue and warm as the Mediterranean, and gray as cold stone, with the great breakers foaming mountain-high into our garden, where many strange flowers of Eastern lands grew and flourished. We were a strange, select little community up there on the hill that, fringed with fir and pine, ran sheer down to the rocks and sand-dunes of the sea. Beyond us lay the open moor, with its world of heather and gorse, stretching into the far blue distance. People who knew nothing—the tame folk of the distant town—called my father a retired sea-captain of Spanish descent. But his black-browed, ear-ringed kind knew him of an older race, and of a less respectable calling. The race—‘The Blood,’ he called it—had come here to Cornwall trading in the days when Solomon was king of Israel, and had his ships manned by Phœnician sailors, by the followers of Hiram of Tyre. My mother had been of ‘The Blood’ also, and had died at my birth. Indeed, my father boasted that since our ancestors had touched Cornwall ‘The Blood’ had never been mixed.

‘Run after any man not one of us, my pretty little devil,’ he said to me once, ‘and I will cut your throat.’

And I laughed, having a curious fastidious distaste for those who were not of ‘The Blood.’

I saw very few women, but was very much at home with the men who crowded into the panelled hall of the gray house when ships were in the harbour. I used to watch and listen to them, as the fire roared up the open chimney and lit up the fierce aquiline faces, the red sashes and caps, and the sharp knives in those same sashes. They used to bring me pieces of coral and amber, and pay me hard-bitten compliments. But otherwise they took small notice of me, *even if they would fain have done so*. I saw that by intuition, and knew that it was not Western, but a strange olden sense of honour. I think my father had once loved a woman of Spain, for he gave me a white mantilla, a comb, and a soft white silken dress, which I wore upon occasions. She must have been a little woman like me, because the dress fitted like my skin.

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All the women of ‘The Blood’ wore mantillas, and carried knives in their stockings, and were tall and stately and proud. I was tiny and slight, but proud too, though I think more easily scared than they were. I could dance the traditional dance of our people, but my father never let me dance for his guests.

‘You’re meat for their master,’ he said one day, grinning at me through his black beard.

I pulled the rings in his ears. ‘*Padre mio*, I have never grown up. Who wants a pixie-woman?’ I asked.

He looked at me gravely. ‘White as snow upon Lebanon, with lips of roses and eyes of stars; as your mother was, so are you. I knifed three men for her,’ he said.

‘God rest her,’ said I. ‘But, padre, my eyes are green, like a cat’s eyes.’

He laughed. ‘In Spain they have a song about green eyes,’ he said.

II.

Though I was delicately built, the life I led had made me physically very strong. I practically lived in the open air. Even my spinning and my needlework I did in the garden. I could walk for miles over the great moor, swim in the sea, and row a heavy boat. On Sundays we went to the church on the edge of the moor above the rocks. It was a quaint little church, and, set amid the wilderness, it was as strange as the faith of ‘The Blood’ who frequented it. Deep in our hearts we cherished a still older faith, but this was a concession to something milder, and yet something revered. The priest, a timid, gentle little man, came in for no consideration at all from his curious flock.

‘It is The Presence,’ I said to myself one day—‘The Presence that was and is and shall be the same, for ever and ever.’

My father had many strange books which I read, but that knowledge came to me from no book, and I was too shy to discuss the hidden things in my heart till the day came.

I was sitting beside my father in the church one lovely summer day, when HE came, walking with the free, light tread, in spite of the heavy sea-boots he wore. In dress he was nowise different from the rest of the folk of ‘The Blood,’

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AUGUST 7, 1920.

save that the thin shirt that he wore was of silk, and his ear-rings were not brass, but gold. He carried his red cap crushed in one hand, as he came towards where we sat. He was very tall, and looked hard as whip-cord. His hair curled over his head and ears in black rings, and his face was beautiful with the sharp, stern beauty of the ancient race. I saw several old fishermen gaze at him with pursed lips. The priest choked, and the book fluttered in his hand, but then he rambled on with his prayer. I saw my father's shoulders shake as he hastily buried his head in his hands. But the stranger came on, and calmly knelt beside me. My father leant across me as we rose, and whispered something I did not hear. The other nodded, and left the church before the end of the service.

Outside we came upon one of my father's old comrades, helpless with laughter against a tombstone. 'Of all the impudence!' he gasped; 'and ten thousand warrants out for him in every port. Gosh! I shall die!'

'Who was he?' I asked timidly, as we walked home.

'Child,' said the padre, 'that was Mara Marazion, of "The Blood Royal" of our people, and, among the Gentiles, the most damned pirate from here to Wyda Sands. Far be it from me to belittle my own poor achievements, but he—God help the ship he takes a fancy to! Yet he has done kind deeds in his day, though he is young still to be making his black soul.'

So that was the first I heard of Mara Marazion, a prince of 'The Old Blood.' Everything seemed strange to me in my little room that night. It was painted white, with lovely Eastern embroideries and cushions, and odds and ends of beautiful things that the padre had acquired on his voyages. Under the window was a chest of red Spanish leather, where I kept my clothes, scented with lavender. Besides the white Spanish silk, I had several other silken garments, as well as my little russet skirt and bodice laced with leather over a white shirt, and a leather cap that I wore when I chose to run wild—which was often.

Having partaken of a bath, and loosened my hair, I sat down on the chest, and quite unconsciously found myself praying, 'Do not let them catch him. Let some woman he loves help him to keep safe. Dear God! they will hang him else.'

Then came a thundering knock at the big iron-studded oak door, and my father plunged into the room. 'Dress yourself,' he chuckled. 'He has just arrived, and I have asked a few who can be trusted to keep their mouths shut.'

So I dressed, and suddenly realised that I was trembling. The folk of 'The Blood' seemed to swarm into my father's house to-night. We danced, after we had dined, in the big oak hall—danced to the music of fiddle, harp, and

drum, and Mara Marazion danced with me all the time. Afterwards we walked in the garden by the moonlight. I learnt much of him that night, but much I already knew by a strange sort of instinct. Lawless he undoubtedly was, but with it went a rigid code of honour that was the code of our ancient world. I felt curiously familiar with his whole mind and personality; the way he walked; the way he slapped the knife in his sash to emphasise an argument; the angle of the red cap on his black curls.

Usually I was painfully shy with strangers, and expected to be more so with the redoubtable Marazion. But now—I found myself telling him things that I had never dreamt of telling any one, and then listened entranced to his stories of the sea—stories that again made my heart beat with that strange and dear familiarity. Then I heard the padre shout my name from the door, and we went in.

III.

He was staying for some days, being safe here.

Next morning I took him to see a litter of puppies in the stable. His black horse stood there beside my father's. There I learnt another thing—his tenderness for small, weak things.

'Would you like one?' I asked rather timidly. He was standing looking down at me, holding a little gray puppy under his chin. He thanked me, and henceforward the gray puppy was his—and evidently knew it, for it shambled after him wherever he went.

One day we were walking together among the rocks. The tide was out, and a long stretch of wet sand lay glittering in the sunset. The gray puppy had attacked a large piece of seaweed with great ferocity, and we laughed at him, as we sat with our backs against a great rock. I had looked up, answering some question of Marazion's, when I felt his arm go about me, and his lips fierce upon mine; and there was nothing else in all the world for me but him, and the clasp of his arms, and that light in his wild dark eyes.

IV.

'No!' said the padre. 'Not until you are done with the old Trade. I'll keep her for you, be sure of that. But while there is any chance of a capture—No! and again No! Besides, my lad, the parson will betray you through fright if you show your nose inside the church again; and this is your only refuge, save that one other you know of, till your ship arrives. Fright for me killed her mother. We'll have no more of that.'

Then Marazion spoke slowly: 'I cannot give it up yet. It would be going back upon my men. Besides, it is my life to hold men so.' He held out a hand clenched as he spoke. 'And, upon my soul, whenever I see a ship that doesn't belong to one of us, I can't keep my hands off her.'

To all my prayers and tears, and to all Marazion's arguments, the padre was adamant. There was to be no wedding till Marazion's life was safe, all over Cornwall—safe, and his crew paid off. Then he and my father ceased arguing, as is the way of our race when each is determined upon his own way, and they talked of other things—of seafaring in far lands—the old Trade, as they called it.

'My little one,' said Marazion, after that night, 'the ship ought to take me off in a week, and then'—— And I could only hide my face against him, heart-sick and trembling.

He grew reckless those days. One evening he came home laughing, booted and spurred. He had been to follow a hunt miles away. He waved the fox's brush at the padre, who gazed at him thunder-struck.

'I spoke Spanish all the time,' he said. 'They thought I was a Spanish grandee. Lord! I laughed coming home till I nearly fell off my horse.'

'You won't fall off a rope so easily,' said my father.

'No,' answered Marazion; 'but I have got the refuge you know of—if it must end there.'

For all his laughter I saw that his face had grown thin, and his eyes fiercer than ever.

v.

A day came when a member of his crew joined us—an old man with one fierce black eye and a nose like a vulture's beak. He came with a warning. The ship had come; Marazion must go, and that quickly.

The padre was away that day, and when old Seth, the man, was gone, we two were alone.

'Will you come with me? It's only an hour's ride; and then I'll bring you back,' said Marazion suddenly. 'The padre will have no need to blame us.'

'If he were to curse me,' I said, 'yet would I follow you. I would follow you through the Gates of Hell, Mara, and you know it.'

He looked down at me, and I saw that he was very pale. 'Oh, my dear!' he said, 'there are other gates that mean eternity to those of our race, and they are not easy to pass through either. Not for such as you.'

'One dreams of them, I think,' I whispered. 'Ever since the day I first saw your face here, I have dreamt of them, Marazion.'

And he took me in his arms and kissed me, saying no more. And so we rode to the cave in the rocks, ten miles away. It was like a dream of fairyland—that inner room of the great cavern, that seemed to lead to the very back of the world.

'It is wonderful!' I murmured, as the one-eyed man lit a hanging lamp of crystal that swung from the roof. Ragged scarlet curtains of Eastern stuff kept the place warm, as well as a huge fireplace in one corner, where that evening

the fire leapt and roared. Near it stood a silken divan covered with rugs and furs. There was a great stone bath in a hollowed recess of the huge cavern. 'That was built no one knows how long ago,' explained Mara, as the one-eyed man solemnly emptied a cauldron of boiling water into it and departed. The little gray puppy we had brought with us was yapping at our heels.

'I am coming to robe you presently,' said Marazion.

Robe me he did, in a soft white silk garment lined with sable, and gold-clasped at breast and waist. Over my head he flung a great rope of pearls, and he set two great pearls in my ears.

'Marazion!' I faltered.

He was on his knees fastening my white fur-lined slippers as I spoke. He sat back on his heels and looked at me. 'Well?' he said.

'Is it just to please you I have these beautiful things to-night, or is it—something more?'

'It is—a great deal more,' he answered gravely, and something in my heart answered to the strange hardness in his voice. I was full of a sudden mad joy, with a mild undercurrent of fear within that made me reckless. The rolled-up sleeve of his silken shirt showed the Sign of the Serpent tattooed on his arm. I pressed my lips to it suddenly.

'I have kept these things for you—always for you,' he said.

'I thought they were only for now,' I said timidly. 'They are beautiful. It is so wonderful to be with you;' and I hugged him like a child in my joy. I saw his lips go white, and his eyes narrow and gleam. Then he sprang up, saying, 'Come, my sweet. We must eat.'

I came to the conclusion that the one-eyed buccaneer was a magician. Certainly he cooked like one, and while we ate, and drank the Spanish wine, Marazion gave him a glass over his shoulder, as the old man stood behind the divan. 'Drink to me to-night, Seth, if you never drank to me before in all your sinful life,' he said.

The old man chuckled. 'True this time, captain,' he mumbled. 'Well—she's a fair piece of spoil—a fair piece!' And he drank.

But Marazion's eyes blazed. 'I'll thank you to keep a civil tongue between your teeth,' he growled. 'The lady is of "The Blood."'

'My mistake, captain; my mistake entirely,' said the old man, as I rose, anxious for peace, and put my hand into the old pirate's. He looked at me with his one savage black eye. 'Poor lamb!' he said. 'Poor lamb!'

Marazion was caressing the gray puppy. 'You can take him, Seth,' he said, putting him into the old man's arms.

Seth looked at him, grinning, quite unabashed. 'Yes, I thought he'd be banished to-night, poor dumb beast,' he grumbled, and departed to his own quarters in the outer cavern—grumbling still.

The great fire had sunk a little as we

sat there whispering together. The centuries seemed to have rolled back. We were just two lovers of the ancient blood, and the ancient faith, whispering of the mystery that love held for such as we. Oh Marazion! Marazion! How beautiful you were that night with the fire-shine on the red silken cap, upon your curls, and upon the deeper fire in your eyes! And when you said 'Come!' I went with you, unquestioning, to where a hidden passage led to an ancient sanctuary of our faith, in the great cavern.

Then I knew. To say that I was not afraid would be a lie. To say that I was not happy

to the edge of death would be another. I clung to the arm that was about me.

In the risen moonlight far above I saw the ancient altar, saw the clouds of incense that hid the moonlight, and I made the sign that all the folk of 'The Blood' learnt. I saw Marazion also sign himself, saw his face tense and pale in the veiled silver light. So the Oath was sworn, for ever and ever!

Then he took me home to the padre, and as we rode by the great rock that hid the cave from us, our hands clasped hard together, for we knew that parting was very near.

(Continued on page 585.)

THE TRAGEDY OF THE DRONE.

By CANNING WILLIAMS.

I WAS once lecturing to some wounded soldiers on the honey-bee, and in the course of my remarks I asked them to guess how many worker-bees it would take to weigh an ounce. 'Ten,' said one. 'Twenty,' said another. 'Fifteen,' exclaimed a third. Then a bold spirit cried, 'Fifty!' All laughed derisively. 'If you were to multiply the last guess by six,' I observed, 'you would not be far wrong.' Yes, an ounce of worker-bees consists of about 300, and the same weight of drones about 100—from which the mathematically minded will deduce the fact that the male bee weighs three times as much as his sister.

If you were to examine a strong colony of bees in the height of summer you would find a countless number of workers, a few hundreds or thousands of drones, and a queen. If you were so unwise as to look inside the same hive in the winter you would see the countless workers and the queen, but you would search in vain for a drone. What has become of the males?

Before I answer the question, I think it would be well to state certain facts connected with the economy of the hive.

As the days begin to lengthen, the queen-bee deposits worker-eggs in some of the cells of the central combs, and as the weather grows warmer, and flowers shyly peep above the sod, nectar and pollen are brought into the busy domicile in ever-increasing quantities. This stimulates the queen to greater egg-production, until, by the end of April, her output (given favourable weather conditions) may reach between two and three thousand in the course of twenty-four hours. In spite of the high mortality among the workers at this season, the population of the hive goes up at a great rate. The queen, who has hitherto neglected the drone-cells (which are usually constructed at the bottom of the combs), now places eggs in some of them, and in about twenty-four days from the time of her doing so each of the baby-drones gnaws away the capping

of its prison, and, pale in colour and weak in leg, struggles out and joins the bustling throng.

The male inhabitants of the hive are quite harmless, for they have no sting or other weapon of defence or offence; neither are they provided with apparatus for secreting wax or gathering nectar. But they are possessed of great strength, large appetites, a wonderful power of flight, and marvellous eyes. It has been calculated that the eyes of a worker contain 12,000 hexagonal lenses or facets, and those of a drone 26,000. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive the power of sight which such an amazing complexity of vision confers upon this lowly creature.

About a fortnight after his birth the drone ventures into the light of day, and tries his wings near the hive, at the same time making a mental note of its exact position. Gradually he gains confidence, until the radius of his excursions may extend to several miles. He is a born aristocrat. When the weather is dull or cold he stays at home, helping himself freely to the sweets his toiling sisters have won; but on warm days, when the unclouded sun is climbing towards the zenith, his lordship sallies forth, his trumpet hum drowning the weaker voices of the working throng. Disdaining earth, he scours aerial spaces, every nerve in his body aquiver, and those magnificent compound eyes of his, which can see in all directions, scanning the azure fields that come within his ken. He is a lover seeking his lass, a prince in search of a princess, a king who would marry and confer upon his consort the dignity of queen and motherhood. But for every princess that wants a mate there are hundreds—nay, thousands—of suitors, and little dreams he of the price he will have to pay if he secures the prize!

But let us hark back to the hive for a minute or two. It has become so full of bees, brood, honey, and pollen that the queen can scarcely find an empty cell to receive an egg. Her

thwarted mother-instinct produces in her a condition of excitement, which is aggravated by the fact that several young queens are being reared, one of which is destined to take her place as reigning sovereign. The workers, too, have also got into a feverish state, for they have difficulty in finding places in which to store their hard-won booty. At last matters reach a climax. The congested condition of the colony can be cured in only one way—by wholesale emigration. So, in the middle of a bright, warm day, the workers, throwing off for once all sense of responsibility, pour out of the hive in a living stream, until the air seems filled with bees, and one wonders how wing-room can be found for so great a crowd. Presently the queen comes out, and, having no desire for aerial capering, alights upon some object near by—the branch of a tree, for instance—and soon a number of her subjects gather round her. The cluster rapidly grows, until a solid mass of bees, perhaps 20,000 strong, depends from the bough. It is a 'swarm'—the gathering of the emigrants prior to taking wing for a new home; but before they set out on their journey the apiarist appears upon the scene and captures them.

Very few drones accompany a swarm; their instinct leads them to remain in the parent hive where the young queens are being reared. A few days after the mighty exodus I have described has taken place, the first princess emerges from her specially constructed cell. If the bees have no intention of throwing off a second swarm, they allow her to wreak her murderous will upon her sisters; the cells are torn open by the jealous creature, and their hapless inmates stung to death. For a few days the virgin queen explores the combs, rubbing shoulders with the workers and the drones, who appear to ignore her presence absolutely; and then, enticed by the sunlight and impelled by strange stirrings within her, she takes from the portals of the hive a timid view of the outside world. Presently she rises gracefully on her wings, but after a short flight returns to safety. Half-an-hour later she may essay another trip, venturing a little farther abroad. She repeats these experimental flights for a day or two, each time increasing the distance of her excursions; and then, when about a week old, and provided that the weather is propitious, she embarks upon the greatest adventure of her existence—her nuptial flight. Away she goes, in ever-widening spirals, until she disappears from human view, but not from the view of the drones, who, from all directions, go in chase of the fleet-winged damsel. Twenty, fifty, a hundred, possibly a thousand, competitors enter the race, the strongest and fleetest of them soon drawing ahead of the others, until, perhaps, not more than a dozen are in close pursuit. The princess must not exhaust her energy, because she has to return home; so, suddenly turning, she yields herself to one of the foremost suitors.

Almost the next instant the drone, having fulfilled the object of his existence, falls dying to the ground. One moment full of life, of ardour, of eager expectancy, the next suffering the agony of a mortal wound! The kiss of love followed by the sting of death!

If in the course of her wedding-flight the queen has circled back to near her starting-place, it sometimes happens that the expiring drone is just able to struggle home, as is proved by the fact that his ruptured body is occasionally discovered near the hive he left. (I have myself picked up a dead drone in this condition.) A few bee-keepers have actually seen the mating of a queen and the death of the drone, and in *The A B C and X Y Z of Bee-Culture*—an American book—several accounts of it are given by eye-witnesses whose credibility is undisputed.

While the queen is away on her wedding-trip (in my experience, it usually occupies about twenty minutes) the workers show some anxiety, and when the bride-widow returns she is met by a number of them, who immediately follow her into the hive, manifesting in their behaviour indications of delight. The one act of fertilisation suffices for the queen's life, in the course of which she may lay, at a very moderate estimate, more than half-a-million eggs.

It may be asked, 'Why are so many drones brought into existence; and why has nature meted out so cruel a fate to the "successful" ones?' Let the famous bee-student, Huber, answer the first question. 'Naturalists,' he says, 'have been extremely embarrassed to account for the number of males in most hives, which seem only a burden to the community, since they appear to fulfil no function. As fecundation cannot be accomplished within the hive, and as the queen is obliged to traverse the expanse of the atmosphere, it is requisite that the males should be numerous that she may have the chance of meeting some one of them in her flight. Were only two or three in each hive, there would be little probability of their departure at the same instant with the queen, or that they would meet her in her excursions; and most of the females might thus remain sterile.' To the second question there is also a satisfying answer. It is this: It is essential for the safety of the queen, and therefore for the prosperity of the commonwealth over which she is to reign, that her stay in the air should not be delayed. She might be blown out of her course by a sudden wind, or beaten to earth, wet-winged and chilled, by a storm of rain, or possibly fall a prey to a passing bird. The long chase of the queen, in which drones from several hives usually take part, renders in-breeding unlikely, and also tests the stamina of the competitors. These objects attained, and in view of the dangers I have mentioned, it is clearly a wise provision of nature that the process of fertilisation should be as brief as possible.

I am no authority on spiders, but I understand that the love-making of the male of certain species is a proceeding which, if successful, ends disastrously. The male spider is smaller than the female. While, like a good sweetheart, his whole attention is occupied in making love, she is stealthily engaged in weaving a web around him, and when he has finished his amours she finishes him. This may be exemplary on the principle of 'waste not, want not,' but it displays a species of low cunning, and the taking of a mean advantage over a fellow-creature when in a condition of love-intoxication, and therefore not quite at his best, which are not calculated to increase one's admiration for the female in question. But the decease of the amorous spider does not excite one's sympathy as does the sudden and painful end of the lover in the sky. There is not that tragic transition from bounding, exuberant life to agonising death. One feels in the former case that the long-legged gallant has a sporting chance to escape, but in the latter escape is impossible. Almost the same moment that brings the suitor victory brings him ghastly defeat; he provides the element which is necessary for the summoning into being of untold thousands of busy lives, and in doing so lays down his own.

The love season in the bee-world is at its height in June and July, and that also is the time of the greatest honey-flow. By August (unless the bees are located in a heather district) the majority of the nectar-yielding flowers have ceased to bloom, and therefore the daily consumption of honey exceeds the income. When this takes place the queen reduces her egg-production, and soon ceases her output entirely. The workers, who have hitherto tolerated the burly drones, allowing them to wander about at will and, unmolested, sate their hearty appetites, now grudge them their meals of precious sweets; and this feeling soon shows itself in acts of hostility. The drones are narrowly and jealously watched, and 'moved on' when they attempt to satisfy their hunger. Harried about by the implacable virgins, they herd together on an outside comb. But here they are not allowed to remain at peace, and the next resting-place for the comrades in misfortune is the floor of the hive, where they look like a flock of bewildered sheep that have been rounded up by a well-trained dog. Slowly the vitality of the defenceless males is undermined by want of food, and when this has proceeded far enough, the calculating, cold-blooded spinsters begin their offensive in real earnest. Each drone is attacked by several of them, and in his alarm he struggles towards the light, dragging his assailants with him. If he breaks free, he may try to enter a neighbouring hive; but the way to food and warmth is barred by vigilant and furious sentries, who pounce upon him and drive him off. Possibly in his search for a home of refuge he

may come across a *queenless* colony. Here he is allowed admittance, for a hive without a queen retains its drones, and even welcomes strange ones. Failing such a sanctuary—and few are they who discover one—he makes repeated and desperate efforts to enter his own domicile. But what a few days ago was his home is now the camp of his pitiless enemies. He is met with fierce opposition, and some of the more ferocious of the sisterhood gnaw at the roots of his wings in order to disable him from flying. Thus the merciless business of extermination proceeds, until every drone lies dead or dying on the ground.

Some authorities state that the workers sting the drones to death. In order to see what went on within the hive at this annual carnival of slaughter, Huber stood six hives on glass tables, and observed (by deputy, for he was blind) what actually took place. The bees in all the hives attacked the drones on the same day. 'They seized them by the antennæ, the limbs, and the wings, and after having dragged them about, they killed them by repeated stings directed between the rings of the belly. The moment that this formidable weapon reached the drones was the last of their existence—they stretched their wings and expired.' A more modern authority states emphatically: 'It is specially to be marked that the bees never sting the drones.' Maeterlinck avers, equally positively, that they do: 'Each one is assailed by three or four envoys of justice, and these vigorously proceed to cut off his wings, amputate his antennæ, and seek an opening between the rings of his cuirass through which to pass their sword.' I have often witnessed the expulsion of the males, but I have never seen them stung, and though I would not have the presumption to deny the testimony of such painstaking observers as Huber and Maeterlinck, yet I am inclined to believe that it is the exception, rather than the rule, for the workers to use their 'swords.'*

The slaughter is not confined to adult males, but if there are male babies in the hive, they are ruthlessly dragged from their cradles, and, after the sweet juices have been sucked from their bodies (could the waste-not-want-not philosophy be carried to a greater extreme?), cast out of the hive, to become the food of birds and night-prowling beetles.

Thus the law of self-preservation operates remorselessly, and the workers that a short time before tended these same infants with unremitting care are suddenly animated with feelings equally strong, but of an opposite nature.

* Since penning these words, I asked the opinion of a recognised authority on the honey-bee (the Rev. J. G. Digges, M.A.). He writes: 'Undoubtedly the drones are sometimes stung to death in the autumn, and they are immediately thrown out of the hive; but the majority are simply driven out with nibbled wings. Apparently it is only those who are unwilling to go that have to be stung.'

Love is turned into hate, and the tender nurses become cruel executioners. Cruel? Well, no, perhaps not that. It would be as unfair to call them cruel for obeying their instincts as it is to

apply such epithets as 'lazy,' 'gluttonous,' and 'good-for-nothing' to the drone which, whether he accomplishes the object of his existence or not, is alike dogged by a cruel fate.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER, Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *Merrie Gentlemen*, &c.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE END OF THE ROAD.

I.

ONE noonday in the November of 1918 a taxi-cab drew up at the Washington Inn, a hostelry erected in St James's Square for American officers. An officer emerged, and walking with the aid of a stout Malacca cane, followed his kit into the place.

It was Austin Selwyn, who, a few days before, had come from France, where he had hovered for a long time in the borderland between life and death. Although he had been severely wounded, it was the nervous strain of the previous four years that told most heavily against him. Week after week he lay, listless and almost unconscious; but gradually youth had reasserted itself, and the lassitude began to disappear with the return of strength. The horrors through which he had passed were softened by the merciful application of time, and as the re-awakened streams of vitality flowed through his veins, his eyes were kindled once more with the magic of alert expression.

Having secured a cubicle and indulged in a light luncheon, he went for a stroll into the street. Looking up, he saw the windows of the rooms where he had spent such lonely, bitter hours crusading against the world's ignorance. It was all so distant, so far in the past, that it was like returning to a boyhood's haunt after the lapse of many years.

Going into Pall Mall, he felt a curiosity to see the Royal Automobile Club again. He entered its busy doors, and passing through to the lounge, took a seat in a corner. The place was full of officers, most of them Canadians on leave; but here and there in the huge room he caught a glimpse of sturdy old civilian members, well past the sixty mark, fighting Foch's amazing victories anew over their port and cigars.

Letting his eyes roam about the place, Selwyn noticed a group of six or seven subalterns surrounding a Staff officer, the whole party indulging in explosive merriment apparently over the quips of the betabbed gentleman in the centre. Selwyn shifted his chair to get a better view of the official humorist, but he could only make out a tunic well covered with foreign decorations. A moment later one of the subalterns shifted his position, and Selwyn could see that the

much-decorated officer was wearing an enormous pair of spurs that would have done admirably for a wicked baron in a pantomime. But his knees! Superbly cut as were his breeches, they could not disguise those expressive knees.

Selwyn called a waitress over. 'Can you tell me,' he said, 'who that officer is in the centre of the room—that Staff officer?'

'Him? Oh, that's Colonel Johnston-Smyth of the War Office.'

'Colonel—Johnston-Smyth!' Selwyn repeated the words mechanically.

'That's him himself, sir. Will you have anything to drink?'

'I think I had better,' said Selwyn.

About ten minutes later, after perpetrating a jest which completely convulsed his auditors, the War Office official rose to his feet, endeavoured to adjust a monocle—with no success—smoothed his tunic, winked long and expressively, and with an air of almost melancholy dignity made for the door, with the admiring pack following close behind.

'Good-day, colonel,' said Selwyn, crossing the room and just managing to intercept the great man.

The ex-artist inclined his head with that nice condescension of the great who realise that they must be known by many whom it is impossible for themselves to know, when he noticed the features of the American. 'My sainted uncle!' he exclaimed; 'if it isn't my old sparring-partner from Old Glory!—Gentlemen, permit me to introduce to you the brains, lungs, and liver of the American Army.'

The subalterns acknowledged the introduction with the utmost cordiality, suggesting that they should return to the lounge and inundate the vitals of the American Army with liquid refreshment; but Selwyn pleaded an excuse, and with many 'Cheerios' the happy-go-lucky youngsters moved on, enjoying to the limit their hard-earned leave from the front.

'May I offer my congratulations?' said Selwyn.

'Come outside,' said the colonel.

They adjourned to the terrace, and Smyth placed his hand in the other's arm. 'Do you know who I am?' he said.

'Eh?' said Selwyn, rather bewildered by the mysterious nature of the question.

'I, my dearAmericano, am A.D.Super-Camouflage Department, War Office.' The colonel chuckled delightedly, but checking himself, reared his neck with almost Roman hauteur. 'I have one major, two captains, five subalterns, and eleven flappers, whose sole duty is to keep people from seeing me.'

'Why?' asked the American.

'I don't know,' said the colonel; 'but it's a fine system.'

'You have done wonderfully well.'

'Moderately so,' said the A.D.Super-Camouflage Department. 'I have been decorated by eleven foreign Governments and given an honorary degree by an American university. I also drive the largest car in London.'

'You amaze me.'

'As an opener,' said the colonel, forgetting his dignity in the recital of his greatness, 'I am in enormous demand. I can open a ball, a bottle, or a bazaar with any man in the country.'

'But,' said Selwyn, 'how did it all come about?'

'Ah!' exclaimed Smyth, glancing up and down the terrace after the manner of a stage villain. 'Three years ago I was an officer's servant. I polished my subaltern-fellow's buttons, cleaned his boots, and mended his unmentionables. One day this young gentleman and myself were billeted on an old French artist. When I saw those canvases, I felt the old Adam in me thirsting for expression. Before all I am an artist! I made a bargain with the old Parley-vous—a pair of my young officer's boots for two canvases and the use of his paints. Agreed. On the one I did a ploughman wending his weary thingumbob home—you know. The following day happened to be my precious young officer's birthday, and we celebrated it in style. I would not say he was an expert with his Scotch, but he was very game—very game indeed. After I had put him to bed, I determined to paint my second masterpiece: "St George to the Rescue!" I did it—and fell asleep where I sat. When I woke next morning, imagine my astonishment! I had done both paintings on the one canvas! The ploughman was toddling along to the left, and St George was hoofing it to the right, but the effect one got was that a milk-wagon was going straight up the centre. It gave me an idea. I waited for my leave, and took the painting to the War Office. I told them if they would give me enough paint I could so disguise the British Army that it would all appear to be marching sideways. That tickled the "brass hats." They could see my argument in a minute. They knew that if you could only get a whole army going sideways the war was won. I was put on the Staff and given a free hand, and in a very short time was placed in complete charge of the super-camouflage policy of the Allies. The testimonials, my dear chap, have been most gratifying. We have un-

disputed evidence of an Australian offering a carrot to a siege-gun under the impression it was a mule. There was a Staff car which we painted so that it would appear to be going backwards, and the only way that a certain Scottish general would ride in it was by sitting the wrong way, with his knees over the back. In fact, my dear sir, if the war only lasts another year, I shall reduce the whole thing to a pastime, blending all the best points of "Blind Man's Buff" with "Button, button, who's got the button?"'

Having reached this satisfactory climax, the worthy colonel shifted his cap to the extreme side of his head, and walked jauntily along with his knees performing a variety of acrobatic wriggles.

'I am most gratified,' said Selwyn, repressing a smile. 'I had no idea, when I saw you and poor Dick Durwent marching away together, that you would rise to such fame.'

'Alas—poor Durwent!' exclaimed Smyth, pulling his cap forward to a dignified angle. 'I never knew who he was until we got to France. You passed him along as Sherwood, you know. His people are frightfully cut up about him.'

'They heard of his death, of course?'

'It isn't that, old son—it's the horrible disgrace. It only leaked out a couple of weeks ago from one of his battalion, but it's common property now. The old boy was absolutely done in—looked twenty years older.'

'What has leaked out?' said Selwyn, stopping in his walk.

'Didn't you hear? Durwent was shot by court-martial—drunk, they say, in the line.'

Selwyn's hand gripped his arm. 'Where is Lord Durwent now?' he said breathlessly.

'In the country, I believe—but why so agitated, myAmericano?'

There was no answer. As fast as his weary limbs could take him, Selwyn was making for the door.

II.

It was nearly eight o'clock that night when Selwyn alighted from a train at the village where he and Elise had heard the fateful announcement of war. He walked through the quaint street, silent and deserted in the November night. Except for two or three people at the station, there was no one to be seen as his footsteps on the cobbled road knocked with their echo against the casement windows of the slumbering dwellings. Reaching the inn, he bargained for a conveyance, and after taking a little food, and arranging for a room, he went outside again, and climbed into a dogcart which had been made ready.

After three or four futile attempts at conversation, the driver retired behind his own thoughts, and left the American to the reverie forced on him by every familiar thing looming out of the shadows. There was not a turn of the road,

not one rising slope, that did not mean some memory of Elise. The very night itself, drowsy with the music of the breeze and the heavy perfume of late autumn, was nature's frame encircling her personality. He had dreaded going because of the longings which were certain to be reawakened, but he had not known that in the secret crevices of his soul there had been left such sleeping memories that rustling bushes and silent meadows would make him want to cry aloud her name.

He told himself that she must be in London, and had forgotten him—and that it was better so. But the night and the darkened road would not be denied. They held the very essence of her being, and left him weak with the ecstasy of his emotion.

At the lodge gate they found a soldier, who allowed them to pass, and they drove on towards the house. So vivid was the sense of her presence that he almost thought he saw her and himself running hand-in-hand together again down the road. By that oak he had picked her up in his arms—and he wondered at the human mind which can find torture and joy in the one recollection.

Driving into the courtyard, he told the man to wait, and knocked at the great central door. An orderly admitted him, and took him to a nurse, who offered to lead him to the wing occupied by Lord and Lady Durwent. With wondering eyes he glanced at the transformation of the rooms once so familiar to him. There were beds even in the halls, and everywhere soldiers in hospital-blue were combining in a cheerful noise which was sufficient indication that their convalescence was progressing favourably. In the music-room a local concert-party (including the organist who had tried to teach Elise the piano) were giving an entertainment, with the utmost satisfaction to themselves and the patients.

The nurse led him upstairs and knocked at a door. On receiving a summons to enter she went in, and a moment later emerged again.

'Will you please go in?' she said.

Thanking her for her trouble, Selwyn stepped into the room, which was lit only by the light from a log-fire, beside which Lord Durwent and his wife were seated. Lady Durwent, who had just come from her nightly grand-duchess parade of the patients, was busying herself with her knitting, and was in obvious good spirits. Lord Durwent rose as Selwyn entered, and the good lady dramatically dropped her knitting on the floor.

'Mister Selwyn!' she exclaimed. 'This is an unexpected pleasure!'

The American bowed cordially over her proffered hand; but when he turned to acknowledge the old nobleman's greeting he was struck silent. No tree withered by a frost ever showed its hurt more clearly than did Lord Durwent.

Although he stood erect in body, and summoned the gentle courtesy which was inseparable from his nature, his whole bearing was as of one whom life has cut across the face with a knotted whip, leaving an open cut. He had thought to live his days in the seclusion of Roselawn, but destiny had spared him nothing.

'Have you had dinner?' asked Lord Durwent. 'We are strictly rationed, but I think the larder still holds something for a welcome guest.'

'Isn't the war dreadful?' said Lady Durwent gustily.

'I had something to eat at the inn,' said Selwyn, 'so I hope you won't bother about me.'

The older man was going to press his hospitality further, but as it was obvious from the American's manner that he had come for a special purpose, he merely indicated a chair near the fire.

'You move stiffly,' he said. 'Have you been wounded?'

'Yes,' said Selwyn, continuing to stand; 'but there are no ill effects, luckily. Lord Durwent, I came from London to-day to speak about your son Dick.'

At the sound of the name Lady Durwent checked a violent sob, which was of double inspiration—grief for her son and pity for her own pride. Her husband showed no sign that he had heard, but ran his hand slowly down the arm of his chair.

And now, for the first time, Selwyn became conscious of her presence—Elise had come noiselessly into the room, and was standing in the shadows. She came slowly towards him.

'Is it necessary,' she said, with an imperious tilt of her head, 'to talk of my brother? We all know what happened.'

By the firelight he saw that, only less noticeably than in her father's case, she too had been stricken. Her rich-hued beauty, which had become so intense with her spiritual development, bore the marks of silent agony. In her eyes there was pain.

'Without wishing to appear discourteous,' said Lord Durwent, 'I think my daughter is right. My family has been one that always put honour first. My son Malcolm maintained that tradition to the end. My younger son broke it. And it is perhaps as well that our title becomes extinct with my death. If you don't mind, we would rather not speak of the matter further.'

'He was such a kind boy—they both were,' sobbed Lady Durwent in an enveloping hysteria, 'and so devoted to their mother.'

Putting Elise gently to one side, Selwyn faced her father.

'Lord Durwent,' he said, 'I was with your son when he was killed. In the long line of your family, sir, not one has died more gloriously.'

Lord Durwent's hands gripped the arms of his chair, and Lady Durwent looked wildly

up through her tears. Elise stood pale and motionless.

'It is true,' said Selwyn. 'I tell you'—

'There is nothing,' said the older man—'there can be nothing for you to tell that would make our shame any the less. My son was shot'—

'Lord Durwent'—

'—shot for disgracing his uniform. That he was brave or fearless at the end cannot alter that truth.'

'Elise!' Selwyn turned from Lord Durwent, and his clenched hands were stretched supplicatingly towards her. 'Your brother was not shot

by the British. He was killed as he went out alone and in the open against the German machine-guns.'

'What are you saying?' Lord Durwent half rose from his chair. 'Why do you bring such rumours? What proof is there'—

'Would I come here at this time,' said Selwyn desperately, 'with rumours? Do you think I have so little sympathy for what you must feel? I saw your son killed, sir. It was in the early morning, and he went to his death as you would have had him go. As you know he did go, Elise.'

(Continued on page 581.)

LEAVES FROM A CATALOGUER'S WALLET.

V.—GREUZE AND DE GIRARDIN'S MOTHER.

By W. ROBERTS.

I.

IN his entertaining and discursive book on *Greuze and His Models*, published eight years ago, Mr John Rivers told us a good many half-forgotten or only dimly remembered facts about the procession of beautiful models who have been immortalised by this ever-popular painter; but he did not tell us all. As a general rule, the world knows very little indeed concerning the models of famous artists; there is a natural reticence in such matters, and those who knew the facts have too often died without revealing their knowledge, usually on the mistaken score that such information cannot possibly interest either the public of the time or posterity. After Greuze himself and his beautiful wife, probably Diderot knew more about the artist's sitters than any one else; but he left much unsaid, and predeceased the artist by twenty-one years.

In spite of changes in the popular taste for paintings—the admired of one generation is often the despised of the next—Greuze's pictures of young girls have never ceased to attract and to charm. He may, indeed, be said to have invented a special type of youthful beauty, to have introduced a new note, with many variations, into art, and more especially French art. He struck the note in early life, and constantly played upon it up to the end of his career. One of his most popular and charming pictures is that of 'A Girl with Doves,' which is now in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House, London. It is probably the Salon picture of 1800, 'L'Innocence tenant deux Pigeons,' which Greuze himself sold to a 'Monsieur Wilkinson' for 4800 livres (or about 4500 francs) in Paris on 17th August 1802; the original receipt has always accompanied the picture, and is now pasted on the back of the panel. This 'Monsieur Wilkinson' was doubtless Joseph Wilkinson, who was residing at 42 Harley Street, London, in 1807, but who lived in Grosvenor Place from 1813 until 1825; Mrs

Wilkinson is given as the tenant from 1826 to 1830, her husband, presumably, having died about 1825. What there is no doubt about, however, is that Mrs Wilkinson herself sent the Greuze picture to Christie's, that it was sold there on 25th April 1828, and that it found a new owner at 245 guineas, a reasonably good advance on the original price. At that sale Mr Christie is reported to have 'informed the company' that the picture was painted expressly for the proprietor, and that the receipt would be handed to the purchaser. It was bought by William Wells of Redleaf, one of the most celebrated picture-collectors of the period, in whose collection it remained for twenty years, and at whose sale, in 1848, it was bought by the Marquess of Hertford for 750 guineas, over three times what it had cost Mr Wells.

There are probably replicas of the picture, as there are certainly other pictures in which Greuze has treated the same subject or idea in slightly different ways; for instance, M. Charles Vendrye's collection contained a picture of the same young girl differently posed with a single pigeon in her arms. Nothing could be more characteristic of Greuze than this type of young girl, and it is perfectly clear that the same girl was the model of many of his other pictures of like type, painted over a period of several years. There are half-a-dozen pictures in the Wallace Collection alone which will prove this. But the catalogue of the Wallace Collection—like most of the books on Greuze—tells us nothing about the model who is claimed to have sat for the picture.

II.

Rather more than a century ago a young man of the name of Émile Delamothe, *de parents légalement inconnus*, drifted to Paris and picked up a living as a clerk. 'Tout à coup,' as Vapereau tells us, he declared his real name to be Émile de Girardin, and announced that his

father was General Alexandre Comte de Girardin (1776–1855), who took part in the wars of the Empire, distinguishing himself at Austerlitz and various other places, and who, like other generals before and since, turned author in his old age. Émile de Girardin's birth is variously given as 1802 and 1806—the earlier is probably the correct date. At all events it is certain that he was abandoned by his parents, who sent him to a *pension*, described as *modique*. His early struggles for existence were undoubtedly great, but these were small matters compared with his efforts to obtain from father and mother the recognition '*que lui refusaient à la fois les préjugés absurdes et des lois mal faites.*' Later in life he declared that one of the most beautiful sights to the gods was a worthy man battling against adversity. Of his own experiences he made use in his first book, *Émile*, published anonymously in 1827; this autobiographical document was proclaimed by Jules Janin to be a *chef-d'œuvre*, and obtained a great success.

For just on half-a-century Émile de Girardin was one of the most forceful figures in French politics and journalism, scoring triumphs in many ways, the greatest of all being the establishment, in 1836, of *La Presse*, the first newspaper to appeal to the masses. He revolutionised French journalism in the teeth of the bitterest opposition. Over the signature of 'Le Vicomte de Launay,' his wife, Delphine Gay, '*la muse de la patrie*,' started the first *feuilleton* printed in a French paper; it was called the *Courier de Paris*, and under this rubric various persons and subjects were discussed with a freedom '*et même un peu scandale*' which compelled everybody to read *La Presse*. The secret of the identity of the Vicomte de Launay was jealously guarded, and Madame de Girardin did not hesitate to '*dire du bien de Madame de Girardin*!'

After a very full life of literary activity, Delphine Gay died in June 1855, but her husband lived for well over twenty years afterwards, dying in 1881. The lives of these two extraordinarily brilliant, and to all intents and purposes well-matched, literary people are scarcely paralleled in modern French authorship. Neither is perhaps much read to-day, and a more or less respectable oblivion is the inevitable fate of the journalist. But whatever the ultimate fate of these novels, plays, poems, and other

publications, *La Presse* will, in the history of French journalism, preserve the names of Émile de Girardin and his wife, Delphine Gay, from complete obscurity.

III.

It will be asked, what is the connection between Greuze's picture of the young girl with two pigeons and Émile de Girardin, the French journalist? The connection is a very intimate one, for the beautiful girl, with the large dreamy eyes, in the Wallace Collection picture was the famous journalist's mother. This would seem impossible if the young girl in Greuze's picture was painted *ad vivum* in 1800. But the fact is probably this, that Greuze painted the picture from a 'stock' portrait done some years previously, just as Turner painted many pictures from sketches and drawings done on his travels years before. The little girl was Adélaïde Marie Fagnan, the daughter of a high functionary in the finance department under Louis XVI. She died in 1851, but lived long enough to witness some of the triumphs of the son whom she had cast adrift as a child, who escaped the fate of our own Richard Savage, and who, unaided, carved his way to fame and to fortune.

Not only did Greuze paint Émile de Girardin's mother, but his maternal grandmother, Madame de Fagnan, also sat to him. In a letter to Arsène Houssaye, De Girardin wrote: '*Greuze a fait de Mme. de Fagnan, ma grand-mère, le beau portrait que l'on voit dans la galerie du Duc du Morny;*' and this is probably the 'Portrait de Mme. X' which was Lot 103 in the Duc de Morny's sale in 1865, in which she is represented as coiffured '*à la Marie Antoinette*,' the hair slightly powdered, and ornamented with a garland of little roses. De Girardin further wrote: '*et de ma mère l'admirable portrait connu sous le titre de "La jeune fille à la colombe," chef-d'œuvre acheté, en 1848, 35,000 francs, par M. Herfort aux héritiers du Baron de Wilckenser. Actuellement collection Wallace.*' Émile de Girardin, like most French authors of the day, was weak in his English names, and not consecutive or accurate in his facts; for 'Wilckenser' was only a bad shot at 'Wilkinson,' and Mr Wilkinson was not a 'baron,' whilst 35,000 francs was far beyond what 'M. Herfort' paid for the picture. But these are details which do not interfere with the interest of the story, or in any way invalidate the claim set out by the founder of *La Presse*.

ON SAFARI.

A RAUCOUS shouting and the sound of much commotion outside his tent awakes the sleeper, though it is yet dark, and through the tent door the camp-fires can be seen still burning. Next, his personal 'boy' appears with

the early morning tea and banana, and announces that the cook has already started, and that breakfast will be waiting for the *Bwana Mkubwa* two hours' march down the road.

Having consumed this frugal meal and digested

the more important announcement, the now fully awakened district commissioner proceeds to creep from under the mosquito-net, wash, and put on the accepted dress of the country—shooting-boots, puttees, khaki shorts, and tunic-shirt; and over this an old shooting-coat, for it is cold at 5.30 A.M., even in Central Africa, when one is at an altitude of over 4000 feet. About a quarter to six the first streaks of dawn appear, and the long line of porters can be discerned being marshalled by the headman, each man with his load, in single file. This manoeuvre necessitates much vituperation and a few cuffs on the part of the headman, for each porter has an ardent desire to seize the lightest load, and to leave the heavier burdens to his neighbours. The argument between the disputants is carried on in high-pitched and excited shouting. By the time order has been enforced the camp has been struck, and the non-commissioned officer of the police escort reports to the waiting commissioner, who is smoking the first cigarette of the day as he watches the scene, that the *safari* is ready to start. Permission given, the long line of squatting black figures rises to its feet, hoists loads, which are balanced on black heads with much shrill chatter, and surges off down the road in full chant, sounding for all the world like a band of Highland pipers tuning up!

The procession is headed by a happy individual proudly bearing the Union-Jack (which is the commissioner's travelling token of office), and setting the refrain of the chant; next come the police N.C.O. and two stalwart police *askaris* with red tarbooshes and black tassels, khaki shirt-tunics, shorts, and puttees (but bootless, for all African natives march better barefoot), armed with Martini rifles and bayonets; after them the long line of porters, the end being drawn up by the commissioner's servants, and the whole 'whipped in' by two more policemen.

The sun is now well up, and the morning mists have melted away, revealing the lovely green country of the Buganda Kingdom—tree and bush clad hills, and hollows luxuriant with tropical growth. The commissioner, tying his coat on the handle-bars, mounts his push-bike, and with rolled-up shirt-sleeves cycles down the 'road'—a broad native track in actual fact—past the *safari*, which is covering the ground at a smart pace, until he reaches the spot where, under a shady tree by the roadside, the black cook has camp table and chair set up and breakfast ready for his hungry master.

This meal is quite an English one of porridge, bacon and eggs, and home-made bread; but tinned butter and marmalade give it a colonial flavour, while an appetite made keen by the early morning air and exercise soon disposes of the lot. A short rest over the after-breakfast pipe, and then another hour and a half's ride brings the commissioner to the scene of this day's work.

This is a cleared patch in the elephant grass on the left of the roadside, in the middle of which has been built a cool grass hut, set back on the slope above the roadway, with a view out across the valley towards the distant forest, and almost within sound of the Sessebo Falls. It is not a permanent rest-house for the use of ordinary wayfarers, but one specially built for our commissioner by the local chief, who, having received news of the *Bwana Mkubwa's* approaching visit, has thus prepared for him; nor has he forgotten either to provide firewood for the cook, and bananas for the porters.

When the commissioner arrives at the spot, he finds the chief, one Tomasi Mkairi, waiting for him with his sub-chiefs and headmen—a round dozen or so. Mkairi, is an old friend of the commissioner's, a Maganda by tribe, a Christian by religion, who has been taught at the C.M.S. mission school at Nemirembe. He is both educated and intelligent, a chief who knows his district and his people through and through, and who works hard for the welfare of his charge. He can read and write, and ride a bicycle, and his most treasured possessions are his silver watch and his fountain pen!

His garb may appear peculiar, for whereas, like most enlightened Buganda, he wears a white, open-work, embroidered linen pork-pie cap and the white linen *kanzu* or long robe, rather like a nightgown, yet over the robe he wears an old tweed coat long since discarded by some European, and under the hem peep tweed-trouser-clad legs, and, alas! boots—the latter dilapidated and at least two sizes too large for him.

His retinue of sub-chiefs and headmen appear in caps and *kanzus* too, of the latter some of white, some of brown, bark-cloth. Several have coats, but none, happily, have risen to the dignity of boots.

All greet the Big Man with broad smiles, polite bows, and phrases of welcome as, dismounting from his bicycle, he shakes hands with Mkairi and returns greetings with the entourage. Then all move to the shade of a tree at the edge of the clearing, where two camp-chairs are placed. The commissioner and Mkairi settle into these, and the others squat in a semi-circle on the ground in front of them. (Chairs, be it noted, are dignities reserved for Europeans and chiefs.)

In musical sing-song Luganda all the affairs of the district are discussed; there is no need for an interpreter, for the commissioner has spent many years in the province, and speaks this and other dialects fluently.

So for two hours the talk swings through rainfall, cotton crops, rinderpest among the cattle, the ravages of sleeping-sickness, foreshore clearing by the lakeside (by which means the dread tsetse fly is combated), plantation boundaries, crime in the district, poll-tax, and the hundred other subjects of administration. Mkairi makes

his report, referring now to this attentive courtier, and now to that one, for corroboration or detail. The commissioner listens, making notes for his monthly report, advises, sympathises, and exhorts, sometimes in the midst of an explanation driving a point home with a jest which draws a shout of laughter from his listeners. Finally, when various orders have been issued, the *indaba* breaks up, and only Mkairi remains behind to gossip with the commissioner and watch the camp being pitched, for now the *safari* has rolled up.

Its arrival has been heralded by a full-throated chant, drawing nearer and nearer, the porters giving tongue with frenzy as the end of the journey comes into sight.

Loads are quickly dropped in the clearing, and the porters drift off to build themselves little grass huts for the night; to cook *mtoke*, a porridge made from bananas; and to fill their water-gourds at the stream near by. Meanwhile the cook is setting up his establishment, and the 'boys' are unpacking chop-boxes and uniform-tins and getting lunch ready in the hut; while the commissioner and Mkairi, over lime-juice and sparklet, exchange Headquarters news, and that of the country-side and of game. Presently the chief departs, with many expressions of goodwill, and pedals off to his *shamba*, five miles away, his dusky retinue panting behind him.

'*Chakula Tyari, Bwana!*' announces the head-boy. In other words, lunch is ready; and very nice, too, consisting, as it does, of cold guinea-fowl, tomatoes and fried potatoes, cheese, fruit, and claret and sparklet. This disposed of, our friend dozes over last mail's *Weekly Times* on his camp-bed until tea-time; after which, armed with a scatter-gun, and accompanied by a police orderly, he scours the neighbouring banana plantations and woods for green pigeon and guinea-fowl, in due course bagging a brace of each. Both are delicious eating; but whereas the guinea-fowl are fairly easily acquired, the pigeon are shy birds, and have terrific speed

on the wing, so that each one bagged means good stalking and good shooting.

Sundown draws near, a lovely pink and orange flush in the sky heralding the sun's sudden plunge and the quick change from daylight to the velvet dark; for of twilight there is scarcely any. A big camp-fire burns in the clearing, and several smaller ones twinkle by the porters' little huts at the edge as the commissioner reaches camp.

Now for a welcome whisky and sparklet, a bath, and a change, which includes putting on mosquito-boots; and then letter-writing and a book fill up the time till dinner.

This meal in due course pays surprising testimony to the cook's skill and experience on *safari*, for he dishes up a 'first-toast' (for some obscure reason the universal name in Banaland for *hors d'œuvre*), soup, tinned whitebait, roast-chicken with sweet potatoes and onions, followed by anchovy savoury and a pine-apple—the red native pine, which, if not so sweet as the Kew variety, is none the less an excellent fruit. The meal, topped off with a cup of excellent coffee, made from beans grown on the White Fathers Mission *shamba* in the district, and a glass of the inevitable liqueur of Africa, variously known as green wine or 'starboard light,' makes the commissioner feel that life is tolerable at times even in Darkest Africa.

Out comes 'His Master's Voice,' and Kennerley Rumford takes the hushed camp to his 'Little Gray Home in the West,' and tells them 'Where my Caravan has rested,' and Major Mackenzie Rogan shows how the Coldstream really can play 'Peer Gynt,' to the apparently keen delight of the dusky audience. (It is curious how a native who will take but a *blasé* interest in a train or a steamer seen even for the first time, yet is ever delighted with a gramophone.)

However, time passes, and to-morrow is bringing another early start; so 'His Master's Voice' is stilled, and a 'nightcap' and a cigarette usher our now drowsy commissioner to his mosquito-curtained camp-bed, and well-earned sleep.

THE RED HOUSE MYSTERY.

By CHARLES W. HOPPER.

I.

'THIS Desirable and Well-Built Family Residence to be Let. Apply to Brown and Randall, High Street, Barnet.'

The time-weathered board that made this statement tottered on its decaying supports. The house, built in early Georgian days, was falling to ruin. A tangle of ivy and brambles grew over the buttressed wall that divided it from the lane. Four of the six windows that overlooked the desolate landscape opposite

were bricked up. Undoubtedly the house had originally been well built; but Verner could not help thinking that the man who had put up that board must have been an optimist.

Yet, to Verner, it was desirable. Its remoteness from the town, its picturesque antiquity, its general air of mystery, all appealed to his dreamy, imaginative nature. What a strange drama of life it must have seen! What changes! What tragedy?

A mile or so away, in the little semi-suburban country town of Chipping Barnet, there was

fierce competition for houses of any kind. Why hadn't it let? Was it too inaccessible? The serpentine lane that led up to it was little more than a cart-track. Or—the idea fascinated Verner—was it haunted? Was its strange loneliness accentuated by the memory of some grim tragedy? As he stood there staring at the old Red House a thrill ran down his spine. Verner *knew* that the old Red House was haunted—felt it in every fibre of his being.

The lane, like the house, had evidently seen better days. He had turned into it one day in an out-of-the-way part of the town, followed it by the side of the golf-course, past the Red House, and had continued along it until it joined the St Albans road at South Mimms. The lane took five miles to reach the village; the main road did it in three. In that five miles he had not met another human being. The distant roar of motor traffic on the main road, heard across the intervening fields, had accompanied him all the way, strangely accentuating his solitude. Yet he had not been alone. The ghost of the past had kept him company.

It had been rough going. For generations, evidently, the ill-kept, grass-grown lane had seen no traffic. At one place, for half a mile it was under water, and he had to take to the fields. At another an old solidly built brick bridge, disproportionately wide and long, carried it across a marshy stream. Verner, a keen lover of the romantic and the picturesque, thought that the Red House, the bridge, and the lane wanted explaining.

Randall, whom he met at the golf club, explained them to Verner. A hundred years ago the lane had been one of the main coaching-roads from London to the north. Then, to ease the gradients and shorten the route, the new road had been cut.

'Directly they had done it,' added Randall, 'the railway came along. Until motors came in, for eighty years there was little traffic on the new road. Now at week-ends it's as bad as Piccadilly on a busy day.'

'That explains that fine old Georgian house,' mused Verner. 'Why hasn't it let?'

Randall eyed him curiously. 'Thinking of getting married—or got friends who are looking for a house?'

'No. But I know some people who would like to come out here if they could find a place. And I was wondering'—

'You wouldn't wonder if you saw inside the place. Don't let 'em waste their time looking at it, unless they are millionaires. There are no drains, light, or water. Every bit of wood is eaten up with dry-rot. We've had it on our hands for years. Owner wouldn't spend a penny on it—he'll only let on a long repairing lease, and he wants a stiff figure. Place wants rebuilding, and isn't worth it. It isn't a good

road for motors, and you could not get a tradesman to call there for love or money.'

'Why not?' said Verner, immediately interested. 'Some murder or mystery?'

'No. The road is too bad, and the house too isolated. Now I come to think of it, though,' said Randall, 'I believe that was the place where the murder was.' He laughed, a little uneasily. 'Funny you should mention it. It wasn't funny, however, when my grandfather told me—I was only a boy at the time. I remember it gave me the creeps. But I'm not quite sure now whether that was the house, after all.'

'Yes,' replied Verner confidently. 'That was the house.'

'But you can't know anything about it,' said the other man, staring at him. 'You were not born when my grandfather told me that story. It is over thirty years ago, and I've never heard it mentioned from that day to this, or repeated it to any one. I always thought the old man made 'em up, because he knew I liked them.'

'It was about a girl, wasn't it?'

'He told me several. But my special favourite was the one about a girl. The man wanted to marry another woman. His first flame cut up rough about it. So he strangled her, and buried her in the garden. And then afterwards she haunted him until he committed suicide.'

'That's the stuff,' said Verner enthusiastically. 'She stands there, at the window, watching for him—eighteenth-century costume—listening for his horse's hoof-beats as he gallops back from town.'

'B-r-r-r!' exclaimed Randall. 'Don't talk about it. I can see 'em now, as I used to see 'em, when I crawled up to bed, looking over my shoulder. Come and have a drink.'

II.

When he had not time to get a round of golf in, the Red House was the turning-point of Verner's evening stroll. After his conversation with Randall the place fascinated him more than ever. Verner was an average-adjuster at Lloyd's. He played cricket and golf, and had the social habits of the ordinary young Englishman. But his nature had an undeveloped side—that of the dreamer and poet. He was heart-free, and the prosaic groove into which his life had settled filled him with a vague discontent. There were moments when his spirit craved for an outlet that would introduce some colour, romance, or adventure into his humdrum existence.

In this mood he often strolled along the old coaching-road to the house that had so fascinated him. Randall had lent him the key, and Verner had explored the place. The quaint interior of the house did not interest him so much as the formal old-world garden, with its broken statues and its moss-grown paths. It breathed the very atmosphere of romance. He

was unable to find any confirmation of the murder story; but the obliging librarian at the Institute had promised to look the matter up.

Verner knew that something must have happened there. He felt it in his bones, and he pictured the poor girl who had been immured there by some stern guardian or jealous husband. He often stared at the cobwebbed window that overlooked the buttressed wall, half-expecting to see her listening for her returning guardian, or watching for the coach to pass.

Except for an occasional pair of lovers, no one frequented the lane. But Verner never found it lonely as he conjured back the life of the past. He knew exactly where the highwayman had waited for the coach. Sometimes he was the highwayman himself, courteously saluting the trembling fair one as she descended from the coach. More often he was the gallant who rescued her after a thrilling combat with the ruffian.

One summer afternoon Verner left the city earlier than usual. Finding no partner at the clubhouse, for practice he played idly round the course with a driving-iron. At the fourteenth hole he hit a ball into the spinney that comes between the course and the old coach-road. He could not find his ball, and tiring of the game, lit his pipe and strolled along the lane.

The day had been bright and sunny, but now, as the afternoon sun drooped towards the horizon, it shone with a sicklier light. A drifting haze threatened to obscure its beams. The air was sultry and oppressive. The steady, persistent whirl of traffic on the distant main road was broken only by the plaintive call of the pewits as they wheeled over the fields that lay between. Never had the old Red House seemed so melancholy to Verner, so steeped in tragic memories of the past.

His senses were curiously alert. A strange feeling of detachment—of remoteness from the world—possessed him, which the distant drone of motors only heightened.

Something was going to happen! Something was happening—now—on the other side of that wall, either in the garden or in the house. With every nerve strung to its highest tension, Verner listened. There was silence. Then he looked up at the window and saw—*her*.

III.

It was the face he knew so well: he had seen it scores of times. She was standing close to the window, gazing sadly at the landscape. Her powdered hair towered above the well-set head. Neck, shoulders, and arms were bare. Verner caught the gleam of jewels, the sheen of a satin quilted petticoat below her low-cut bodice. She had not seen him, and he knew that she was bored—intensely bored.

It was a beautiful face, but, oh, so ghastly pale. Verner shuddered. Suddenly, as she raised a

little hand and delicately stifled a yawn, she turned, and her eyes met his. He had never seen such wonderful eyes. They showed like purple pools against the deadly pallor of her skin.

For a moment she stared at him in astonishment; then, as a man's hand gripped her wrist and pulled her away from the window, she started in alarm, and glanced at Verner, as it seemed to him, with a look of mingled resignation and appeal.

He did not hesitate. Throwing his golf-club over, he swarmed up the ivy that grew on the eight-foot wall. There was a thick bed of nettles on the other side, and Verner dropped into it on his hands and knees. He felt just in the mood to meet the villain who had laid his hands so rudely on the girl. A tangled shrubbery lay in front of him. As he fought his way through it, full of impotent rage and nettlestings, smothered with dust and cobwebs, Verner caught sight of them in front of him as they left the house by a side-door. The man was dragging her along, and the girl was feebly resisting. She was calling, 'Algernon! Help! Oh, help me, Algernon!'

The coarse-looking ruffian who was abducting her laughed. The horrid mirth made Verner's blood run cold. He caught sight of the unearthly pallor of the scoundrel's face. He knew he could not help, for neither of them was a figure of flesh and blood, yet Verner was irresistibly drawn to follow them. The motor traffic on the distant high-road steadily droned a weird modern accompaniment to this eighteenth-century tragedy.

'You are wasting your breath, my pretty one,' chuckled the villain. 'We've got Master Algernon trussed up like a fowl in the bushes over there. If you come quietly and quickly, we will spare his life. If not'—The brute raised his free hand and drew it across his throat with a horribly significant gesture. 'So hasten, my pretty lady. There is no time to waste.'

Verner broke through the undergrowth in time to see them disappear along a moss-grown path. Another man was with them—a dreadful figure with a black patch over his eye. Verner cautiously followed them. Then, as a third ruffian with a sword joined them, and the little party halted at the end of the path, Verner hesitated. He wished now that he had stopped to recover his golf-club.

With a piercing scream that made his blood run cold, the girl flung herself down and knelt at the feet of her captor.

'Spare me,' she cried. 'You shall have gold.' The grinning scoundrel shook his head. Again she screamed, 'Help! Algernon! Oh, help!'

Although he knew they would all instantly vanish, Verner felt that he must rush to her aid, when suddenly a man burst out of the bushes, and in a second there was a clash of steel. The new-comer, whom Verner guessed to be Algernon,

knew how to handle a sword. He might have held his own with his two principal opponents if the third scoundrel, the man with the patch over his eye, had not suddenly stolen behind the rescuer and flung a cloak over his head.

The chief villain drew back his sword, and was about to plunge it into the prostrate victim's breast. It was too much for Verner. Flesh and blood could stand it no longer. Neatly side-stepping the second ruffian, who stared at him in surprise, Verner landed a straight left full on the would-be murderer's jaw. The man went down like a log.

IV.

The dazed Verner suddenly realised that he had struck solid flesh; that eyes were staring at him from all directions; that he was the centre of a crowd of people in costumes ancient and modern, who were studying him with amazement. Everything was hushed; even the purring motors had ceased their drone. In the middle of the lawn was a large camera, and the man who had dropped the handle suddenly let off a stream of American profanity that astonished Verner.

'You chuckle-headed mutt!' said the ruffian with the patch. 'How did you blow in?'

'Where am I?' said Verner feebly. He turned to the girl whom he had sought to rescue. 'Who—and what are you?'

'I am Ruth Adair,' she said, smiling.

'But y-your face!' he exclaimed. 'Your face! I know it so well. I've seen it so often.'

'At the pictures,' she replied. 'It's on every hoarding in the world.'

'But—I don't understand,' gasped Verner. 'It was so real.'

'We have to make it real,' said Miss Adair—'to speak and act our parts. Otherwise we could not get the effect. You see, we are the Famous Frisco Film Players, and we have come three thousand miles to use your English backgrounds.'

'And we'd been waiting all the blessed afternoon for that gleam of sunlight right here,' said the camera-operator angrily, 'when you butted in, you hen-brained lunatic! Look at it now. It's gone again.'

'Keep a stiff upper lip,' murmured Miss Adair. 'Mike has got the jumps, but Dan is taking it very quietly. He is the man who bosses this crowd.'

Verner was suddenly conscious of a large man—a man with a square jaw—who was chewing an unlit cigar. Daniel J. Emmott, the world's greatest picture-producer, seemed to wake out of his lethargy. He came forward with extended hand.

'Shake. Put it there. Dunno about your brains, but you've got grit, young man. Grit and good looks is all we want for the film. Don't want brains—to act for it. We want 'em behind it, though, and perhaps that's where I come in. What's your name?'

'Verner. Hartley Verner.'

'Good name for the bills,' said Daniel J. Emmott thoughtfully. 'They say Britishers are slow, but I never saw a quicker and neater bit of work. Bit too quick, perhaps. Think it registered all right, Mike?'

'Sure,' said the camera-operator.

'I am very sorry, sir, to have disturbed your operations,' said Verner. 'But their faces were so ghastly pale, I thought they were ghosts.'

'That's the "make-up,"' said Ruth Adair.

'I thought it was all a dream.'

'You've got it,' exclaimed the producer enthusiastically. 'It *is* a dream. And they *are* ghosts—the whole crew of 'em. You dream the whole thing. Get me?'

'Perhaps I dreamed this,' said the injured actor, scowling, as he nursed his swollen jaw. 'I'll give the rube something to dream about.'

'Can it, Smiler,' said Daniel J. Emmott. 'Cut it right out. I always thought this show wanted a little more punch, and, by Gee-rusalem! it's got it.'

'I guess I have,' said Smiler with a bitter laugh, 'if this show hasn't.'

'I propose we take this gentleman outside and run off a few hundred feet of him moseying round the house and dreaming; seeing faces, and breaking in—that is, if you'll permit, sir, and the infernal climate will oblige.'

As if in answer, the sun began to break through the clouds.

'It's a cinch,' declared Daniel J. Emmott confidently. 'It's *the* goods. This film will sell like hot cakes.'

And it did.

And now you know how Hartley Verner became a cinema star, and how Romance and Ruth Adair came into his life.

A SONG OF LIFE.

SING me a song of splendid Youth,
Free as the vagrant wind;
A merry song, a light song,
The song of a care-free mind,
When life is made of happiness,
And Youth is unaware
How surely Fate will mark him
With the lining hand of care.

Sing me a song of life's great prime,
So brave, and strong, and deep;
A steady song, a full song,
The song of those who reap,
And find life's harvest rich and ripe
With good that never dies,
When seeds of Great Ambition
Are sown by Enterprise.

Sing me a song of life's calm close,
Tranquil, and sweet, and frail;
A little, sad, contented song,
The song of the ended trail,
When, happy with our memories,
We watch life's twilight fall,
And smile on Death all tenderly,
When answering The Call.

J. DEWAR DAVIDSON.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

I.—MEDITERRANEAN, 1861-1866.

By C. E. GIFFORD, C.B., R.N.

I.

IN March 1861 I was given a nomination as assistant-clerk in the Royal Navy, and duly presented myself at Portsmouth.

In the train I met a seafaring man, who said, in reply to my inquiries about a hotel, 'All the young gentlemen from the navy go to the "Cable's Head," on the Common Hard, just abreast of the *Victory*.' When I arrived at the Hard and asked for this curiously named inn, I found it was the 'Keppel's Head.'

Next morning at nine I presented myself on board the *Victory*, and though I did not (as the Irish assistant-surgeon is reported to have done) knock at the door of the entry port on the middle deck and ask, 'Please, is this the Royal Navy?' I was green enough to have done so.

When I look back to that day I appreciate the difficulty of the newly embarked Gosport marine, who could not find his hammock, though he was sure he had stowed it in the nettings on 'the Gossy side.' Neither he nor I had had any experience of swinging at moorings, and we equally lost our bearings.

We were interrupted in our examination to witness a sight which, an officer told us, we might never see again—a three-decker, the *Marlborough*, coming into harbour to pay off. Little did I think that four months later, when that grand old ship left the harbour, recommissioned, I should be on board her, taking passage to Malta. But it was so. I was one of eight fortunate candidates, and was appointed to the secretary's office of the Commander-in-Chief on the Mediterranean Station.

I spent my first two or three months on board the *Bellerophon* hulk, where the *Marlborough's* crew were berthed whilst their ship was in dockyard hands, and I learnt my first naval lesson very shortly after joining her. Our commander, Thomas Brandreth, of whom we gunroom youngsters were in wholesome fear, asked me a question, to which I replied, 'I don't know, sir.' 'Then go and find out,' rapped out in a sharp tone, taught me for ever after to adopt as a reply, 'I'll find out, sir.'

I learn from my home letters (all preserved by a fond mother), which will be freely quoted

from in aid of my recollection, that fitting-out days in 1861 meant busy times for all hands, but that we had 'glorious evenings.' I read of a concert in the chestroom, presided over by the senior midshipman, the instruments being tea-trays, combs, rattles, police-whistles, &c.

About this date the new breech-loading Armstrong guns were introduced, the *Marlborough* being the first ship in the Mediterranean carrying a 110-pounder.

Whilst we were lying at Spithead all the youngsters were sent for to come on deck and see H.M.S. *Ganges* arriving from the Pacific. She was the last sailing two-decker in commission at sea.

II.

We left Spithead in the *Marlborough* in July 1861, with 1444 officers and men on board, 30 cadets from the *Britannia* having just joined us, bringing up our gunroom numbers to about 65. Of these, 'the greater part have fallen asleep;' some have passed into civil life; two at least turned soldiers, one of them becoming a distinguished general—Sir Henry Hildyard.

I heard a story of Hildyard, as adjutant of the Highland Light Infantry, going, in uniform, on board the *Caledonia*, flagship at Malta, to call on an old messmate, whom he found to be officer of the watch. Hildyard hailed him with, 'I say, old chap, your fore-royal yard wants squaring.' The officer of the watch sends for the boatswain, and, on his appearing, 'Mr Baxter,' says he in his suavest tones, 'the adjutant of the Highland Light Infantry has come on board to say that your fore-royal yard wants squaring, and says something about getting a jigger on your lower lift.' Exit Mr Baxter, muttering, 'Well, I'm . . . !'

We had barely cleared the Isle of Wight when we fell in with a south-west gale, and experienced all the joys of an overcrowded gunroom, with ports barred in.

I think my previous experience of the sea had been limited to hauling up lobster-pots off Downderry, of which I retained very unpleasant recollections; and I certainly had never been out of sight of land. Little wonder that, in common with some fifty messmates, I paid toll to Nep-

tune. I read in my next home letter that one midshipman, Count Metaxa, offered one of the seniors five shillings to throw him overboard. I should have liked to do the same, but I had not the necessary five shillings.

The Bay of Biscay was not kind to us, and by the time we got across we had no coal left, and had to put into Ferrol, the chief naval port on the north-west coast of Spain, for a fresh supply. Our senior assistant-paymaster took fifteen of us boys ashore, and regaled us with fruit, cakes, and country wine. If all our childish orders of 'Rain, rain, go to Spain,' when we wanted a fine day, had been fulfilled, we should fully have paid for them now, for it poured in torrents throughout our stay.

Ferrol is ideally situated for a naval port, a very narrow channel of some miles opening out into a deep bay. In later years I was made very familiar with the difficulties of the approach to the harbour, having been assigned the unpleasant duty of prosecuting the admiral of the Channel Squadron before a court-martial for default in connection with the grounding of the battleship *Howe* in the narrows.

Ferrol was uninteresting, the chief impression remaining on my mind being the enormous crinolines of the Spanish ladies, and the brilliant colour of their dresses.

A gunroom crew rowed to Corunna to visit the grave of Sir John Moore. I have never had any sympathy with the critic who meanly looked up the phases of the moon, and proved there was none visible on the night of the funeral, so that the poet had no justification for saying that they buried the general by 'the struggling moon-beams' misty light.'

A more practical effort of a similar nature took place when the captain of the *Conqueror* was being tried by court-martial for running his ship on to a coral-reef in the Bahamas. To show the care taken in navigating her, evidence was given that a certain star was 'taken' by the midshipman of the middle watch, his observation carefully worked out and logged. A member of the court, Captain C. F. A. Shadwell, compiler of a volume of Star Tables, was seen to be busy with a nautical almanac, and, as a result of his researches, informed the court that the star in question was not visible during that watch! And this reminds me of a story I once heard Sir Robert Ball tell in one of his popular lectures on astronomy. He was on duty at the Rosse Observatory, when a visitor came in the evening to ask if he might see the moon through the great Rosse telescope. 'Certainly,' was the reply. 'Come here at half-past twelve. I am on night-duty, and shall be very glad to give you a sight of her. She rises at midnight.' 'Thank you for nothing,' said the visitor. 'I can see her with my own eyes when she is above the horizon, but I supposed with your big glass I could have seen her now.' And he took his departure.

III.

After a short stay at Gibraltar, we duly reached Malta on 10th August 1861. The Commander-in-Chief, Vice-Admiral Sir William Fanshawe Martin, was waiting to hoist his flag in the *Marlborough*. I was landed for duty in his office, and took up my quarters in Strada Zaccaria. Here I made my first acquaintance with the mosquito. From that day to this he has never neglected me, never ceased to sing to me at night in the intervals of feasting on my blood. What maddening pests mosquitoes are to thin-skinned people! Fourteen years later, in the Shanghai River, I had a violent attack of what the doctors called malarial fever. This was long before medical science had discovered that a lady mosquito is the bearer of the bacillus which is so often the cause of our fevers. I had been bitten badly, and have no doubt that was the cause of an illness which nearly cost me my life.

I met, in China, with a touching story of filial affection, as shown by the behaviour of a Chinese boy. 'Wu Mang, a lad of eight years of age, who lived under the Tsin dynasty, was very dutiful to his parents. They were so poor that they could not afford to furnish their beds with mosquito-curtains, and every night myriads of mosquitoes attacked him, unrestrainedly feasting on his blood. Although there were so many, Wu would not drive them away, lest they should go to his parents and annoy them. Such was his affection.'

Let us hope, for poor Wu's sake, that the mosquitoes of the Tsin dynasty were not the fever-bearing species.

But to return to Malta and the *Marlborough*.

The admiral had under his command a fine fleet of forty-two pendants, fourteen of them line-of-battle ships. Rear-Admiral Rodney Mundy was second in command, and Rear-Admiral Sydney C. Dacres captain of the fleet. When the fleet was at Malta the Commander-in-Chief occupied Admiralty House, whilst the captain of the fleet lived on board the *Marlborough*, and superintended drills, exercises, &c. Precisely at eight every morning the slight form of the Commander-in-Chief was to be seen in the well-known arch at the end of the Baracca watching the morning evolution. He and his flag-lieutenant had long been occupied in preparing a code of evolutionary signals for the fleet, which was to be tested during the summer cruise.

The fleet put to sea during August, and proceeded to Naples. Where could a boy find greater delight than in a cruise which gave him a view of Mount Etna, the Strait of Messina, Stromboli—always an active volcano—and Vesuvius, and led to a stay of two months in the beautiful Bay of Naples?

We had our own little excitements, too, on board the *Marlborough*. We were taken in tow by the *Terrible*, in those days regarded as a

marvel of power, though her 800 horse-power would now be scarcely enough for a modern dredger. It was she that put to sea in the disastrous gale at Balaklava in 1856, which wrecked so many British transports. 'Round went the ponderous wheels, and right in the teeth of the gale out steamed the mighty *Terrible*,' said one newspaper report of the gale. She took us along gaily at nine knots, but on a Sunday morning whilst we were at church the congregation was suddenly startled by seeing the two ships running into one another—*Charybdis*, the whirlpool, had hold of us, but we came through without collision.

After passing through the Strait we ran into a region of waterspouts, and counted fourteen. One big fellow was so near us that we fired two shotted guns at it to prevent its bursting over our heads and falling on our decks.

We spent the autumn in the Bay of Naples, anchoring generally off the city, but occasionally at Castellamare.

General Cialdini, viceroy of the province, dined one night on board the *Marlborough*, and it was made an occasion of great ceremony. A salute of nineteen guns was fired as he left the shore, and yards were manned on his coming on board. I had not before seen a great foreign official, and was much impressed with the nineteen orders and medals which he wore. On his leaving the ship, we burned red, white, and green lights at the yard-arms, and the boats of the squadron, all burning blue lights, formed two lines from the ship to the shore. The effect was charming.

The squadron was fully occupied in testing the new evolutionary signals, weighing in the early morning, steaming in the offing all day, and returning to the anchorage at night. It is the only occasion on which I remember a squadron 'anchoring by the stern;' but, then, Sir William Martin never spared either himself or his officers and men.

I had the pleasure, somewhere in the 'nineties, of sitting at lunch next to Mr (now Sir) Henry W. Lucy, and he asked me whom I thought the greatest admiral I had ever seen. I replied unhesitatingly, 'Sir William Martin.' 'Well,' said Toby M.P., 'that is interesting; I never heard of him. What did he do for the navy?' So short-lived is fame!

I told Mr Lucy that the navy owed to Sir William, among other things, the introduction of the continuous service system (under which men were entered for a term of years), which is admitted to have done more for the efficiency and discipline of the fleet than any other measure. I described how he had brought into a high state of discipline the crews of the Mediterranean fleet of some fifteen thousand men, a large part of them tagrag and bobtail swept into the navy at the time of the Crimean War; how tremendously keen he had been in

raising the fleet's standard in gunnery; to what a wonderful pitch of perfection he brought the fleet in sail-drill and other competitive evolutions; in fact, how much he had done to earn the sobriquet of 'Pincher Martin,' by which he was universally known in the service—the pinches being his constant and determined efforts to raise the efficiency of the fleet.

I served a second time in Sir William's office when he was Port-Admiral at Devonport, from 1866 to 1869. During this command he brought in great reforms in the Home Port administration. I remember hearing an Admiralty official say, 'There is still a pile of papers about a foot high containing Admiral Martin's proposals on naval matters which we have not yet been able to tackle.'

IV.

But to return to the Bay of Naples, where we youngsters enjoyed life thoroughly. Expeditions to the top of Mount Vesuvius, to Pompeii and Herculaneum, and frequent visits to the splendid museum filled up our days ashore.

Our morning and evening swim alongside the ship was interfered with by news of sharks having been seen; a soldier swimming close to Garrison Point, Corfu, had been taken down by a shark and had lost his life. But with a crew of 1120, a large proportion of them anxious for a dip, it was easy enough to find men to rig up alongside a lower-studding-sail as a bathing-tank. At sea, after the men's supper-hour—that is, about four o'clock—when the weather was fine, the squadron would heave to, and the signal 'Hands to bathe' come as joyful news after a hot day. It would be a bold shark that would venture into the midst of hundreds of men and boys skylarking in the water, and we were never disturbed. Weak or nervous swimmers would occasionally suffer a severe fright when the ship, forging ahead, left them some little distance astern.

Our summer cruise came to an end each year on 31st October, when the fleet returned to Malta, and those of us who were attached to the Commander-in-Chief's staff took up our quarters on shore. Here our gunroom messmates would frequently join us in making night hideous by singing the popular street-songs of the day—'Bob Ridley,' 'Dixie,' 'Champagne Charlie,' and other long-forgotten ditties.

It must not be supposed that our musical appetite was satisfied with such poor fare; we had a gunroom-box at the Opera House in Strada Teatro, where, for two shillings and sixpence a month, each of us had a front-seat twice a week, and where there was generally plenty of standing-room on other nights in our big stage-box. So we became familiar with Verdi, Rossini, and Donizetti, whose operas were prime favourites with the Maltese.

Our bands in the fleet were good, that in the

flagship particularly so. Nominally the bandmen were British subjects—Maltese; actually Italy supplied most of them. I find in my scrap-book a typical letter from one of them, dated from H.M.S. *London* at Corfu, 2nd January 1862, and addressed to 'His Excellency the Admiral on board H.M.S. *Marlborough*.' He writes as follows:

'Saverio Grancagnolo, a bandsman on board H.M.S. *London*, submits to Your Excellency that he has served the Illustrious and Valiant English nation the last two years and four months and never gets tired to praise and celebrate it at the highest degree, being an Italian, but with his greatest sorrow he suggests Your Excellency to obtain his discharge as his wife died of a cruel disease and left two unhappy children in the street without assistance from any relative whatever. Therefore the humble Petitioner begs of Y.E. in the name of whatever she has dearest in the world to allow him his disembarkment that he may go into the bosom of his two poor orphans.

'The Petitioner hopes it and remains, Your Excellency's most humble Servant,

'SAVERIO GRANCAGNOLO.'

It fell to my lot, whilst serving as secretary at Portsmouth in 1887, to make an inquiry into the mode of recruiting and training boys for naval bands, and later, as one of the secretaries of the Manning Committee, to visit most of the great Board-school establishments in the vicinity of London in search of recruiting-grounds for our bandboys; and I was impressed with the opinion that there was an abundance of native talent. Since then the Royal Naval School of Music has been established, which supplies British bandmen instead of foreigners, who might be a source of danger in war-time.

It is not all naval officers who are musical, however. A story is told of a captain who, on taking his morning exercise on the poop of his ship, observed that one of the bandmen, a Hercules in size and strength, was playing the piccolo, whereas a feeble little man was struggling with the trombone. Calling up the bandmaster, he ordered him to change their instruments immediately! It may have been the same officer who, observing that the big drum was silent whilst the other instruments were playing, sent for the drummer and threatened to punish him for laziness. 'Thirty-two bars rest, sir,' said the drummer. 'Rubbish!' replied the captain. 'There's not the least need for you to have any rest during the short time the band is playing.'

But I am letting naval bands run away with me.

v.

We spent a great part of the summer of 1862 in the Ionian Islands, which then formed a British Protectorate, with Sir Henry Storks as

Lord High Commissioner. Each island had its British garrison, Corfu specially being a favourite station, Cephalonia and Zante having also their attractions.

In 1858 Mr Gladstone had visited the islands to inquire into their desire to be restored to Greece; this led to the Union-Jack being struck in May 1864 and the Greek flag being hoisted. We were grieved at losing our favourite summer resort, but I remember that Sir William Martin strongly supported the policy of giving up the islands.

Many years later I was picnicking near the Empress of Austria's beautiful Corfu villa, and in conversation with our coachman, a Corfiote, learned that, as a driver in the British Commissariat Service, he had taken Mr Gladstone to the many villages, where he addressed the people, a Greek-speaking race, in the language of Homer. I asked, 'Did he speak to them in Greek?' 'Oh yes,' said he. 'Could he speak easily?' 'Splendidly,' said Jehu. 'Could you understand him?' 'Oh no! But they told us afterwards what 'twas all about!'

The cession of the Ionian Islands was preceded by the destruction of the greater part of the forts, which it was thought Greece would not be strong enough to hold against a hostile force. A party of R.E. officers, under Major Shaw, came out to blow them up, and my eldest brother, who was one of them, fired all the charges at Fort Neuf. The little island of Vido in Corfu Harbour was so strongly and expensively fortified that a question was asked in the House of Commons whether the guns were of gold. As each charge was fired—some of them of five thousand pounds of gunpowder (there was no gun-cotton in those days)—a groan went up from the crowds of Corfiotes watching the operations from the town.

Early in the morning of 27th October 1862, when we were lying at Corfu, we were startled by the firing of a royal salute, and soon learned that H.M.S. *Scylla* was standing-in, flying the Greek Royal Standard. On board were King Otho and his queen, driven from Athens by an insurrection, and on their way to Venice. His Majesty was to become one of Daudet's 'Rois en Exil.'

The squadron got up steam and started full speed for Athens, anchoring in Phalerum Bay, just outside the Piræus. We found great excitement prevailing, but no danger to life beyond that occasioned by straggling groups of soldiers firing *feux de joie* with ball-cartridges.

Having got rid of their king, the Athenians were enthusiastically in favour of offering the crown to our Prince Alfred (later Duke of Edinburgh), and every house in Athens displayed his portrait draped in British and Greek colours.

Just abreast of our anchorage in Argostoli Harbour, close to the beach and slightly below sea-level, were two mills with undershot wheels.

The harbour is tideless, and a constant stream flowed from the sea, drove the wheels, and then disappeared in a natural tunnel, the entrance to which was some hundred yards beyond the mills. What became of the water was an insoluble mystery. Scientists had studied the question in vain; barrels of tar had been poured into the stream, and the coast-line watched unsuccessfully

for some trace of it. The nearest active volcano from which it could have escaped, in the shape of steam, was Stromboli, some three hundred miles distant.

We returned to Malta at the end of October, and spent the next six months in our winter quarters.

(Continued on page 606.)

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXVI.—continued.

III.

IN a voice that shook with feeling Selwyn told of the fight for the bridge; how Dick, and Mathews, who had saved him, reached the Americans; of the desperate hand-to-hand fighting; how the groom had guarded his young master; the impending disaster; and the death of Dick.

'It meant more than just our lives,' he concluded, in a silence so acute that the crackling of the logs startled the air like pistol-shots, 'for as Dick fell we swept forward and gained the brushwood. Less than three hours afterwards the French arrived, and largely by the use of that bridge a heavy counter-attack was launched. We buried Dick where he fell—and, Lord Durwent, it is not often that men weep. The French general, to whom the tank officer had made his report, pinned this on your son's breast, and then gave it to me to have it forwarded to you. He asked me to convey his message: "That the soil of France was richer for having taken so brave a man to its heart."'

He handed a medal of the *Croix de Guerre* to Lord Durwent, who held it for several moments in the palm of his hand. From the distant parts of the house came the noise of singing soldiers, and a gust of wind rattled the windows as it blew about the great old mansion. Elise had not moved, but through her tears an overwhelming triumph was shining.

'And Mathews?' asked Lord Durwent slowly.

'We found him after the attack,' the American answered. 'He must have dragged himself several yards after he had been hit, and was lying unconscious, with his hand stretched out to touch Dick's boot. Have you heard nothing from him, sir?'

'Nothing.'

Again there was a silence fraught with such intensity that Selwyn thought the very beating of his pulses could be heard. At last Lord Durwent rose, and with an air of deepest respect placed the medal in the hands of his wife. Her theatricalism was mute in a sorrow that was free from shame.

'Captain Selwyn,' said Lord Durwent, 'we shall never forget.'

Feeling that his presence was making the

situation only the more acute, Selwyn pleaded the excuse of the waiting horse to hasten his departure.

'But you will stay here for the night?' said Lady Durwent.

'No—thank you very much. I have left my haversack at the inn; and, besides, I must catch the 7.45 train to London in the morning to keep an important appointment. Good-night, Lady Durwent.'

Amidst subdued but earnest good wishes from the peer and his wife, he wished them good-bye and turned to Elise.

'Good-night,' he said, his face flaming suddenly red.

'Good-night,' she answered, taking his proffered hand.

'I shall go with you,' said Lord Durwent.

The two men walked through the corridors, which were growing quieter as the night advanced, and, with another exchange of farewells, Selwyn went out into the dark.

He was weak from the ordeal through which he had passed, and both his mind and his body were bordering on exhaustion. He called to the sleeping driver, who in turn roused the horse from a similar condition, but just as the wheels grinding on the gravel were opposite him Selwyn heard the door open and the rustle of skirts.

'Austin!' cried Elise, running through the dark.

He almost stumbled as he went towards her, and caught her arms in his hands.

'I didn't want you to go,' she said breathlessly, 'without saying thanks. If Boy-blue had really been shot as they said, I—I——'

She did not finish the sentence, but clasping his hand, pressed it twice to her burning lips.

'Elise,' he cried brokenly—but she had freed herself and was making for the door.

No longer weary, but with every artery of his body on fire with uncontrollable love for her, he intercepted the girl. 'Elise,' he cried, 'I thought I could go from here and carry my heart-hunger with me—but now I can't. I can't do it.'

'You went away to America.' Her flashing eyes held his in a burning reproach. 'You did not need me then—and you don't now.'

'But—you didn't care? You never came back to the hospital, and I wrote to you every day. Tell me, Elise, did you really care—a little?'

'Yes, I did—more than I would admit to myself. But you didn't. All you could think of was going back to America.'

'But, my dearest'—his heart was throbbing with a tumultuous joy—'if I had only known. There was so much work for me to do in America'—

'You will always have work to do. You don't need me. I shouldn't have come out to-night. Please let me go.'

'Then you don't care—now?'

'No. You have your work to do still. You said yourself that we come of different worlds'—

'Elise, my dear'—he caught her hands in his and forced her towards him—'what does that matter—what can anything matter when we need each other so much? I have nothing to offer you—not as much as when we first met—but with your help, dear heart, I'll start again. We can do so much together. Elise—I hardly know what I am saying—but you do understand, don't you? I can't live without you. Tell me that you still care a little. Tell me'—

Her hands were pressed against his coat, forcing him away from her, when, with a strange little cry, she nestled into his arms and hid her face against his breast.

For a moment he doubted that it could be true, and then a feeling of infinite tenderness swept everything else aside. It was not a time for words or hot caresses to declare his passion. He stooped down and pressed his lips against her hair in silent reverence. She was his. This woman against his breast, this girl whose being held the mystery and the charm of life, was his. The arms that held her to him pressed more tightly, as if jealous of the years they had been robbed of her.

'I must go in,' she whispered.

He led her to the door, her hand in his, but though he longed to take her in his embrace and give his lips the sweet intoxication that they craved, he knew instinctively that her surrender was so spiritual a thing that he must accept it as the gift of an unopened spirit-flower.

'Good-night, dear.' She paused at the door, then raised her face to his.

Their lips met in the first kiss.

IV.

The following Saturday Selwyn met Elise at Waterloo, and with her hand on his arm they walked through London's happy streets.

It was 9th November.

News had come that the Germans had entered the French lines to receive the armistice terms, and hard on that was the official report that the German Emperor had abdicated.

London—great London—whose bosom had sustained the shocks, the hopes, the cruelties of war, was bathed in a noble sunlight. For all its incongruities and jumbled architecture, it has great moments that no other city knows; and as Selwyn and Elise made their way through the crowds, there was an indefinable majesty that lay like a golden robe over the whole metropolis.

Above St Paul's there floated shining gray air-ships, escorted by encircling aeroplanes. Hope—dumb hope—was abroad. Not in an abandonment of ecstasy, or of garish vulgarity which was soon to follow, but in a spirit of proud sorrow, Londoners raised their eyes to the skies. Passengers on omnibuses looked with new gratitude at the plucky girls in charge who had carried on so long. People stood aside to let wounded soldiers pass, and old men touched their hats to them. The heart of London beat in unison with the great heart of humanity.

From crowded streets, from domes and spires and open parks, there soared to heaven a mighty '*Gloria—gloria in excelsis.*'

After a lunch, during which they were both shy and extraordinarily happy, they took a taxicab and drove to a house in Bedford Square.

Leaving Elise, Selwyn knocked at the door, and was admitted to a room where a girl in an American nurse's outdoor costume waited for him.

'I got your letter in answer to mine, Austin,' said she, giving him both her hands, 'and I am all ready. Did you see him?'

'I did—yesterday afternoon. But, Marjory, I told him nothing of you, and if you want to withdraw there is yet time. Have you really thought what this means to you?'

Her only answer was a patient smile as she opened the door and led him outside.

'Elise,' said Selwyn, as they entered the cab, 'I want to introduce Miss Marjory Shoreham of New York.'

'Austin has told me all about you,' said Elise, 'and I think you are wonderfully brave.'

She took the nurse's hand and held it tightly in hers as the car drove towards Waterloo.

An hour later they reached a Sussex station, and hiring a conveyance, drove to a charming country home which was owned by a Mr Redwood, whom Selwyn had met on board ship. A servant told them as they drove up to the door that the master of the house had gone to the village, but that they were to come in and make themselves at home.

As he helped the girls to alight Selwyn heard the nurse catch her breath with a spasm of pain. He glanced over his shoulder and saw a man standing on the lawn facing the sun, which was reaching the west with the passing of afternoon.

'Please remain here,' said Selwyn, 'and I will motion you when to come.'

He walked towards the solitary figure, who heard him, and turned a little to greet him.

'Is that you, Austin?'

'Yes, Van,' answered Selwyn. 'How could you tell?'

With his old kindly, tired smile the ex-diplomat put out his hand, which Selwyn gripped heartily.

'I suppose it is nature's compensation,' said Van Derwater calmly. 'Now that I cannot see, footsteps and voices seem to mean so much more. I was just thinking before you came that, though I have seen it a thousand times, I have never *felt* the sun in the west before. See—I can feel it on my face from over there. Mr Redwood tells me that the news from France is excellent.'

'It is,' said Selwyn. 'I think the end is only a matter of hours.'

'A matter of hours; and after that—peace. Austin, I haven't much to live for. It was in my stars, I suppose, that I should walk alone; but there is one fear which haunts me—that all this may be for nothing—for nothing. If I thought that on my blindness and the suffering of all these other men a structure could be built where Britain and America and France would clasp the torch of humanity together, I would welcome this darkness as few men ever welcomed the light. But it is a terrible thought—that people may forget; that civilisation might make no attempt to atone for her murdered dead.'

He smiled again, and fumbling for Selwyn's

shoulder, patted it, as if to say he was not to be taken too seriously.

'The world must have looked wonderful to-day in this sunlight,' he went on. 'Do you know, I hardly dare think of the spring at all. I sometimes feel that I could never look upon the green of a meadow again, and live.'

Selwyn had beckoned to the nurse, who was coming across the lawn towards them.

'Van,' he said, taking his friend's arm, 'don't be too surprised, will you? But—but an old friend has come back to you.'

'Who is it?' Van Derwater's form became rigid. 'I can hear a step, Austin! Austin, where are you? What is this you're doing to me? Speak, man—would you drive me mad?'

Without a sound the girl had clutched his hand and had fallen on her knees at his feet.

'Marjory!' With a pitiful joy he felt her hair and face with his hand, and in his weakness he almost fell. Vainly he protested that she must go away, that he could not let her share his tragedy. Her only answer was his name murmured over and over again.

Creeping silently away, Selwyn rejoined Elise. Once they looked back. The girl was in Van Derwater's arms, and his face was raised towards the sun which he was never more to see. But on that face was written a happiness that comes to few men in this world.

(Continued on page 598.)

'THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES.'

By F. ROWLINSON.

THERE has always been a tendency, not only amongst the ignorant and superstitious, but also amongst some of the most enlightened, to regard the phenomena of the heavens as having a far-reaching effect upon human destiny. Man's life and his happiness are directly bound up in the earth's fertility, and since this is, without doubt, dependent upon the sun, it is argued that it is not improbable that the other heavenly bodies also play their part in the shaping of destiny. This much is within the bounds of possibility to even the most sceptical amongst us, but the argument has been carried still further. For since it is possible accurately to foretell the movements of most of the observed bodies, so, too, argue some, it should be possible to deduce from astronomical calculations some indication of the future of those influenced by the heavenly movements. So recent an authority as Dr Wilde has given his opinion that 'nothing incongruous with the laws of nature is implied in the theory that sun, moon, and stars influence men's physical bodies and conditions, seeing that man is made up of a physical part of the earth.' Not even in these unbelieving days does the science (if so it be) of astrology lack its

adherents—witness the yearly sale of almanacs by some dozen or more would-be seers; witness also the remarkable interest in Professor Porta's prediction last year of a world catastrophe.

The Babylonians were the first nation (apart from those of the Far East) to formulate a coherent scheme of astronomy. Their knowledge and their calculations of the movements of the heavenly bodies were comprehensive and exact; notably so, considering their apparatus. They were certainly the founders of modern astronomy so far as observation and calculation go, although their ideas would seem to us ludicrously absurd. On the basis of this knowledge their priests (who were probably their astronomers too) built up a system of astrology, at first, perhaps, as an artifice whereby the heavenly phenomena could be explained in terms of nature personified. Later, a special sect of the priests, the *bārē*, devoted themselves to the divination of the will and intentions of the gods by astrological methods; later still, mysticism and quackery were introduced as a hold upon the credulity of the ignorant.

The art of divination was at first a simple one. The course of the sun-god, Shamash, through the

year was mapped out into twelve constellations (now the twelve signs of the zodiac). A person born in a month when the sun touched such-and-such a constellation or sign was assured of wealth, of bravery, of misfortune, of chastity, or various other qualities. Everything was very simple.

But, unfortunately, the diversity of human fortunes and misfortunes is such that the discrepancies of the simple system were too noticeably frequent even for the most credulous, and so additional influences were called in as evidence: Sin, the moon-god, and Ishtar, Ninib, Nebo, Marduk, and Nergal (the five planets), all added to and modified the primary zodiacal predictions. Later the field was extended to include the fixed stars, and the whole gradually became involved in such a medley of magic and alchemy and quackery that it became almost unintelligible.

This rigmarole spread to other lands, modified here and there by some freshness of imagination, here and there adapted to an already existent mythology. The Arab philosophers in particular developed an extraordinary jumble of early chemical knowledge with astronomy and astrology. The Greek and Latin writers introduced poetical imagery to the queer science (Virgil connects Orion with approaching rain, and the Pleiades with wild storms). So, side by side, or, rather, linked together, astronomy and astrology grew through the centuries, sometimes officially encouraged, sometimes severely repressed, but always surviving by their appeal to the imagination. Interest and belief were not likely to flag whilst any man could go outside on a clear night and see great wonders for himself.

The combined sciences came to western Europe partly from the Arabs through the Moors and Spain, partly direct through the returning crusaders. Astrology, in particular, became fashionable in medieval times, and every court and prince must needs have a private astronomer. A sorry enough time some of these poor wretches must have had, and many were the ingenious ambiguities behind which they sheltered to preserve their positions—or their necks! Most of these were probably hangers-on, seeing in the 'science' an easy (if precarious) way to court favour. Amongst them, however, were some few real seekers after knowledge. The medieval astronomers were almost all astrologers too, but it is inconceivable that every one of these keen men could have believed the whole of their teaching. After all, they had to earn the means to carry out their more serious studies.

With the advent of the system of Copernicus began the estrangement of astronomy and astrology, although they were intimately connected for long after the sixteenth century. Instances of the way the astronomers of these early times mixed science and tradition are very numerous. Stöffler, the mathematician of Tübingen, calculated that in February 1524 Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn would be in conjunction, and predicted

a universal deluge as a result. His forecast, however, was based upon the slenderest of grounds—that the phenomenon would take place in the sign of Pisces, the Fishes! This pronouncement, coming from so noted a mathematician, created a great stir; arks were built, and many people made suitable preparations. Alas for Stöffler (but happily for the world), February was not even normally wet!

Not so unfortunate in his prophecies was Tycho Brahé a few years later. Having calculated from astronomical data, and with noteworthy success, the path of the great comet of 1577, Tycho indulged his fancy in a few astrological predictions. Most remarkable of these was his statement that a prince should be born in the far north who should lay waste the German kingdoms, and vanish in 1632. Brahé himself died in 1601, and this horoscope was fulfilled to the letter by Gustavus Adolphus, born in Stockholm, who advanced into Germany with overwhelming success, and who *did* disappear in 1632.

Stöffler and Brahé, as has been indicated, were of that school to whom there existed no distinction between astronomy and astrology. Kepler, only a few years their junior, already marked the rift which began to appear about this time, for, although he actually dabbled in astrology, he did so only to support his very large family. His attitude was clearly indicated in some of his own writings: 'What would you complain of, you too scrupulous philosophers, if astrology the daughter, whom you think foolish, support a poor wise mother (astronomy), if the mother is tolerated by the world only by reason of these follies? If men had not had the hope of reading their future in the skies, would any of you have been wise enough to study astronomy for her own sake?'

The last great stronghold of astrology in Europe was in France under the patronage of the Medicis. Paris was overrun with them, no less than thirty thousand practising at one time. There is an interesting story connected with Catherine de Medici. This much-feared queen, celebrated for her power, noble and imperious in character, was a prey to the most ignorant credulity where astrology was concerned. Having been told by one of the staff of astrologers who fawned upon her court (Cosmo Ruggieri, a Florentine) that the name Saint-Germain would seal her doom, she most anxiously avoided all persons or places bearing it. She abandoned the magnificent palace of the Tuileries, shortly after she had completed it, because it was in the parish of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois. In its stead she built another (scarcely as magnificent, for funds were running short) near St Eustache. Even here, amongst her astrologers, vague fears troubled her, and she built near the palace a fine fluted Doric column of enormous height, from which she herself might examine the stars. But her

fate pursued her. One day, overcome with faintness at the news of the violent death of the Duke de Guise, she sent hurriedly for a priest. On his arrival she asked his name. It was le Père Saint-Germain! 'Ah me!' she exclaimed; 'then I am dead!' She died the next day.

In England, Swift and his satire gave the death-blow to astrology with his ludicrous 'Isaac Bickerstaff's *Predictions for the Year 1708*.' Since then astrology has existed only amongst the most credulous and ignorant of the country-folk, and the spread of education has all but extinguished these last sparks.

MARAZION.

PART II.

VI.

THEY caught him as he went to join his ship the next evening. All his crew were on board, even one-eyed Seth. And they waited, knowing nothing. It was night when my father came and told me. The tears were running down his brown face, but I stood before him, and could neither move nor cry.

Marazion! My Marazion! They would hang him. The beautiful strong throat would—

He had one day more, they said.

'Sidonia, my own child, my little lamb! Cry, or you will die!' The words came to me from a long way off.

I smiled. 'I am sorry, *padre mio*, I cannot,' I said.

He was rocking me on his knee, holding me tight. I put my arms round his neck. '*Padre mio*! we loved each other so. We did no dishonour to you, did we? And we were so happy! God would not punish us for such a little time—only one day for eternity, *padre*—only one day we had!' I heard my own dry voice whispering.

'No—no!' he said. 'It was as it always was with some of us. You did no wrong, poor lamb; and you paid. Always the weakest pays in that.'

I was very cold; even my heart felt like ice; but I had no tears. I put my hand on the padre's cheek. 'You'll take me to him, *padre*, will you not?' I said.

'They won't let us in till to-morrow morning,' he said. 'At dawn I'll take you.'

So we sat together all the night. Once the padre tried to make me drink some wine, but my throat seemed closed up; and at last the dawn had come.

The town was alive with people. Some soldiers looked at me stolidly as we passed. Then we dismounted, and I held on to the padre's hand as we walked along, till a big stone edifice reared itself before our eyes. By it stood a crowd of people, ugly curiosity in their eyes. For against the wall leant a woman sobbing, while an old gentleman in a red hunting-coat tried to lead her away. Her hood had fallen back and her chestnut hair was all loose about her face.

'Squire's daughter she be,' said a man to father.

'Squire tried mighty hard to get him off, but the case was too black. And Marazion—he'll go game. He cut his jokes in the face of justice. There's summat in the old blood after all.'

And I listened and heard and saw like one in a dream. Marazion! He would have been on the great galleon by now. He had told me of his big cabin with the red hangings, where we would be together some day. Together! That was all that mattered in heaven, or earth, or hell to me.

VII.

The leg-irons he wore clanked as he rose to meet us. And then—I was close in his arms, and lay still there. Then came my father's voice: 'Would to God I had hung in my youth instead!'

'Never say that, captain,' answered Marazion.

My father's voice was rough as he spoke again. 'I would leave you alone together, if I could, but I'll look at the damned wall.'

I had just strength to kiss the padre's hand as it clutched mine. Then he had turned away, and my only conscious thought was to bury myself closer in the arms that held me, and to feel his lips upon mine—as he whispered of those hours in the cave, and how nothing mattered, nor life nor death, just because of that. And then, in a moment it seemed, the jailer had come back, and the time was over for us two. For me there was no time. I had locked my arms about the red sash, feeling dimly that no power on earth would make me let him go. But Marazion took my hands in his, and his clasp was iron. And I screamed once in a sort of whisper, as a tortured little animal might scream. Only he could have made me let go, since my will was his, now for ever and ever. But I looked up at him, and my eyes prayed what I could not say.

I felt the padre's hand on my shoulder, and knew that their eyes had met over my head. To my tortured senses their voices came, but brought no understanding till afterwards. First came the padre's voice: 'Have you got any of it on you?' Then Marazion's voice from far, far away: 'Yes, in that glass charm round my neck. Pull it off—will you, captain?—and smash it. There's water in the pitcher there.' There was some growled interference on the jailer's part; that too I remembered afterwards. Then my

lover's voice again: 'You are faint, little one. Drink this—come—to please me.'

To please him! Perhaps they would let me stay longer, just a minute longer, if I drank, said my bewildered brain. My head was tilted back against his arm, and something cool and bitter-sweet was running down my throat.

How strange it was! We were back in the sea-cave, and outside was the roar of the sea beating for ever against the rocks.

VIII.

When I awoke I was lying on the oak settle in the panelled hall at home, leaning back against silken cushions. By me sat the padre, looking worn and old.

'Padre!' I staggered to my feet, and then full recollection came to me—recollection and frozen horror. 'Padre! Did you give me *that*?'

'Yes,' he answered. 'He carried some of that old Phœnician stuff on him. I had used mine years ago. You could not have borne it else.'

I spoke dully: 'How long have I slept?'

'Three hours, little lass. Only three hours; I swear it,' he answered.

It was already dusk, and to-morrow— The madness of my own agony mastered me, and I spoke always in a whisper, for my voice seemed nearly gone. 'Padre, if I went back—back to those who have judged him, and told them it was not one life they were taking, but three, would they listen?'

He shook his head.

'No,' came his answer. 'My daughter is not to shame herself even for a king of our people.'

I fell at his feet, kissing his muddy sea-boots. 'Padre! what shame if I bore his son? And what shame to pretend it, just for his life—his life? These people, who do not understand us, may have no pity upon our love, but they might pity a little one who had done them no wrong, even if they wished to kill him, and me. It would be such a small lie, padre; and there might be a chance—just a little chance.'

He shook his head. 'No good, dear heart! I know them. They would but mock you. Didn't some of the soldiers laugh at his Gentile wench, high in the land as she is? Still more would they laugh at one of his own kind.'

I sprang up. 'I am going,' I said. But he caught me in his arms and held me. Then something in my heart, or brain, or both, seemed to break with a thousand sparks of fire, and I knew no more.

IX.

Pain and the blackest depths of hell—I know them all. And all centred round the gray stone building of the jail, with the sobbing woman leaning against it. Sometimes they were leading Marazion to his death, and I tried to go to him, but she stretched out her arms in front of me like iron bars, and would not let me pass.

And I would throw myself at her feet, begging and praying her to let me go to him. For I was his. And then she would laugh, and I would feel for the haft of my knife. These, and many more dreams, came to me, out of hell. Then suddenly I seemed to rise up out of the depths—to lie in such deadly weakness that I thought death was merciful, and had come to me at last, to send me where my heart had already gone.

I opened my eyes, and found myself in my little room, with the spoil of many voyages about me, and a scarlet coverlet of soft Eastern stuff over me. I held up my hand, and could see the light through it. Then I called weakly, 'Padre!'

A woman came in—she was not of our people, I could see. She gave one look at me. 'Captain!' she called sharply—'captain!' And then he came—*padre mio*!—walking softly without his sea-boots. I clung to him, and his tears fell wet on my face.

'Tell her,' said the woman then. 'She is better;' and she went out.

I did not understand. 'Have I been very ill, padre?' I asked.

'It was the fever in your brain, my lamb,' he said brokenly. 'Can you bear it, if I tell you?'

'You'll not want me to stay behind him, padre?' I asked wistfully.

Poor padre fairly burst into tears. 'No fool like an old one,' he gasped. 'Child, he's *alive*—retrieved! Some Spanish prince, whose son could not swim, and was once dragged by Marazion out of the sea by the scruff of the neck, moved heaven and earth, and got a free pardon out of the king. Only just in time'—

I clung to his arm. 'Padre,' I faltered, 'do not be frightened, but I can't breathe!' And everything grew cold and dark, but not the darkness I had known. When I came to myself, the woman was bathing my head, and the padre storming at her. She was quite calm.

'I tell you she is not dead, captain,' I heard as I opened my eyes, to hear the last of the padre's words: 'And she tells a hard-bitten old pirate like me not to be afraid, and then falls over. If I've killed the only thing I love, bar one in Paradise, it's your fault.'

'Padre! Padre!' I murmured.

But the mischief was done. 'I take my leave to go, sir,' said my nurse angrily. 'I have heard heathenry enough in this house, anyway.'

My father bowed. 'Madam, my tongue ran away with me. If you must go, take my apologies'—

'And my grateful thanks,' I said timidly.

But she was adamant. 'I will take my money now, I think,' she said.

'As you will,' said the padre, and I heard her suddenly change her tone, and thank him, from the next room.

'No matter,' he said coolly, coming back.

'After all, the two of us have done most of the nursing.'

My heart was fluttering in my throat again. 'Padre—where is he?' I whispered.

'Asleep. He hasn't closed an eye for three nights,' said my father. 'You were quieter when he held you. You wouldn't have the woman at any price. Besides, you talked far too much for any one but us to hear, my poor babe.'

'Did I?' I whispered, holding his hand to my cheek, and feeling rather troubled.

He looked down at me, and never had I seen his black eyes so tender before. 'It is all right, little one. There was your mother and myself,' he said. 'That old temple in the rock saw us too, my dear.'

I kissed his hand, and for a while we were both silent.

'Oh, padre, and he must be so tired!' I said then, remorsefully.

'Well, it was your being so ill, most of all,' said my father.

There was a light step at the door. It opened very gently. I knew who was there, and I clung trembling to the padre's hand.

'Why aren't you asleep?' said the padre roughly.

'Asleep!' said Marazion. 'I heard her call me!'

The padre sprang up and left the room, blowing his nose in a large red handkerchief. Of the next moments I cannot speak.

So life came back to me.

X.

It was Christmas Day—the day before we sailed. We had asked the padre to come with us; but he snorted, and said he was there to keep a port for us to run to when necessary. And the women of our folk dressed me in white, with Marazion's great pearls about my neck and in my ears, and they covered me with my mother's veil; and so I walked with the padre to the church on the edge of the moor above the sea. It was crowded with scarlet sashes and fierce dark faces, for all Marazion's crew were there, and many others as well. But my soul was in the ancient temple of our faith, there in the pirate's cave. There was green holly with scarlet berries about the old pillars. The priest's voice shook, and his hands too, as he spoke hesitatingly: 'Who giveth this woman to this man'—and I saw the padre's hand touch the knife in his sash, as he answered with a menacing 'I do!'

Then I guessed. The poor timid old man had been frightened into this service. I lifted my eyes wonderingly to the beautiful stern face above me. The priest spoke on so low, I could scarcely hear him, till I felt Marazion put the ring on my finger.

Then suddenly some one had gone to the organ, and the old Christmas hymn had

thundered out, and, lo! we were all singing—priest, fishermen, women, and Marazion's crew—Marazion and I hand-in-hand—'Oh come, all ye Faithful!'

It thundered like the surf on the beach, one clear boy's voice—Marazion's youngest sailor—piercing through it like a sword. And then, to the last notes of the organ, we had turned and gone out.

'Hutt!' said one-eyed Seth as we passed him—'He born to-day judged not such as we, to my thinking, capitano.'

And Marazion took his hand as he passed, and next moment seemed to disappear in a sea of red sashes and glittering knives, as his crew hurled themselves upon him to shake his hand.

'Outside, outside, you mannerless dogs!' he said, and outside they fairly dragged him.

According to our old custom he could not lift my veil till we were home. I heard him laughing and talking, and then he came back to me, picked me up bodily, and strode off with me.

'Pirate!' shouted the padre after him.

'Pirate yourself, captain,' answered Marazion.

XI.

That night we feasted and danced in the old panelled hall. At the end of eating and drinking, young Malachi, the boy who had sung, sprang on to the great oaken table, and sang the old 'Song of the Sea Rovers,' a thing that made the blood run hot through our veins.

'Lord!' said the padre when he had finished, 'if I were not so happy, I could wish that I were what I was again.'

And then the hall was cleared for the dance. I danced the last dance of all with the padre. Marazion and young Malachi were tearing down the room together, almost landing in the fire of the great open hearth. One-eyed Seth was dancing solemnly with the gray puppy in his arms, amid shouts of laughter. My veil had fallen over my face a little. I put it back to look up into the padre's brown face, as we stopped by the foot of the old winding stairs of black oak.

'Padre,' I said, 'I can never speak well when I am too happy. But I thank you for all my life, *padre mio*.'

He gave me a great hug. 'God bless you, my lamb!' he said huskily. 'You are like your mother, when we danced in this very hall. Her veil was falling, just so, and I—I had to sail away for my life without her next morning. Well! well! Look here,' he continued in a different tone; 'you're not still troubled about that wench? You know whom I mean? You spoke of her when you were out of your wits.'

'Yes, padre,' I faltered, 'I know; but I was only frightened because I was ill, and had evil dreams.'

'The women will run after him, you know,' said the padre.

I laughed. 'As they run after you, padre,' I answered.

Had not that last shadow of my fevered brain been laid to rest when I lay clasped in Marazion's arms, when I came out of the Shadow of Death and Hell?

XII.

'This stands good for home, does it not?' said Marazion, putting his signed pardon into my father's hand as we stood on the deck of his ship.

My father grinned. 'So that's your game, is it?' he inquired.

Marazion looked him squarely in the eyes. 'A king of *our* blood asks for no pardon on the high seas,' he said.

'Well, of all the unmitigated young devils'—began my father.

'I am not ungrateful, but the ship is mine, and the men are mine, and as far as I can make it, the sea is mine. It always has been mine—ours, I should say.'

'That is all sheer, solid, damned Phœnician!' said the padre. 'Man to man I agree with you, but you will have a care for her—don't let her be frightened or see'—

'God knows I will not,' said Marazion. 'If they leave me alone I'll trade fair, but I doubt if they will; and if they do not, would you have me hide behind this king's pardon?'

'Blast it, no!' roared my father, so suddenly that I jumped. And then he had kissed me and bidden Marazion farewell and gone.

My own padre! I leant over the gilded rail

of the big ship till I could see his brown face no more as he rowed ashore. An arm came round my shoulders and held me close. I looked up into Marazion's face. 'I am saying the same words as the padre, down in my heart,' I said.

XIII.

I do not think great happiness leaves such a mark upon one's nature as great sorrow. Perhaps it is not that exactly, but happiness seems to merge now into one great light, that is not broken into hours and days, like sorrow. Certain these wild days, and wilder nights, on the great ship under the Black Flag seemed to merge into the beauty of sunlit, vine-clad countries, and the clasp of Marazion's arms, and the flame of love in those relentless dark eyes.

The gray puppy (who had grown into a huge shaggy hound now, and had given up eating every one's boots and bits of rope) showed one the passing of time outwardly, though to us two who were one there seemed no time.

It was upon one Christmas Eve that we sailed for the harbour below the gray stone house—and our hold was heavy with gold and strange jewels and casks of Spanish wine—and I was in the padre's arms.

'So you have done it,' he said grimly to Marazion that night.

'Only under compulsion,' said Marazion quietly.

The padre handed a sealed document to him across the table. 'Take this thing back, for Heaven's sake! It has burned my pocket for three years,' he said.

THE END.

THE LIVYERES OF LABRADOR.

By VICTOR ROUSSEAU.

EVERYBODY has heard of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, who married women from Tahiti and became the progenitors of the Pitcairn Islanders; but it is probable that only a few persons are acquainted with the romance of the Livyeres of Labrador, the descendants of British seamen who intermarried with the Eskimos.

The word Livyere is not a native name Anglicised. It means simply the people who 'live here,' as opposed to the floating summer population of whalers and traders. The Livyeres, who resemble the Eskimos more than the English, are, nevertheless, loyal to the core to Britain, and sent nearly twoscore of their men to fight in the Great War.

All of those who survived turned their backs upon civilisation, tramping five or six hundred miles on snowshoes to resume their occupations as trappers and fishermen.

The Livyeres consist of about a thousand souls, inhabiting a territory some nine hundred miles in length, between Canadian Labrador, in

the south, and the territory of the pure-blooded Eskimos to the northward. Their history as a people begins about a hundred years ago, with the settlement along that desolate shore of shipwrecked mariners, whose numbers were increased by runaway sailors from whaling-ships. Until quite recently, however, the Livyeres were practically an unknown race.

The British husbands quickly civilised the Eskimo women who had united fortunes with them. They constructed frame houses in place of the snow *igloo*, upheld the Christian faith staunchly, and taught their children to consider themselves as British subjects. To-day fidelity to Church and State is the first principle of the Livyere's belief.

Although the motor-boat has now been introduced, and the illustrated papers come two or three times during the brief summer, on the Newfoundland mail-steamers, the Livyeres are naturally not so up-to-date as the denizens of more accessible countries. In particular, they

are not abreast of the fashions, and the bustle is only just going out of style.

The year of the Livyeres consists of ten months of winter and two of mosquito-ridden hot weather, called summer; but practically it is divided into the salmon, the cod, and the trapping seasons. In June the native exchanges his *kossak*, or sealskin coat, for the lighter *dikki*, made of moleskin or cotton drill. He puts away his sleigh and takes to his motor-boat, to lay nets for the salmon in the 'tickles,' narrow runs between two islands, or between an island and the mainland. Salted fish forms the principal staple of his winter supply, eked out with flour cakes and perhaps a caribou, shot during the season of migration, and hung up to freeze throughout the winter.

When the ice begins to form, air-holes reveal the presence of the seal, upon which the Livyere is dependent for his winter dress, his traces and whip, and the long boots that are worn by both sexes. Young seals are laid by their mothers on the new ice; the warmth of their bodies causes it to thaw beneath them, and the next frost often creates a new layer above them, so that the 'whitecoats,' as they are termed, are frequently taken by the hunters out of a perfectly transparent prison, within which they are immediately detected. Besides the whitecoats there are the 'rangers,' beautiful piebald animals, and the well-known 'hoods' and 'harps' of the North Atlantic waters, so called from the pattern upon the shoulders.

When the fur of the wild animals has grown long in midwinter, the Livyere leaves his home and sets his line of traps in the district that he has selected. The sale of his furs to the company factor, here called a 'postmaster,' provides him with the necessities of life; but, like the Montagnais Indian, he is nearly always behind-hand and in debt, and in seasons when the caribou change their route, or there is a scarcity of fur-bearing beasts, his lot is a hard one. Sometimes, however, the capture of a silver fox brings happiness to a Livyere home for the ensuing twelvemonth, for the pelt of one of these animals is worth a hundred pounds to him.

When the news comes that the minister is on the way, the Livyere harnesses his dogs to his sleigh, or *komatik*, which has whalebone runners, takes his wife and children, the babies being encased in crates, and sets out to welcome the parson and escort him a part of the way along his route. The arrival of the clergyman is the occasion for the celebration of marriages, and in former years it was customary for unions entered into without any formalities to be legalised at this time.

Recent years have been a period of black misfortune for these kindly and simple people. The last whaler of 1918 brought the influenza scourge into the country. Within a few weeks it had run like wildfire through the entire settlement, with a mortality of 25 per cent. The Rev. Henry Gordon, an Oxford graduate, who has laboured for several years among the Livyeres, assisted by visits from the medical mission under Dr Grenfell, was utterly unable to cope with the plague. He was himself attacked, and lay for three days in a stupor, from which he was aroused by the imperative necessity of digging graves for the dead in the frozen soil. He toiled at this heart-rending task for days, for the most part semi-delirious. When he recovered, and was able to investigate, he discovered whole families dead and frozen in their fireless abodes. In one settlement the sole survivor was an almost imbecile old woman, who was gnawing a lump of frozen bread in the midst of the bodies of her descendants. Mr Gordon has been revisiting England in order to raise a small sum of money to build an orphanage for the children of the influenza victims, which is to be combined with a school where an elementary education can be given and some knowledge of domestic science inculcated.

Despite his apparently deplorable position, the Livyere would under no circumstances exchange his lot for that of the dweller in a more favoured clime. He thinks himself the happiest man in the world; and Livyeres who visit Newfoundland usually lose no time in going 'down north' into Labrador again.

INDUSTRIAL USES FOR THE POTATO.

By FREDERICK A. TALBOT,

Author of *The Rejuvenation of Agricultural Britain*, *The New Garden of Canada*, &c.

I.

THE potato has always been invested with a peculiar significance. Its food value has become established, and the potato is now generally regarded as coming second to wheat as the staff of life. During the war, when our wheat-flour stocks were at a low level, we were urged to eat more potatoes, while our small food-raisers

were strongly recommended to choose the tuber as the main crop for their allotments. Some idea of the extent to which the official requests were met may be gathered from the fact that during 1918 the allotment-holders south of the Tweed raised a round million tons of the tubers from their small plots.

Ever since the potato was introduced into Europe it has been regarded as an indispensable

vegetable. It appeals to every nation included in the category of 'bread-eaters,' and the farmer, appreciating the value of this crop, was disposed to devote more and more land to its cultivation. This tendency was encouraged by the discovery that the tuber constitutes a first-class food not only for man, but for cattle as well. The potato's profitable nature particularly impressed the German farmer, and he concentrated his energies upon increasing the yield from his holdings, as well as reclaiming land which was considered to be useless for agriculture, in order to extend the acreage devoted to the tuber. The inevitable result was a glut of potatoes. The problem was complicated by the circumstance that this food became available for stock at the time when other feeding-stuffs were plentiful; whereas if the potato could only be preserved in some form or other, to be released for feeding purposes at a later date, when other suitable foods were difficult to procure, and when open-air grazing was impossible owing to snow and frost, incalculable benefits would accrue.

In this country the situation did not present such a startling aspect. Our annual crop is relatively small, being seven or eight million tons a year. Cultivation for the table still constitutes the determining factor, while the question of storage does not present any grave problems, because resort can be made to clamping or pitting. But in Germany, which raises 54,000,000 tons of potatoes a year, clamping was quite out of the question.

II.

To cope with the glut in Germany two lines of investigation were undertaken. One was purely scientific, involving the perfection of processes for the extraction of the outstanding contents of the tuber and their application to industrial purposes. The composition of the potato, according to a British authority, may roughly be set down as follows:

Starch	15.4 to 17 per cent.
Fibrin and albumen	2.5 "
Dextrine and pectose	2 "
Cellulose	1 "
Mineral matter	1 "
Fat5 "
Water	75 "
Waste	1 "

The high starch content prompted the utilisation of the potato for the extraction of this industrial commodity; while it also proved profitable to secure the alcohol, for which there was a wide and increasing market in Germany. But the starch yield varied very widely. This variation affected the market value of the produce to a very great degree. Accordingly the growers found themselves at the mercy of the merchants, who fixed the prices, which erred so markedly on the low side as to render the cultivation of the crop far from profitable. The growers were compelled to accept the

ruinous quotations owing to the extreme susceptibility of the potato to frost, which militated against the elaboration of simple, effective, and cheap storage methods.

The agrarian interests were forced to attack the question from motives of self-preservation, and the successful drying of beet-pulp after the sugar has been extracted, thereby enabling the material to be kept indefinitely for stock-feeding purposes, suggested an examination of the feasibility of applying similar methods to the potato. These investigations were carried out, and as a result two successful and simple methods were evolved, perfected, and brought into operation.

In the one process the potato is shredded into pencil-like pieces, and then dried under intense heat, the resultant product being known as *schnitzel*. In the second process the potatoes are cooked, mashed to a pulp, and passed between hot rollers, after the manner of a sheet of paper, so that when finally removed they are in the form of thin, small flakes, called *flocken*. The product from both processes may be kept indefinitely (so long as it is preserved from the ravages of damp) and is not affected by frost. Consequently the farmers are able to hold their surplus crops to tide their stock over the winter; while, if they decide to place them upon the market, they can do so under advantageous price conditions, the ruinous tactics of the merchants thus being completely circumvented. To illustrate the keeping properties of the *flocken*, or flake, it may be stated that in some instances flake has been kept for a period of five years or more, and upon investigation has been found to be quite as good as that recently prepared.

While two processes are available, it is the *flocken* system which is the more widely practised. Although somewhat at a disadvantage in cost of production, flake is claimed to be superior in point of digestibility, and the capital cost of the requisite plant is lower. Thus, whereas the cost of producing *schnitzel* was computed to range from four to six shillings per ton of raw potatoes, that of *flocken* extended from eight to ten shillings per ton of raw potatoes.

The process completely solved the potato problem in Germany. Before the war there were fully 500 potato-drying factories in operation, of which total only about 20 per cent. were devoted to the manufacture of the *schnitzel*. The rapid development of the industry was due in great measure to the practical sympathy of the Government, which co-operated with the agricultural societies in the encouragement of experiment by the offer of attractive prizes.

III.

It was quickly found that the dried potato, especially in flake form, constituted a first-class raw material for many promising products. Drying did not adversely affect the composition

of the potato. Starch and alcohol could be produced as readily from the dried as from the raw tuber. The dried product is converted into flour, which is sold as 'farina.' The demand for this product is rising steadily in these islands, owing to increasing application of 'farina' to the preparation of proprietary custard-powders, bun-flours, thick sauces, soups, and mixed farinaceous articles. The extending use in these fields is not surprising in view of the nutritive properties of the product, more particularly as it represents the potato in a highly concentrated form and free from water, which allows it to be broken down according to the dictates of fancy.

This growing popularity of farina was responsible for a new development—a proposal to prepare potato-flour in the British Isles upon an extensive scale. Hitherto, owing to the tuber having been grown almost exclusively for consumption as a vegetable, it had been felt that the quantity of potatoes remaining would be inadequate to sustain such an industry; but from investigations which had been made, it was evident that the raising of this crop had not been developed owing to the fear among the growers that supply would far outdistance demand. Moreover, the fickleness of the British climate had also been regarded as an adverse factor, especially when it is remembered that the solution for blight has not yet been discovered, and that blight, as the result of a wet season, is likely to ruin the crop.

The outlook was improved by the perfection of a new process evolved by an English inventor. The salient characteristic of this process is its variability, which permits one or other product to be exploited according to the conditions of the market. Should the demand for the potato-flour show a decline, the recovery of the alcohol and the starch may be at once pursued; while, similarly, should these fall in favour, another change over to glucose or some other by-product may be effected. The ability to ring the changes in this manner according to the pulse of the market is maintained to be a decided asset, and will tend to steady the price paid to the farmer for his raw material, which, in turn, will encourage him to devote increased attention to the cultivation of the potato and the raising of more prolific varieties, and to have more liberal recourse to fertilisers to improve the yield per acre.

There are other features which will make appeal to the potato-grower. It is pointed out that the establishment of flake-preparing mills in the centres of the potato-raising districts, with adequate railway communications and ample supplies of water, will enable the haulage problem between factory and field to be adjusted very successfully. It is conceded that haulage should not exceed five to seven miles. Acquiescence in such a limit will facilitate the grower's

part of the task. He will sell his crop as it is dug. Even if it should have been ravaged by disease, the crop will not be lost, because the mill will at once treat the damaged potatoes for the by-products, which may be satisfactorily recovered from such raw material. Similarly, if the grower desires to retain the potatoes suited for the table, he will be at liberty to do so, the mill taking over all that remains after selection or grading has been completed. Furthermore, the farmer will not be required to resort to clamping, with its attendant expense and uncertainty.

IV.

The process is simple. The potatoes brought from the fields are dumped into a capacious hopper, whence they fall on to a conveyer, which carries them to the washer. Cleaned, they are again picked up by the conveyer, to be borne to the cooker. This operation is only partly completed with the aid of steam. The automatic carrier once more picks them up, to transfer them to the flaking-machine. This consists essentially of a nest of rollers of large dimensions set varying distances apart, the space between the final rollers being approximately equal to the thickness of a sheet of tissue-paper.

In passing through this machine the potatoes become reduced to a pulp, which finally forms a continuous film or sheet, as in a paper-making machine, the sheet diminishing in thickness as it approaches the final rollers. These various rollers are hollow, and are internally heated by steam, which serves to complete the cooking operation, practically the whole of the 75 per cent. of water entering into the composition of the raw tuber being thus extracted. The film clings to the bright surface of the final steel rollers, and is peeled off by means of scrapers. Owing to the extreme thinness of the film and its dry, crisp texture, the continuous sheet crumbles into small, thin flakes—hence the name—to fall into a trough, from which it is carried by the conveyer to the packing-room, where it is weighed and bagged for storage or immediate delivery.

The operation imposes very little effort upon skilled labour. Virtually the only attention required is in the control of the steam, which must not exceed a certain temperature or it will char the flake. It will be observed that the potatoes are discharged into the machine whole, but the peel becomes detached from the pulp or fleshy part of the potato, and is similarly flaked, to fall into the collecting-trough.

The flake may be used for the production of starch, glucose, alcohol, dextrine, or whatever other by-product may be required, or it may be utilised in this condition for the preparation of cattle food. A certain quantity has been used for the manufacture of nitrogenous soap, and has been found well adapted to this unusual

application. If farina is the ultimate product desired, the flake is milled in the ordinary manner. In this process the skin and other inedible material become separated from the rest. The offal is not wasted, but is recovered, to be converted into compounded cattle meal.

v.

The farina is yellowish-white in colour, extremely fine, fragrant, and slightly sweet to the taste, and the potato flavour is not so marked as might be supposed. It is eminently suited to the making of bread, yielding, if mixed with flour in the proper proportion, an attractive loaf of even cellular structure, free from sponginess—a loaf which will retain its moisture for a much longer period than one made from pure wheaten-flour. Moreover, it renders the bread more easily digested, while the rich carbohydrate content of the farina renders it a valuable nutritious food. The addition to the loaf may safely be carried to 5 per cent., which is equivalent to seventy pounds of mashed potatoes per sack of flour, one pound of farina being equal to five pounds of raw potatoes. Even in this marked proportion no trace of the potato is observable to the palate.

A popular prejudice against the use of the potato in bread-making appears to obtain, but in reality it is quite unreasonable. Probably the objection has gained strength from the sodden character of the loaf into the preparation of which mashed potatoes have entered. This is due to the difficulty of mixing the dry flour with the wet mash. Again, unless extreme care and cleanliness are observed in the handling of the mash the bread will speedily sour, the potato being extremely sensitive to contamination.

When the potato is used in a farinaceous form, however, no such disadvantages prevail, inasmuch as the farina can be more readily and completely blended with the wheaten product, thus ensuring a homogeneous loaf. The use of the potato in the making of bread is by no means a modern innovation; nor can it be regarded as an adulterant in view of its high food value. In the days of our great-grand-fathers bakers were compelled to incorporate a certain proportion of potatoes with the wheat-flour for technical reasons, British wheat being less glutinous than foreign wheat, which was not available in those days. With the introduction of the imported cereal, more glutinous in character, the necessity to resort to the potato to remedy the inherent deficiency of the domestic wheat disappeared, and so the practice was permitted to lapse. Even to-day, however, scientifically prepared potato-bread is superior to the pure wheat product, and this is one reason why home-made bread, obtainable on remote farms, is often so much appreciated.

The elevation of the potato to an industrial plane in these islands represents the dawn of a

new era. The proposal has been discussed in Irish circles, being strongly advocated as a means of coping with the surplus crop harvested in that country. The fact that it offers a means of steadying the market, and secures the farmer against complete financial loss in the event of adverse weather causing widespread disease, should be sufficient to encourage the devotion of more acres to the growth of this commodity, as well as the more extensive use of artificial fertilisers to obtain bigger yields per acre. If such enterprise should be displayed, the farmer would not only benefit materially in pocket, but he would enable certain other native industries to secure a solid footing, and render us less and less dependent upon the foreigner in matters pertaining to our foods and industries.

OUR SHOP.

MOTHER says it's awful, now, the price she has to pay
When she goes to do the marketing for dinner every day.
She says she wishes we could live on what the birdies eat,
With berries for our pudding, and a juicy worm for meat!

But underneath the gorse-bush, just above the old sea-wall,
Phyl and I, we have a shop that isn't dear at all.
And we are always most polite to customers, and say,
'How can I serve you, madam? *Everything* is cheap to-day.

'We have pebble new potatoes at a penny for a pound—
And we'll throw you in this pebble egg, so smooth and white and round.
And Phyl has made some cakes and scones that look extremely nice,
And a lovely slab of butter—may I offer you a slice?

'We can sell you needles, also, for they grow in dozens here,
Or a yard of seaweed ribbon—would a penny be too dear?
While to-day we're very lucky; we've a set of furs in store,
For Mr Rabbit caught his coat when passing by our door!'

The reason why our price is sure to be within your reach
Is because we mostly get our goods for nothing from the beach.
Materials for our butter and our cakes are close at hand—
They are made of best sea-water, and the very finest sand.

So when you're tired of spending in the ordinary way,
Just walk along the old sea-wall where, every sunny day,
We are spreading out our goods, and hoping somebody will stop,
For we *love* to have a customer at our little shop!

B. NOEL SAXELBY.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

VENGEANCE VALLEY.

By W. VICTOR COOK, Author of *Grey Fish*.

PART I.

I.

PERHAPS the most convenient point at which to commence following the adventures of Kid Peters is a June morning on which he found himself released from the Montana State Prison at Deerlodge, where he had just completed a sentence for cattle-thieving. Such an introduction, I am aware, is scarcely calculated to enlist the sympathy of God-fearing people on Kid Peters's behalf; but it is best to be truthful. Moreover, it will cheer you to know that as a matter of cold fact the Kid never stole anything in his life, unless it were the affections of men and women—for he was a straight, dark, gay-eyed limb of a lad before Deerlodge closed its heavy gates on him. Even the judge, in sentencing him, had expressed regret that appearances should be so deceptive, and had added a quantity of good advice about pulling up before it should be too late.

Kid Peters thought of this good advice now with a grim smile on his thin face, as he stood and drank in the clean sunlight. Not, of course, that he had any idea of following the judge's counsel. He intended to follow Sid Morgan instead, and kill him. Why? Because it was Sid Morgan, foreman of the great ranch in the Musselshell Valley—near which the Kid, two years ago, had dared to set up as a homesteader—who had engineered the diabolical net of circumstantial evidence upon which the Kid had been unjustly condemned for a theft he had never committed. If you know anything about the way the powerful ranch-owners of western Montana try to freeze out homesteaders near their territories, you will not need to be told how such a net could be woven; if you don't know anything of these matters, you must excuse me for passing on. The fact remains that the Kid, with two years of bitter brooding in his young heart, intended to find Sid Morgan, and kill him. Very wrong and unchristian, of course; but the Kid was only twenty-three.

The State of Montana, taking a keen interest in the welfare of its citizens, and desiring the work of reformation commenced in the penitentiary to be continued beyond its gates, had kindly equipped the Kid in an all-cotton suit

of clothes which couldn't possibly fit any one, and was popularly reputed to cost three dollars seventy cents, and, as a further proof of its interest in his future well-being, had presented him with five dollars cash with which to pay his expenses in removing from Deerlodge. The citizens of that enterprising town object strongly to any ex-convict's presence within their corporate limits, just as strongly as the penitentiary residents object to their own presence there, before becoming ex-convicts. So the State releases its prisoners one day before the expiry of their sentence, and having thus twenty-four hours' control of their movements, compels them to take an immediate departure.

Kid Peters took his departure accordingly, and, with the assistance of a few rides borrowed at the expense of the railway authorities, made his way back to the ranching country, though not to the same district which had witnessed his misfortune. At that season, he knew, ranch help would be greatly in demand, and he easily secured a job. After a month's work he drew such of his wages as had not been already advanced for clothing, and began in earnest his hunt for his enemy.

II.

He had counted on finding Sid Morgan at his place on the old ranch, but at the outset of Kid's quest disappointment awaited him. Morgan had disappeared from the district. Kid Peters digested the rebuff as best he might, but it only added heat to the smouldering fires within him. He dared not make open inquiry; and so, smothering his fierce young pride, he got work again in the place where all men knew of his disgrace, and settled himself to await the revelations of chance gossip.

Two years previously he had been the proud possessor of a sorrel gelding of uncertain antecedents and more uncertain temper, which at the time of his misfortune had been taken charge of for him by a fellow-homesteader, who persisted in believing in the Kid's innocence in face of all the evidence brought against him. To this loyal friend the young man one day betook himself to claim his property.

'There he is, Kid, as strong as a lion, and

pretty near as dangerous,' said the homesteader, taking Peters out to his corral. 'I've had some good offers for him, too, but I knew you kind of liked the brute, and I wouldn't sell him. I always calculated on your coming for him some day. Who do you think made me the last offer for him?'

'Some guy who didn't know him,' answered the Kid with an approach to his old gay smile.

'You're wrong! It was that son-of-a-blank, Sid Morgan, who testified against you at the trial.'

The face of young Peters set hard, but he held himself in. 'What did he want him for?'

'He wanted a strong horse to go prospecting with.'

'So do I,' said the Kid. 'Morgan and the boss had a fall out, they tell me.'

'That's so. Morgan got fired. He packed up and went off to the Bitter Root Range, to hunt for gold-bricks.'

'The Bitter Root Range is a big place,' remarked the Kid, spelling for information. 'Some one put him wise?'

'If so, Sid kept it dark. He's deep.'

'I hope he'll meet his deserts,' said Peters, and rode thoughtfully back to the ranch on his sorrel gelding.

As he had remarked, the Bitter Root Range is a big place, running through five degrees of latitude, and forming the boundary between Montana and the State of Idaho. To look for a roving prospector among the infinite complexity of its five hundred miles of peaks and valleys, its forests and cañons and torrents, is many degrees more herculean than to hunt for a needle in a hayrick. Nevertheless, Kid Peters, nursing his vengeance from day to day, came to the wilds of the Bitter Root. To outward seeming he was a prospector like other prospectors, only perhaps better-looking than the majority.

Day after day up and down the gulches of the great divide he rode his sorrel gelding, his wide hat shading his grim young face from the scorching sun, his high lace-boots up to his knees, his provisions and his prospector's clutter strapped to the saddle. The yellow, marigold-like flowers of the bitter root, Montana's floral emblem, bloomed about his horse's feet; the torrents roared along their beds beside him; the great crags reared above him towards the blue. But go where he might, he could hear no tidings of Sid Morgan, his enemy.

III.

On an evening in late September Kid Peters was riding slowly down a valley of the upper foothills, following the course of a shallow creek that ran gurgling in a gravelly bed, and considering a suitable camping-ground for the night. For two days he had been traversing almost virgin country. He had crossed a pass in the

divide six thousand feet above sea-level, and he had come gradually down through a succession of scenery so glorious that the sheer splendour of it had made him forget the demon of hate which had brought him thither. Immense bull-pines, great fir-forests in the gorges, small, deep lakes that mirrored the sky from unruffled surfaces, made a solitude peopled only by the creatures of the wild—white-tailed and black-tailed deer, elk, mountain goats, black and cinnamon bears. Once he had seen a mountain lion, which had grinned at him with bared teeth and passed on. Along the stream-banks he had watched beaver and pine-marten and musk-rat busy at their affairs. The Kid felt good, and as the sunset glow reddened the heights above him, the spell of this mountain land descended on his soul.

'Say, have you seen a white mule?'

The Kid started out of his reverie, and looked over his shoulder for the origin of that clear musical voice.

She was the very complement to his dreams. Lovely? He had never seen anything like her as she stood there, questioning him with anxious brown eyes and parted red lips.

'Have you seen a white mule?'

If Kid Peters could have truthfully said he had seen a white mule, he would have felt happier. But he couldn't, so there was no use beating about the bush.

'No. Have you lost one?' He threw himself from his horse, and eagerness and admiration illumined his young face.

'I've had one stolen,' said the witch of the mountains, meeting his glance with a faintly rising colour.

She was dressed very much as the Kid was himself, and was clearly prospecting. She had on lace-boots like his, and a short-skirted dress over knickers. Her hair, cut short—but not too short—clustered about her face in shining curls. A little way behind her, where a tiny rivulet ran down to feed the creek, the Kid perceived her cabin—an ordinary prospector's cabin—at the mouth of a tunnel dug in a bank, with its dump of pay-gravel beside the sluice-boxes.

'You're the first living soul I've seen in this valley,' he informed her. 'Guess if I had met in with any one else like you, I shouldn't have got this far.' The Kid accompanied this forward remark with such an honest smile that it was next to impossible to take offence. 'I crossed the divide yesterday, and came right along down. What's the name of this gulch?'

'Vengeance Valley,' said she.

'Well, that's a nice name, sure!' remarked the Kid. 'Won't you tell me about this mule of yours?'

He noticed the red lips set firmly, and the brown eyes fill with tears, and he pretended to busy himself in a casual way with the girths of his saddle.

'Yesterday I went down for supplies to Hat

Creek,' she said. 'That is twenty miles away. I took what little dust I had with me—this placer does not pan out as I hoped, but I mean to persevere—and I came back this afternoon with stuff for three weeks. I tied up the mule for a minute by the cabin door before unloading her, and went a few hundred yards down the stream, round the bend yonder, to look at some traps I had set. I wasn't away half-an-hour, but when I got back the mule was gone, and all my stuff with her.' The witch's voice broke, and the tears would come. She dashed them away with a little brown hand.

'Say, that's too bad! A real dirty bit of work! But don't you worry, Miss—Miss'—

'My name is Hester M'Cleod. Guess you don't belong around here, Mr—Mr'— she countered, smiling through her tears.

The Kid was strongly tempted to sink his besmirched identity under a fictitious name; but looking into that face of hers, he felt it impossible. 'I'm called Kid Peters,' he said. 'I don't belong anywhere particular. See here, Miss M'Cleod, the guys that took your mule can't be far away. If she has come twenty miles to-day, she won't be good for much more this side of to-morrow. There's nothing to be done to-night. The dirty skunks who have stolen her will take good care not to light a fire, and we can't track them in the dark. There's plenty of grub for the two of us on my horse; so, if you will please allow me, I'll just build a fire here by the creek, and we'll have supper, and then you can turn in to your cabin, and I'll lie by the fire—in case they pinch that too.' The Kid smiled cheerfully, and his spirits rose mightily to see the relief in his pretty companion's face. 'As soon as it's light,' he added, 'we'll set off on the war-trail. Have you got a gun?'

'It's on the mule.'

'That's a nuisance! Never mind. We'll make out without one.'

IV.

How he was going to make out without a gun, in the face of bandits who had one, and probably more than one, the Kid had no very clear notion, but under the inspiration of present company his spirits soared above such trivialities.

Under the inspiration, too, of the excellent fire which he built, and of the excellent supper which he cooked, and of the elastic youth of them both, their acquaintance made surprising progress. The Kid, omitting only the disastrous episode of his residence in Deerlodge, gave Miss M'Cleod a truthful and not unattractive sketch of his roving young life as miner, rancher, and homesteader. In return, he learned how Miss Hester, an only child of a widower, had come west with her father as a girl; how her father, bitten with the prevalent gold-fever of the country, had contrived through good and evil

fortune to equip his daughter to teach in the high schools of the State. This fact at first went near to appalling the Kid, who had never in his life set foot over the threshold of a high school; but his alarm was happily discounted and tempered to mere human adoration by Miss Hester's frank, unabashed trust in his manhood, and the magic spell of her beauty. When he learned further that old M'Cleod, coming home to die after a distant expedition in the Bitter Root, had bequeathed to his daughter the secret of a supposed rich deposit in Vengeance Valley, and that she, inheriting his wander-lust, had put in the long summer vacation in carrying on single-handed the old man's prospecting, the romantic completeness of the situation held Kid Peters enthralled.

When at last, much later than was prudent in view of the necessity of a start at dawn, they bade each other good-night, they might have known each other for years. When the rough door of her cabin closed behind her, the Kid stood staring at it like a man in a trance, his young wits a whirl of mad, glad fancies. When he rolled himself in his blanket and lay down beside his fire, the solemn march of the stars over his head looked down upon a young man bewitched from all possibility of slumber; and long before the cabin door opened again, and the witch stepped freshly out into the dawning day, he had their breakfast ready, and the sorrel gelding saddled for the journey.

'I've been thinking about that scum that took your mule, Miss Hester,' said the Kid. (It had got to 'Miss Hester' already.)

'They have a good start of us,' she answered dubiously. 'And we haven't the least idea what direction they have taken.'

'We can make a pretty good guess, though,' said the Kid cheerfully. 'If you'll stand just here beside me, I'll be able to show you what I mean.'

Miss M'Cleod came and stood there accordingly—though, to tell the truth, she could have seen just as well where she was.

'They can't have gone straight down the gulch, or you would have seen them. And they can't have gone straight up, or I should have seen them. So it follows that they must have side-tracked themselves somewhere. That's logic!' Miss M'Cleod nodded approval. 'Next, they are not likely to stay close around waiting for callers, with an animal on their hands whose colour would identify her five miles away. Their plan would be to get away as quick as they could, and camouflage that mule so that her own sister would pass her without cocking an ear. They must have known you were here, and come over on purpose to rob you; and if that's so, it means they had either run short of grub, or lost their own beast, or both. And it means, too, that their own camp must be within a radius, say, of twenty miles or thereabout.

And on this side the creek. It's too deep and dangerous to ford for some distance, and the hills the other side are too bare for cover and too steep to travel. Is that logic too?'

'Yes, Sherlock,' said Miss Hester, smiling; 'though these things had not struck me before.'

v.

Mightily encouraged by her appreciation, the Kid pointed with a lean brown hand towards a dark belt of pines that straggled up the rise of the hillside a little behind Miss M'Cleod's cabin. 'Yon's the road they took, or I'm a Dutchman,' he pronounced. 'Those trees are the skirts of a great forest which stretches up into the mountains for miles. Yesterday, when I came down from the divide, before I started to follow this creek, I stood a while to get the lie of the country in my head. Some miles higher up, the ridge which that forest covers, and which shuts in this side of the valley, drops to a much lower level, and at that point a man who knew the country should be able without much difficulty to cross from this valley to the head of another that winds round and runs almost parallel to it. Seen from above, the two look like the halves of a much wider valley, split down the middle by the ridge of forest. I should fancy your friends are camped somewhere down in the other half of the valley. We'll just go and see.'

Fired by the romantic zest of the adventure, Kid Peters spoke as though the traversing of a score of miles of virgin hill-forest were as simple a matter as crossing the street to post a letter. But Miss Hester experienced a moment of hesitation at the prospect. In broad daylight the undertaking struck her as a little preposterous. Her brown eyes smiled at the Kid kindly—very kindly—and the curl-framed face tilted a little coquettishly to one side as she voiced her hesitation.

'You're good. You'll think me very silly, but I believe I'd be more sensible to come down with you to Hat Creek, and let the old mule go. If you don't mind, Mr Peters.'

'What!' cried the Kid, in genuine horror; 'leave those scallywags to get away with their plunder? Oh, say, Hester!'

The ardour of his protest was more than Miss M'Cleod had bargained for, and so was his free use of her name, but the honest warmth of the boy's enthusiasm defied reproof. Indeed, she rather foolishly laid a small hand on his shoulder.

'You see, it doesn't *really* matter so much to me,' she urged. 'I've got my living to go back to. It may be a serious thing to them.'

'I'll make it so, if I can,' quoth the Kid fiercely. 'The scoundrels—robbing a helpless girl like you!'

'I suppose I *must* seem pretty helpless,' she admitted, with a sly upward glance in his face. 'No grub, no mule, no idea who robbed me, or

where the robbers went. I must look kind of soft.'

The mock-rueful glance was still on him. The Kid felt pretty desperate. 'See here, Miss Hester,' he exclaimed, 'if I was to start telling you what you look like, I guess—I guess'—

'Well?'

'Oh, I guess you'd think me crazy! Now, let's think. I can see you don't cotton to the idea of chasing around the Bitter Root Range after that mule with a wild cow-puncher like me; and perhaps you're right. Here's what we'll do. I'll leave you half my grub, and I'll get along after them. If I don't strike their trail in three days, I'll come back and take you down to Hat Creek. Then I'll load up with some more stuff and a gun, and try again. Get that mule I will!'

'You're quite determined, Mr Peters?'

'Quite,' said the Kid.

'Then, if you go, I will go. So let's start.'

vi.

They started. Never in his life had the Kid felt so exuberantly happy. He seemed to tread on air. They spent a whole glorious day together, scrambling over the forest-clothed ridge. The going was hard at times—very hard; but if the Kid had been offered a bower in Paradise in exchange, he would have laughed contemptuously.

All day long they had seen nothing of their quarry. But towards sundown, having traversed the ridge, and begun to descend from the forest at the point where the valleys forked, they perceived, some way down the newly opened gulch, a thin spiral of smoke rising from a stretch of bare ground near the creek-bed. It was too far to make out any details, and the daylight would not serve long, but the sight gave them a new incentive.

'If the mule is there,' said Peters gaily, 'we'll go and collect her. If not, we'll perhaps hear about her.' He led his weary sorrel gelding down the steep hillside, and with the light failing they approached the camp.

The smoke was curling from the roof of a rough shanty built on rising ground a little way from the creek, and just clear of the timbered slope above. A white mule, plain for any one to see, was tethered by a rope to the doorpost. Nobody was to be seen outside.

'There she is,' said the Kid. 'You stay here with the horse, Hester, and I'll fetch her.'

But Miss M'Cleod, who throughout the long day had borne herself bravely, suddenly gave way to apprehension. She laid a detaining hand on the Kid's arm. 'Tell me; what are you going to do, Kid?'

'Why, get the mule, sure,' answered the Kid, who felt electric thrills running up his arm and all over his body.

'But there may be several of them, and you are single-handed and unarmed!'

Kid Peters lingered, loath to lose those electric thrills. 'I learned a hymn once,' he muttered. 'It went something like this, Miss Hester: "Twice armed is he whose cause is just, and three times he who gets his blow in fust." Don't worry about me.'

'Promise me,' she begged, 'that you won't do anything rash. Oh Kid, if anything happened to you, I should—I should feel dreadful!'

This was more than Kid Peters could stand.

'Would you?' he whispered, snatching both her hands in his. 'Would you? I wonder!'

'Please, please don't do anything rash!' she implored. 'Promise me!'

'I promise, on my—on my life!' he vowed; and even as he spoke the last word he unintentionally broke his vow, for he kissed both her hands fervently as he left her without another word and made for the camp.

(To be continued.)

A THRILLING INDIAN JUGGLER.

By C. D. WEBSTER.

THERE has been a certain amount of discussion of late about the mysticism of the tricks performed by Indian jugglers, and although I have never seen the 'pole-trick' performed, I have seen several very remarkable feats, about which there was no mysticism whatever. In fact, the crudity of the whole 'show' I witnessed was the most striking part of it. The juggler, his assistants, his whole 'bag of tricks,' and the perfectly natural surroundings seemed to preclude entirely the possibility of much aid from previously prepared apparatus.

The occasion was a regimental 'anniversary,' and for the entertainment of our guests the troupe of performers had been sent for from some neighbouring city.

The stage was an open, grass hockey-ground, and the setting a wide plain and the clear blue sky. The day was one of the usual bright cold-weather days of northern India.

A *shamiana* of tents had been erected on the edge of the hockey-ground, and under it our guests sat, and partook of refreshments. The sepoys all sat outside the side-lines of the hockey-ground. It was an ideal spot for the performance.

The troupe consisted of a middle-aged Mohammedan of about fifty, a younger man, and a boy. They gave the appearance of hailing from the United Provinces.

For the execution of their programme they divested themselves of all apparel, with the exception of the loin-cloth. The tricks were carried out within a few yards of the *shamiana*, and directly in front of it.

The first trick was a very thrilling one, requiring unshakable nerves. Two poles, each of them six or seven feet long, were produced, and lashed together, end to end, with string. So roughly were they attached to each other that when the combined pole was raised into the air a distinct 'kink' was visible at the joint, and the top half seemed to wave about as if disinclined to remain in a straight line with the bottom half.

The next item to appear needs a bit of describing. It consisted of a rough pad or saddle, firmly stuffed and covered with coloured cloth.

It was about a foot in diameter, and more or less circular. The shafts of three short javelins, each about one and a half feet long, were embedded in the saddle, so as to form a sort of tripod, with the heavy pointed spear-heads as the feet. Under the saddle there must have been a cup of leather or metal into which the end of the pole was placed. So much for the apparatus for this trick, which we shall now try to describe.

The older man, with the help of the younger one, raised the pole, with the tripod balanced on its tip, into a perpendicular position. He then proceeded slowly to circulate the wobbly pole, which was a good twelve feet in length, so that the saddle began to revolve. Gradually increasing the strength of the revolutions, he waited until the saddle was going round at a tremendous pace, making the hearts of all the spectators rise into their throats for fear that something would give way—and then, suddenly, to every one's horror, he gave the pole an upward heave!

In an instant the tripod, still whirling round and round at top speed, shot into the air. The pole fell sideways to the earth, and the fearsome-looking sharp-pointed tripod descended headlong. Before we knew what had happened, the old man, with a shout of 'Allah!' threw himself flat on his back—and there he was, pinioned to the ground by the spears!

But he had come to no hurt, and we saw that in his recumbent position his legs were stretched wide apart; one of the javelins had embedded itself in the grass between them, and the other two, between his arms and his body, were likewise so deeply buried that his assistant and a spectator had to pull the heads out of the ground before the daring old fellow could get up. With a bound he was on his feet and ready for the next trick, which, for what seemed sheer suicide, was even more blood-curdling than the first. Several of our lady friends had to turn their heads aside during its execution.

For it, a common or garden Indian bullock-cart, one of the clumsiest things on two wheels imaginable (if one does not take into account the iron-wheeled carts of central China), was hauled

on to the ground by some sepoya. It had heavy wooden sides and wheels, and its long shaft protruded straight out from the body of the cart.

To the extreme end of the shaft an antique bayonet, with an iron socket and ring, was tied, in the same effective, though crude, fashion, with its sharp point outwards.

The cart was then crammed with sepoya—at least a dozen must have got aboard—and the shaft was lifted off the ground by some others.

The old juggler then strode up to his bulky piece of apparatus, and bending down, guided the tip of the bayonet on to a point in his forehead about two inches above the level of his nose. Every one, except himself and the crew on the cart, stood well clear. His arms behind his back, he now proceeded to push steadily against the bayonet with his forehead. He put every ounce of his weight and every atom of his strength into that steady pressure. We could see the veins standing out on his neck and the perspiration on his temples. The ladies uttered little screams of terror. After a few seconds the cart began slowly to move backwards, and, having once started it, the extraordinary old fellow took some half-a-dozen steps forward, propelling it before him. Then he leapt backwards, and the shaft of the cart rattled to the ground. He afterwards displayed his forehead to us all. There was a little blood where the point of the bayonet had cut the skin, and a distinct groove about

half-an-inch long in the skull, caused by the frequent performance of this trick.

These were his two most spectacular performances, which between them seemed to have taken a good deal out of him.

He next proceeded to eat a small roll of white cotton, and invited any one to pull the end of it—which he displayed sticking out of his abdomen! I myself pulled it, and drew at least a foot of it out, and there was no doubt about its coming from under the skin, because as I pulled I drew the outer skin outwards into a peak with it! The ladies, I may say, were *not* invited to view anything except the first part of this trick—namely, the swallowing. They were left to 'swallow' the rest themselves, and accept what their male friends told them.

The juggler finished up his extraordinary entertainment by lying flat on the ground, face upwards, and allowing a huge stone about a hundred pounds in weight to be placed on his chest. Two immense mallets were then produced, and two of the regimental *pahleas* (strong men) were invited to get to work and hammer it to pieces on its living platform. This, with much grunting and groaning, and many mighty swipes, they managed to do, and the stone rolled off in two halves, one on each side of the smiling old ruffian, who, rising, 'salaamed,' and announced that the end of his programme had now been reached.

THE PARTS MEN PLAY.

CHAPTER XXVII.—A LIGHT ON THE WATER.

I.

A SULKY winter came hard upon November, and the war of armies was succeeded by the war of diplomats.

One day in January the same vehicle that had driven Selwyn to Roselawn deposited another visitor there. He was a sturdy, well-set-up fellow, but a thinness and a certain pallor in the cheeks conflicted with their natural weather-beaten texture.

The morose driver helped him to alight, and handed him his crutches, which he took with a snort of disapproval. He made his way at a dignified pace around the drive, pausing *en route* to look at the gables and wings of Roselawn as one who returns to familiar scenes after a long absence.

Without encountering any one he reached the stables, and opening a door, mounted the stairs that led to the dwelling-quarters above.

There was no one in the cosy dining-room, and sitting down, he hammered the floor with his crutch. The homely sound of dishes being washed ceased suddenly in the adjoining room, and Mrs Mathews threw open the door.

'Who is it?' she cried.

'Me,' said Mathews.

Uttering a pious exclamation that reflected both doubt and confidence in the all-wise workings of Providence, his wife fell heavily upon him, with strong symptoms of hysteria.

'Heavenly hope!' she cried, after her exuberance permitted of speech; 'so you've come home?'

'I hev,' said her husband solemnly; 'and I'm werry pleased to observe you so fit, m'dear. Is the offspring a-takin' his oats reg'lar?'

'Lord!' said Mrs Mathews irrelevantly, subsiding into a chair, 'I thought you was dead. You never writ.'

'That,' said Mathews, 'was conseckens of a understandin', clear and likewise to the point, atwixt me and Mas'r Dick. "Mum's the word," sez he. "Mum's the word," sez I. And that there was as it should be, no argifyin' provin' contrairiwise. But Milord he found me out, and sez as how he knows it all, and would I come home?—which, bein' free from horspital, I likewise does. Now, m'dear, if you will proceed with any nooz I would be much obliged to draw up a little forrader, as it were.'

'Did Milord tell you about Miss Elise?' said his wife, after much thought. 'She's gone and got herself engaged.'

'To who?'

'Captain Selwyn. Him as was visiting here when the war begun.'

'Now that there,' said Mathews, nodding his head slowly and admiringly, 'is nooz. That there is what a feller likes to hear from his old woman. You're a-doin' fine.'

'The wedding,' went on his wife, her eyes sparkling with the universal feminine excitement about such matters, 'is next week, and Wellington is bespoke for to pump the organ. Ain't that wonderful grand?'

'That,' said Mathews with great dignity, 'is werry gratifyin' to a parent, that is. Pump the organ at a weddin'! I hopes he won't go for to do nothing to give inconvenience to the parties concerned. Where is he, old girl?'

'Upstairs in bed, daddy, with the whooping-cough something horrid.'

'Wot a infant!' commented the groom proudly. 'I never see such a offspring for his age—never. Whooping-cough something horrid? Well, well!'

For a full minute he reflected with such apparent satisfaction on his son and heir's vulnerability to human ailments that there is no telling when he would have left off, if his reverie had not been broken by his wife placing a pipe in his hands and a bowl on the table.

'It was always waiting on you, daddy,' said the good woman. 'I sez to Wellington, "That's his favourite, it is, and we'll always have it ready for him when he comes home."'

Without any display of emotion or undue haste, the old groom filled the pipe, lit it, drew a long breath of smoke, and slowly blew it into the air, regarding his good partner throughout with a look that clearly showed the importance he attached to the experiment.

He took a second puff, raised his eyes from hers to the ceiling, and his broad face crinkled into a grin, the like of which his wife had never seen before on his countenance.

'Old girl,' he said, 'when I sees you first I sez, "There's the filly for my money;" and so you was. And, by Criky! you and me haven't reached the last jump yet—no, sir. M'dear, I hev some nooz for *you* now.'

He puffed tantalisingly at the pipe, and surveyed his wife's intense curiosity with studied approbation.

'When Milord come to see me last week,' he said, measuring the words slowly, 'he tells me as how he won't go for to hev no more hossees, and conseckens o' me bein' all bunged up by them sausage-eaters, he sez as how would I like to be the landlord o' "The Hares and Fox" in the village, him havin' bought the same, and would I go for to tell you as a surprise, likewise and sim'lar?'

'Heavenly hope!' cried the good woman, bursting into tears; 'if that ain't marvellous grand!'

'That,' said Mathews, beckoning for her to hand him his crutches, 'is what Milord has done for you and me. And, missus, as long as there's a drop in the cellar none o' the soldier-lads in the village will go for to want a pint o' bitter nohow. Now, old girl, if you'll give a leg up we'll go and see how the infant is lookin'.'

II.

A few days later, in the chapel decked with flowers, the marriage of Selwyn and Elise took place.

In spite of her disappointment that Elise was not marrying a title, Lady Durwent rose superbly to the occasion. She led the weeping and the laughing with the utmost heartiness, and recalled her own wedding so eloquently and vividly that those who didn't know about the Ironmonger supposed she must have been the daughter of a marchioness at least, and was probably related to royalty.

Just before the ceremony itself the youthful Wellington, who had confounded science by a remarkable recovery from his ailment, was confronted with the offer of half-a-crown if he acquitted himself well, and threatened with corporal punishment if he didn't. With this double stimulus, he pumped without cessation and with such heartiness that the rector's words were at times hardly audible above the sound of air escaping from the bellows—necessitating a punitive expedition on the part of the sexton, and engendering in Wellington a permanent mistrust in the justice of human affairs.

Late in the afternoon bride and groom left for London, on their way to America.

When the train came in and they had entered their compartment, Selwyn, with feelings that left him dumb, looked out at the little group who had come to say farewell.

Lord Durwent stood with his unchangeable air of gentleness and courtesy, but in his eyes there was the look of a man for whom life holds only memories. Lady Durwent alternated dramatically between advice and tears; and Mathews stood proudly beside his wife (whose hat was of most marvellous size and colours), nodding his head sagaciously, and uttering as much philosophy in five minutes as falls to the lot of most men in a decade.

And so, with his wife's hand trembling on his arm, Austin Selwyn leaned from the window and waved good-bye to the little English village.

III.

A year went by, and, with the passing of winter, Selwyn and Elise, in their home at Long Island, watched the budding promise of another spring.

Their home was by the sea, and in the presence

of that great majestic force they had lived as man and wife, taking up the broken threads of life, and knitting them together for the future.

The task of resuming his literary work had been next to impossible for Selwyn. He had tried to mould the destinies of nations—and they had fallen back upon him, crushing him. His thoughts cried out for utterance, but self-distrust robbed him of courage. Months went by, and his chafing, restless longing for self-expression grew more intense and more intolerable.

And then the woman who was his wife lost her own yoke of self-restraint in solicitude for him. Timidly, hesitatingly at first, she invaded the precincts of his mind. With subtle persistence, yet never seeming to force her way, she wove her personality about his like a web of silken thread. Her purity of thought, her innate artistry, her depth of feeling, played on his spirit like dew upon the parched earth.

As the passing hours took their course, each nature unconsciously gave to the other the freedom that comes only with surrender. His strength and his care for her liberated her womanhood, and, like a flower that has lived in shadow, her soul blossomed to fullness in that warmth.

And his troubled mind, directionless, yet rebellious of inaction, found again the meaning and the hidden truths of life, then gained the courage to be life's interpreter.

Once more Austin Selwyn wrote.

One evening towards the summer Elise was sitting on the veranda, when he came from his study and joined her. The first pale stars were shining through a sheen of blue that rose from the horizon in an encircling, shimmering mist.

'Are you through with your writing?' she said.

'Not yet,' he answered, sitting beside her; 'but I could not resist the call of you and this wonderful night.'

'Isn't it glorious?' she said softly, taking his hand in hers. 'I think that blue over the sea must be like the Arabian desert at night when the camel-trains rest on their way. Don't you love the sound of the waves?'

With a little sigh she leaned her head on his shoulder, and he held her close to him.

'Happy, Elise?'

'So happy,' she whispered, 'that I am afraid some day I shall find it isn't true.'

He laughed gently, and for a few moments neither spoke, held by the wonderful intimacy of the spirit that does not need words for understanding.

'Austin dear,' she said at length, 'before you came out I was counting the stars—and playing with dreams. Don't think me silly, will you? But I was planning, if we have a son, what I should like to call him.'

'I think I know,' he said, pressing his lips against her hair. 'Dick?'

'And Gerard for his second name. I should want him to be strong and true like Gerard—

but he must have Dick's eyes and Dick's smile. But, then, I want so much for this dream-boy of ours—for, most of all, he must be like my husband.'

With a sudden shyness she hid her face against his breast, and he ran his hand caressingly over her arm, which was like cool velvet to the touch.

The glimmering stars grew stronger, and a breeze from the sea crept murmuringly over the spring-scented fields.

'There are times,' he said, 'when I long for the power to reach out for the great truths that lie hidden in space and in the silence of a night like this—to put them in such simple language that every one could read and understand. I think, dear, if I could translate the wonder of you and the spirit of the sea into words, I could prove the immortality of the soul.'

She looked up into his face, and something of the mystic blue of the skies lay in the depths of her eyes.

IV.

Late that night he resumed work in his study, but a thousand memories and fancies came crowding to his mind. He tried to shake them off, but they clung to him—memories of the war—memories of the times when the world was drunk with passion. He heard, as if afar off, the whine and shriek of shells, and he saw the dead—grotesque, silent, horrible.

That was the great absurdity—the dead.

It was hopeless to write. He was no longer pilot of his thoughts.

He rose to his feet and threw open the door with an impatient desire for fresh air. Though the cool breeze refreshed his temples, the restlessness of his mind was only increased by the hush of nature's nocturne, through which the sound of the sea came like a drone.

Beneath the canopy of that same sky the dead were lying. Across the seas a breeze of spring was stealing about the graves, as now it played about his face.

What was his part towards them—to mourn, and fill his life with useless melancholy? To forget, and turn his face towards the future?

Forget . . . ?

'There are times'—he found himself repeating mechanically the words which, a few hours before, he had spoken to Elise—'when I long for the power to reach out for the great truths—hidden in space—and in the silence of the night.'

Suddenly his brow grew calm. The baffled, questioning look left his eyes, and he smiled strangely.

Closing the door, he turned back to his desk, and taking the pen, looked for a full minute at the paper before him.

'To My Unborn Son.'

He gazed at what he had written as though the words had appeared of their own volition.

'To My Unborn Son.'

With a far-away dreaminess in his eyes he dipped his pen in the ink and commenced to write:

'Somewhere beyond the borders of life you are waiting. I cannot speak to you, nor look on your face, but the love of a father for his child can penetrate the eternal mysteries of the unknown. To those who love there is no death; and in the hearts of parents, children live long before they are born.

'My son, this letter that I write now to you will lie hidden and unseen by other eyes until the time when you alone shall read it. I shall be changed by then: like the world, I may forget; but you, my son, must read these words, and know that they are truth—truth as unchangeable as the tides of the sea, or the hours of dawn and sunset.

'Civilisation has murdered ten million men.'

'The human mind cannot encompass that. It is beyond its comprehension, so it is trying to forget.

'Ten million men—murdered.

'Read these words, my son, written in the hush of night, when men's souls stand revealed.

'Nearly six years ago there came the war. History will prove this or that responsibility for it, but the civilisation that made war possible is itself responsible. The nations sprang to arms; but soon, by that strange destiny which seems to guide mankind, the issue was one not of nations against nations, but of Humanity against Germany. Do not ask me how the land of Goethe, Schiller, and Beethoven became so vile. I only know that Germany was the champion of evil, and on Britain and France men's hopes were rested.

'America did not fight. When this is read by you, my son, you will have known the noble thrill of patriotism, the pride of race and citizenship. But it is because of that that you must read what I write now about the country I love best.

'Less than any other nation, America is to be blamed for the war. Her life was separate from the older world, and the spoils of victory made no appeal. Yet this great Republic, born of man's desire for freedom, remained silent even when the whole world saw that the war was one of Justice against Evil. Men, like myself, were blind, and fed the flames of ignorance with ignorance. Others knew we were not ready, and called upon us to prepare; and others made great fortunes while Youth went to its Cross.

'Month after month passed by, and Britain and her Allies fought our fight; and the murder of men went on.

'At last we came of age, and our young men stormed across the seas, not to save America—for we had nothing to fear—but to rid the world of a monster that threatened the very vitals of Humanity. Look well on our shame, my son, but do not forget that when we went it was for

an ideal—just as years before our fathers died to free the Negro. That much was America debased; that much was America great.'

Selwyn put down his pen, and rested his head between his hands. Ten minutes passed before he looked up and began to write again.

'The war is over. *America is debtor to the world.* Read this, my son, with both humility and pride—humility that it is so, pride that we yet can pay.

'Those awful years while we stood apart, the homes of Britain gave their sons—the sons for whom their parents yearned, as I am yearning now for you. Through Britain's broken hearts, and through the grief of women throughout the world, the youth of America were saved. I know that we have our thousands of stricken homes and ruined lives, but the end of the war left America debtor to civilisation, even though she gave the strength which brought the war to an end.

'Faced with our indebtedness, what did we do?

'Europe lay stricken. The spectres of ruin, starvation, anarchy, hovered about her form. The world was through with war; men groped for light; and from the peoples of the earth a universal cry went up that these things must not be.

'It was our chance. We still were strong. We held the charter of mankind within our hands, and men looked to us. Over prostrate Europe the conquering nations gathered, and men in all the distant corners of the earth listened for the voice of him who would cry in the wilderness that a new age was born.

'Vital days went by. At last the man who spoke for us outlined his plan that all the Powers of the world should join together in a covenant that war should be no more.

'Men waited, and still waited. The plan was argued, ridiculed, applauded—and smothered beneath a fall of words. Already the agony of Man was hardening into the cynicism of despair. Nations that had bled together grew wary and drew apart.

'And still men waited, for they knew that only America's voice could allay the clamour. Then we spoke. Angered by the methods of our leader, angered by the spirit of revenge that was settling over Europe, angered by delay, once more we failed to see the great truths written across the face of the sun.

'America—debtor to the world—America cried out that she alone of all the nations would stand aloof. Let history gloss it over as it will, we held back the hand of succour that Europe craved for.

'From the land of scented mists came the Japanese; from Greece that once was first in all the arts, from South America and the countries of Europe, men gathered to the League of Nations—and *we were not there.*

'As I write to you, my son, the League is an impotent, powerless thing, at which the men who know only nationality and not humanity sneer and make jest. The body is there—America alone could be the heart.

'Bloodless, helpless, it is in semblance a living thing, but all men know it has no life, and already the diplomats who have no other way are using it as a shield for their methods that cannot bear the light.

'My son, in the hush and loneliness of night, ponder over these words. Because we did not fight, millions of men were foully done to death. What of the genius, the science, the beauty of the souls intended for great things, that fell so damnably? How many Miltons, how many Lincolns, were crucified in that army of the young?

'*We must repay.* Our destiny is clear, and no people can thwart its destiny without the gravest danger. Our duty is to restore. Whatever our resources, in things material or of the spirit, this generation and yours and the generation to follow must give unsparingly. Our minds and hearts must turn to Europe, for only in service to mankind can America fulfil that for which she was created.

'Across the seas lies England. She has done much that is unworthy of her in the past; she has much to teach and much to learn; but within the heart of Old England there is

majestic grandeur and great mercifulness, and with that heart ours must beat in unison. The solemn splendour of Britain's sacrifice must never be forgotten.

'Believe in life, my son. Believe in men. Take on my charge and fight the flames of Ignorance, not as I did, but with the power of Reason and of Right. The universal mind is still alive. Trust in it as Wagner when he wrote his music, as Shelley when he sang of beauty, as Washington when he founded this great Republic. Men speak through their nationalities, but in every country of the world there is an aristocracy of thought; and if you have the power, I charge you work towards the end when that great aristocracy will flood the earth with golden splendour and Ignorance will be no more.

'These words I leave with you, my son, on this silent night in May. Perhaps you will never read them. Perhaps you will live only in our two hearts. But on the borders of life we reach out for you, praying that you may come to stay the hunger of our hearts, to be our living son.'

Selwyn dropped his pen and rose slowly from his chair. Passing his hand across his brow, he went to the door, and opening it, looked out.

From the thin crescent of a new moon, a narrow path of light was glimmering on the water.

THE END.

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

V.—THE BROWN HARE.*

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

ONE of the marvels of wild nature is that the hare survives—not only survives, but, if given any chance whatever, thrives and multiplies. It is one of the few wild-folk to whom nature has given no secure sanctuary. The common prey of all, pursued first by one, then by another, only its marvellous speed and its superb staying-power enable the hare to hold its own against so many foes. The foxes and the rabbits have their burrows, but the hare has no such shelter; he meets his foes on their own ground, and beats them at their own game. He is a superb running-machine, wise in the wisdom of the trails, and withal a joy to behold. Away he goes—starting from a tuft at our feet, floating, gliding, over the pasture, light as a thistle-seed, keeping always to the hollows, seldom showing

himself on the skyline. And what lover of the great outdoors has never felt the desire to follow on in wild pursuit?

Truly he is the common sport of all, this creature which is always game to the end—living a life of hairbreadth escapes till he can hold out no longer against his foes. Particularly is this so when the snow is on the ground; for it is not the hard, swift run that kills the hare; it is the slow 'tramp, tramp, tramp' of a dogged pursuer on his trail. In times of snow the shepherd and the farm-man know that the hare is at their mercy, and taking down the old gun from its shelf, the hunter sallies forth. Here is the quarry's over-night trail; there is nothing to be done but follow that chain of tracks to the winter form, which is found in a sheltered hollow of the pasture, facing south. The man stops short in readiness ten paces away. The tracks lead to that tuft, but beyond the tuft the story of Jack's life, written in the world's oldest writing, ceases abruptly. Stooping, the man picks up a twig, and throws it at the tuft; then

* Earlier articles in this series, published in the May, June, July, and August parts of *Chambers's Journal*, dealt with the Badger, the Pine-Marten, the Water-Rat, and the Hedgehog respectively.

away goes the hare, ears laid back, eyes watching behind, eager to place some obstacle between himself and his pursuer. There is a loud report, a squeal, and the hare zigzags; another report, and silence. There, tinting the snow with his life's blood, lies the hero of many a fiery run, who owes his fate, like so many of his kindred, to the tell-tale writing of the snows!

II.

How far will a hare run before dogs? Some say eight miles at the most. Personally, I think eighteen a fully conservative estimate. Before a pack of hounds he will not run far, because his spirit is broken by fear; before a single dog no faster than himself he is capable of putting up a very different show.

Each hare has its own runways—or, rather, passes to and from its feeding-grounds by the same routes. Normally it will never go through or over a wall if there is a gateway through which it can pass, and it is to be feared that this partiality towards open going often proves the hare's undoing. The poacher knows it well, and has nothing to do but place his net across the gateway, and then drive the hare into it, using his snares in the same way. But occasionally an old hare knows these things, and once having been frightened, he never faces a gate again.

The hare is one of the few animals that can see behind it as it runs, and it is owing to this faculty that the animal is so well able to dodge hounds at close quarters, doubling and twisting in the ace of time, and thus tiring and disheartening its pursuers when every one thinks the run is at an end. So absorbed does the hare often become in looking behind that it forgets to calculate for danger ahead; and many a hare, pursued by dogs, has been known to run into the legs of spectators, never seeing them, so intent was its backward gaze.

Most motorists have indulged in a short, if unsuccessful, pursuit of a hare, the animal sticking to the open roadway ahead of the car, watching the vehicle as he runs, never thinking of turning aside till the car is actually on him. Pursuing a hare thus, I have timed it by speedometer to maintain a pace of twenty-eight miles per hour over a short distance, which seems about the animal's limit.

The hind-legs of a hare are most abnormally developed, for, like those of the kangaroo, they are the animal's propelling-members. Often the creature's life is dependent upon a sudden, lightning spurt—shooting off into space to foil the first dash of Reynard, who has discovered it in its form, and knows well that if once the hare gets on its legs the game is up. A hare has even been known to break one of its legs in shooting off the mark, the bone proving insufficiently strong for the sudden strain thrown upon it. The forelegs are comparatively feeble, functioning more or less as pivots over which the

creature bounds, and it is because the forelegs are inadequate for the strain thrown upon them by the gigantic bounds that a hare is so much at a disadvantage in going downhill.

A good hare will run any ordinary dog to a standstill with miles of energy to spare; but though one of the most 'marvellous running-machines in creation, he is, nevertheless, a creature of mortal limits. Pursued by beagles, bounding ahead of them mile after mile, and keeping them on the distant skyline, in the end he mounts a wall as a point of observation, and hounds and huntsmen, coming up, find him crouching there, still watching his back trail! But it is a limp and lifeless form the huntsman tosses to the hounds; for here, again, the old old tricks are set at naught, the marvellous uphill sweep has failed to leave his pursuers behind, and he has died as he has lived—watching his back trail. Looking behind! That is why he holds the roadway ahead of the motorist; that is why he often falls when descending a mountain-side at speed; and be his last effort the act of climbing to a point of observation, or launching himself into space in a final supreme effort to outstrip his pursuers, he is always looking behind.

III.

In disposition hares are the most solitary of all four-footed, warm-blooded things. They never associate except for the brief period of the honeymoon, being, of course, polygamous animals. Something of the solitude of their disposition begins to show immediately after birth, when very often the youngsters separate, and each makes for itself a solitary form, uniting only when the mother calls them at meal-times. If a honeymooning couple be flushed together, they separate immediately, to reunite later on, guided as to each other's direction by their sense of smell. The scent-glands are highly developed, purely for mating purposes. Were these glands less developed, the animals would never find each other where mating is most necessary for the survival of the species—that is, where hares are few and far between. I have never heard of hares uniting in any way purely for social amusement, though such a thing does not seem to be unknown among certain northern varieties.

March is the hare's love-making season; hence the saying, 'Mad as a March hare!' Hares are truly mad in March, and during that month many a stern battle takes place between the gentlemen who, unfortunately, fall in love with the same lady—which appears to be the common order of things. Neither are the contests worked out on Marquis of Queensberry rules, the chief ambition of every gentleman hare in March being to kick every other gentleman hare into insensibility. The one who can jump highest and kick hardest wins the fair lady, and it is

a laughable sight to see two hares indulging in one of these sky-hopping contests. Taking a run at each other, they collide in mid-air, striking furiously, each trying to kick the other over the wall and into the next field. I have seen two hares, startled by a common foe, make off side by side, and simultaneously take one of these running jumps at each other ere going fifty yards, to come to earth and repeat the performance time and again till finally out of sight. Also, a male hare, on seeing a rival, will stand straight up on his hind-legs, appearing of enormous size, and utter such a scream of rage that the other hare will bolt rather than remain to fight this veritable elephant among hares!

The Mad Moon lasts generally into the second week of April,* and at about this time the first leverets of the season come into the world. Hares continue to breed till September, and at least three litters are produced annually. Curiously enough, the young are born with their eyes open, though they remain in the form till about a fortnight old. Gestation takes approximately four weeks, and two or three at a birth is the usual number. During the periods of abnormal increase in their numbers, to which subsequent reference is made, five or even six may be born, but the number always returns to the original two or three. The young are mature at one year, and the first two years of a hare's life are the most critical. If it survives these, it is well on the way to becoming a wise hare, which is the only hare that lives till the decline of its powers heralds its going.

IV.

As soon as the young are old enough to leave the nest they are able to dispense with the services of their mother. Each day thereafter they become more and more independent of her, living their lives apart. By this time she has probably formed new associations, and is well on the way to the production of another family. It is seldom that the young are seen following the mother except, perhaps, during abnormally dry seasons, when water becomes necessary to their existence; then, occasionally, the young may be seen accompanying the dam down to the drinking-place. She will, however, fight on their behalf till she becomes occupied with a second brood, and the squeal of one of her leverets brings her instantly to the place, prepared to do battle with cat or stoat as the occasion may demand.

In passing to and from the form in which her young are hidden a mother-hare exercises the utmost care to break the line of tell-tale scent she leaves. This she does by back-tracking a

certain distance, so as to leave a dead end in her trail; then she takes a terrific leap to one side or the other, and repeats the performance. I knew one hare whose leverets were hidden at the edge of a swamp, and in coming and going she always threaded a tortuous course through this swamp, jumping and back-tracking many times, and seeking out the wettest patches, where the scent would not lie.

Just where does the hare stand in the scale of animal intelligence? Higher than the rabbit, yet a long way below the deer and the otter. It has not even advanced to the first stage of civilisation by keeping its home clean and sanitary, and in this may lie the secret of the fearful epidemics which occasionally devastate the whole hare population of certain areas.

But the hare profits by previous experience, and in this lies the beginning of wisdom. A mother-rabbit blunders into the same mistakes season by season, and her young are taken from her by the same harsh fate; but a hare seldom blunders twice into the same mistake—'Once bitten, twice shy,' is the axiom of her existence. The whole trouble lies in the fact that the young do not profit by the experience of their elders. Each has its own way to make and its own experience to gain. Were this not so, the hare would assuredly be among the fittest of the land, for to its natural gifts would be added the ability to adapt itself to changed conditions, and thus to become modernised, as have the deer, the otter, and the fox.

V.

A wild animal has two kinds of foes—hereditary, and those which are brought about by a change in the conditions under which it lives. The former it contends with guided by inherent knowledge, which is instinct; the latter it learns to circumvent only by experience. The hereditary foes of the wild hare are the fox, the weasel, the hound, even man himself. Against each of these the hare has its means of defence. A young hare that has lived its life in perfect immunity instinctively dodges through a narrow opening to baffle a pursuing hound, and as instinctively doubles back and leaps aside when going to its form in order to delay a pursuing stoat. All these tricks, clever in their way, are the outcome of endless decades of experience—they are, indeed, inherited habit. A young hare obtains little or no education from its mother. Not one single lesson as regards the circumventing of their numerous foes is taught the young hares by their mother, yet they grow up to hold their place among the wildest of all four-footed things.

Among the comparatively modern enemies of the hare, regarding which it must learn by experience, are the hempen-net, the snare, and the net set across the open gateway. If hares, like foxes and deer, possessed among their gifts

* In Scotland and in the Pennines hares may be seen in pairs, or even in groups, during the dusk of the evening, till well on in the month of May, or even later in very high country. Much depends on the weather conditions.
—H. M. B.

the ability to hand on their experience to their children, then these modern engines of man would be set at naught by their cunning. A hare lives to grow wise; by chance rather than sound judgment it has evaded death time and again ere, in its old age, the wisdom of experience is added to its inherited knowledge. But the children of that hare profit in no way by its learning. They are as unsophisticated as regards the modern engines of mankind as are the first brood of a dam who has lived in perfect security. This is yet another factor that makes it difficult to understand the hare's powers of survival. It is surrounded by foes; anything that can catch a hare can kill it; it is prone to all the ills and ailments of mortal flesh—barring, perhaps, kleptomania and orator's throat; the knowledge of the parents is denied the children—they have no friends or guardians, save the strength and agility of their own hind-legs and their own powers of reproduction. Truly the hare is among the marvels of modern existence.

In this country the hare population is reasonably free from disease, owing to the fact that they are never over-plentiful; but in other countries the number of hares periodically becomes so enormous that they literally overrun the land. In certain parts of Canada, for instance, hare plagues occur regularly.

Such plagues do not last long—a few months at the most sees them through; for disease, every disease under the sun, soon becomes rife, and in a season or two not a hare is left. It takes not only the weak, but also the strong—it clears the whole country of its hare population, and the dead bodies of the victims are littered like leaves over hundreds of miles of territory.

VI.

I have no notes on the length of life of captive hares, but there is no doubt that if both were in captivity the hare would probably out-

live the rabbit by two or three years. In the wild this does not apply, for, whereas a wild rabbit may live to become old and decrepit, a hare never does. As soon as its senses begin to lose their keenness, it inevitably falls a victim to one or other of its foes. A rabbit can seek the shelter of mother-earth, and becoming conscious of its enfeebled state, it ceases to wander far afield, remaining always near to some place of sanctuary. Not so the hare. When old age comes upon him he must still sally forth into the open, meeting his foes on their own ground; and the day of his first and last failure inevitably dawns with the falling off of his powers.

The average hare is well past its prime at nine; it is old at ten; and few, if any, live to see twelve.

The mean weight of the brown hare is between 7 and 9 lb. A 9-lb. hare is a good one; and 11-lb. hares are occasionally heard of, though seldom bagged.

Wherein lies the secret of the hare's survival? In its fecundity, and there alone. It survives simply because it is better able to stand the huge drainage on its numbers than the creatures that once shared its environment, but are now gone. In some districts its numbers have dwindled to the merest few, and were it nowhere preserved its extermination would be a matter of ten years at the most. Over vast areas of country the hares are totally exterminated by the end of winter; but during spring and summer, when the warfare against them abates a little, other hares creep in from the sanctuaries farther afield, and make good the shortage. Our old English and Scottish estates are responsible for keeping the hare alive; and were they to go, the hare would most assuredly go with them, and we should lose a creature that is not only inoffensive to man, but is a joy to behold—truly a child of the wild March winds and of the great open places.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

MEDITERRANEAN—continued.

VI.

IN May 1863 Vice-Admiral Robert Smart relieved Sir William Martin in the command, and a place was found for me in the new Commander-in-Chief's office. In order to give me a short holiday, the home-going admiral took me as far as Marseilles in H.M.S. *Magicienne*.

After a short stay at Naples, we ran through the Strait of Bonifacio, between Sardinia and Corsica, and passed inside the little island of Caprera, where General Garibaldi, like another Cincinnatus, had retired to till his fields. A very modest cottage formed the home of the

national hero. Up to this time I had not seen the general; his embarkation at Catania for Rome the previous August, which led to the disaster at Aspromonte, had kept us on the *qui vive*, and I remember a midnight trip at Corfu to communicate to the admiral the news of Garibaldi being wounded and taken prisoner.

It is strange how long association between places and sounds lasts. I never think of my first visit to Pompeii without hearing the strains of 'Viva Garibaldi!' sung by a strolling musician, who haunted us for hours, and who had only two songs in his repertoire—'Viva Garibaldi!' and 'Santa Lucia.'

From Naples we went on to Marseilles, where we learned to drink that excellent wine, vermouth, whose virtues were described on the bottle as follows: 'The Vermouth, who is a wit wine of former qualities saturated and perfumed with odoriferous herbs. His tonic pungent febrifuge, and astringent qualities is a mighty preservative against fever, and he is the most beneficent of all the drinks.'

The summer of 1863 we spent mostly in Greek waters. The country was in a disturbed state, and had not yet found a king—Prince Alfred having been obliged to refuse the throne, since he was heir to the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. At Athens there was a fleet of British, French, Russian, Austrian, Turkish, and Italian men-of-war, and the Piræus was very gay.

The need of a supply of drinking-water took us occasionally to the Gulf of Nauplia, where there was a beautiful perennial stream, unlike the classic Athenian rivers Ilissus and Cephissus, which ran dry in summer. From Nauplia we visited Tiryns and Mycenæ, the former with its cyclopean walls and architecture, Mycenæ with its remains of the days of Agamemnon, only waiting for the coming of Professor Schliemann to give up the treasures concealed in the tomb of the king. We visited this treasure-house, its entrance being under a remarkable stone, eighty-seven feet long and eighteen wide. Had we only known it, close to our feet was a mass of wealth which a pickaxe and shovel would easily have brought to view. There was no one to guard these remains, and apparently we might have helped ourselves!

During the summer our squadron was doing police work; a report of a riot at once led to the despatch of a gunboat to the port nearest to the scene. In Athens itself Captain Charles Hillyar, of H.M.S. *Queen*, had landed a detachment of marines for the protection of the National Bank. During the rioting the Minister of War, anxious to quell the discontent amongst the troops, whose pay was in arrear, had bombarded the bank from the town square. On the admiral's arrival, detachments from the British, French, and Russian ships (the fleets of the protecting Powers) relieved the *Queen's* men.

Athens in 1863 had a very neglected appearance. The Acropolis was so uncared for that the signs of the Turkish bombardment in 1827 were still visible. One of our assistant-surgeons took possession of a skull, which he picked from a heap lying in a pit. Fragments of the pillars of the Parthenon were scattered about in all directions, and one was content that the Elgin Marbles should be safely housed in the British Museum.

Our amusements this summer were limited to an occasional cricket-match, rowing, and bathing. One of our favourite walks was to Xerxes' seat, whence, in 480 B.C., the Persian monarch is said to have watched the naval action in Salamis

Bay, when his fleet of two thousand ships was destroyed by the Greek fleet under Themistocles.

On the 30th October 1863 a Greek frigate, escorted by H.M.S. *Revenge*, arrived from Toulon with Prince George of Denmark on board. He had accepted the offer of the throne of Greece, and there were great rejoicings in Athens. The prince landed at the Piræus, drove to Athens, took the oath at the cathedral, and was presented with the crown.

We remained until the end of November, by which time the country had quieted down. King George, who was only about eighteen, and as handsome as his sister Alexandra, then Princess of Wales, was beautiful, came to a dance on board the *Marlborough*, and charmed every one by his gracious manners.

VII.

After a long and busy spell at Malta, enlivened by dances, picnics, cricket-matches, &c., we left in the *Marlborough* for Corfu early in May 1864, to be present at the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece.

Towards the end of October the *Marlborough* sailed for England, and the *Gibraltar* became temporary flagship.

One's first ship has a special charm, and certainly we had good reason to be proud of the *Marlborough*. She was a model of efficiency in every respect. In competitive sail-drill she was an easy first; in discipline, in gun-drill, in general smartness, she left little to be desired. She may well have been smart, for, as we were so frequently reminded by officers of her rival ships, some hundreds of her seamen had served two commissions in her, and had, therefore, been continuously working together for five or six years.

I am reminded of an incident which took place in the Piræus when a little Turkish sloop, the *Broussa*, commanded by Hassan Bey, who had been serving in the British Fleet for some years, used to take part in the weekly competitive sail-drill of our squadron. The *Icarus*, commanded by Commander Nowell Salmon, V.C., was a very similar vessel, and the two commanders had been messmates. The *Broussa* would at times beat the *Icarus* at sail-drill, though the latter was splendidly smart; but then Johnny Turco was not above taking advantage of unfair dodges, as, for instance, when his upper sails, lightly secured by spun yarn, would fall before a man reached the upper yards to loose them—and so on.

Commander Salmon, calling on board the *Broussa*, asked Hassan how he made his men so smart. 'I'll show you,' said Hassan, and forthwith ordered the last man down from aloft to be bastinadoed.

Sir Nowell Salmon, as whose secretary I afterwards spent six of the happiest years of my life, was at this date the youngest commander in the

fleet, his Victoria Cross having gained for him his commander's commission at the earliest possible date. He was fond of telling us of another incident in his service in the *Icarus*. He had been ordered by Sir Robert Smart to report to him at 6 A.M. as ready for sea. A big Russian transport came into the Piræus during the night, and let go her anchor on top of the cable of the *Icarus*. Whilst the *Icarus* was struggling to get up her anchor, the two commanders appeared on their respective forecastles, and the polite Russian officer, raising his cap (we had not learned the new-fangled military mode of saluting which the navy has adopted of late years), said, 'Monsieur le Commandant, I am vair sorry; for me it is nosing; for you it is not so good.'

After much delay the cable was cleared, and Commander Salmon knocked at Sir Robert Smart's cabin door at 7 A.M., an hour late, to be greeted by Sir Robert's Northumbrian drawl, 'Young man, you are vary deleeborate.'

To revert for a moment to the men of the *Marlborough*. The captain of the afterguard, one Campany, a first-class petty-officer rating, was a fine old seaman, the apple of the commander's eye; for he and his afterguard-men never failed to keep quarter-deck and poop spotlessly clean and dazzlingly bright. Old Campany had, alas! a fault not uncommon amongst seamen in the 'sixties. As sure as he went on leave, so sure was he to get drunk, and, unless some sober shipmate took charge of him, to overstay his leave. On an occasion of general leave at Malta he came on board forty-eight hours late, and was fallen-in with the defaulters at seven bells next forenoon, for his case to be dealt with by Commander Brandreth. 'Well, Campany, what does this mean?' 'Beggin' your pardon, sir, I'd a stroke of bad luck. I took a boat and sailed down to Gozo, and coming back the she-rock [sirocco, the south-east wind] blew us nearly across to Sicily, and it took us two days to get back to Malta.' Result: case dismissed. Not long after this Campany was on leave at Syracuse, and returned twenty-four hours late. 'What happened?' asked the commander. 'Well, sir,' says Campany, 'I went with one of them Sicily chaps to see the Cattycoombs; the beggar left me in 'em in the dark, and I've been a-wandering about 'em till I was almost starved.' Once more the case was dismissed.

Arrived at the Piræus, the ship's company was again given general leave, with the usual result as regards Campany. It appeared that on this occasion he had gone up to 'Aythens,' and thought he would take a walk to the top of Mount Pentelicus, but that on the way he was captured by brigands! This was too much even for the friendly commander, and poor Campany was disrated to able seaman. It is pleasing to relate that he recovered his rating by good behaviour before the *Marlborough* paid off.

VIII.

H.M.S. *Victoria*, the new flagship, arrived from England, and we left in her at the beginning of July for the coast of Spain, calling at Port Mahon.

A gunroom mess in 1865 was conducted on very economical lines. Even in the wardroom messes late dinners were not allowed, and I see my home letters speak of the band playing daily from three to four for the admiral's dinner. We boys dined at noon, both at sea and in harbour; tea-time was about five o'clock; and after that hour the mess supplied us only with ship's biscuit, of which there was always plenty to be had. We were allowed to spend about sixpence a day in luxuries—jam, pickles, cheese, &c.—which were known as 'extras.'

I have often been asked why naval messes were (and, I believe, still are) so much more economically conducted than military messes. The reason is not far to seek. The naval mess subscription was, by the Queen's Regulations, fixed at three pounds a month for the wardroom and thirty shillings for the gunroom officers; in addition, the ordinary ship's ration, worth, perhaps, one shilling a day, was allowed to each officer; and a small subscription was authorised for servants and other mess expenses. Similarly the maximum permissible amount of officers' wine bills was laid down in regulations, and at every inspection rigid inquiries and examination of mess accounts were made to ascertain that these rules had not been broken.

Our 1865 summer cruise was very pleasant. Besides the wooden line-of-battle ships and frigates, we had three ironclads, very early instances of the new navy—*Royal Oak*, *Resistance*, and the little sloop *Enterprise*. The wooden line, led by the *Victoria*, watched their behaviour in rough weather with keen interest. It had been whispered that they called themselves the 'Guards of the Navy,' but the wallowing of the *Royal Oak* in the trough of the sea suggested to some wit of the wooden line that the name of 'Sea Pigs' was more suitable.

I have a lively recollection of the rolling capabilities of an armour-plated wooden ship. When I was cruising in the *Royal Alfred* from Bermuda to Barbados in 1869, she rolled thirty degrees each way for days together. I remember the commander of a little ship of some seven hundred tons, which was cruising with us, saying that he could have cast loose his guns on any one of those days (when, of course, the *Royal Alfred* dared not do so) and put shots into us, feet below the water-line.

We visited in the course of the summer Barcelona and Rosas Bay in Spain, and then, crossing to Italy, spent two months between Genoa, Spezzia, Leghorn, and Naples.

It was the fashion in those days for the

Commander-in-Chief's family to pass at any rate part of the summer in the flagship, and both in the *Marlborough* and the *Victoria* the admiral's ample quarters were at times fully occupied. On this cruise I joined in many a pleasant little trip with our ladies; but modern railway and steamer travel have made the coasts so well known that I will not venture to say anything about them.

At Spezzia we found that Charles Lever, the novelist, who held the post of British Consul there, had come down from Florence with his family to meet the fleet. The hotel—which, by the way, displayed his consular flag—became the rendezvous of the officers of the fleet. When Sunday came, instead of dancing, a wedding was suggested. Bride and bridegroom, bride's-maids and groomsmen, were chosen, and a sham parson officiated. In the middle of the ceremony Charles Lever, in a solemn voice, said, 'Perhaps you young people don't realise that, this ceremony having been performed in the presence of Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, he has but to sign a certificate to that effect to make it a legal and binding marriage.' The bridegroom, who became a distinguished admiral, would have been a desirable husband, and there was reason to believe that the lady, a relation of the consul's, would not have been an unwilling bride!

1865 was unhappily marked as a cholera year in the Mediterranean, and we had great difficulty in avoiding quarantine.

IX.

I saw very little of Gibraltar during my five years' service in the Mediterranean. Affairs in the western part of the station did not call for the Commander-in-Chief's presence, and our cruises were for the most part confined to the eastern waters. Having, therefore, very few personal reminiscences of 'The Rock,' I will end this account with some records, collected, I think, by a military staff officer, a copy of which came into my possession during one of our short visits.

SOME CURIOSITIES OF ADMINISTRATION AND DISCIPLINE IN OLDEN DAYS AT GIBRALTAR, FROM ABOUT 1730 TO THE EARLY PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

(1) No asses are to carry wadding to any of the Batteries, but the men are to carry it on their backs.

(2) Any donkeys loose in the town are to be the property of the person taking them away, and any straying on the ramparts are to be shot by the sentries.

(3) Ships coming into the Bay without showing their colours are to be fired on, and the cost of the shot recovered in the Port Dues.

(4) All men who have complaints to make against their wives are to send their names to the Town Major.

(5) All masons whatsoever are to be employed on the King's works and on no other; and if any are found to have been employed on private works, Lord Tyrawley will have every foot of the work done pulled down.

(6) Fishermen are only to sell their fish after the servant of the Governor has bought what he requires.

(7) Although persons are strictly forbidden to go on the Spanish Glacis, some Officers of the Garrison have most courageously stormed the lines by getting over the wall. The Spanish General is glad the sentry did not shoot them; the English General would be glad if he had, as a warning to others. He hopes to hear no more of such schoolboyish behaviour, which would shame the service of the most unmilitary nation upon earth.

(8) A man of the — Regiment having been so wicked and cowardly as to hang himself, the Commanding Officer is ordered to treat the corpse with the greatest ignominy. No funeral service is to be performed; the body is to be hung up by the heels for a certain time, and afterwards thrown over the Line Walls, like a dog or a cat.

(9) If Sentries are attacked by bullocks in the streets or on the Line Wall, they are to retire into an embrasure or get upon the parapet; but they are not to fire inconsiderately.

(10) On account of the scarcity of flour, soldiers are not to have their hair powdered until further orders.

(11) The Queue is to be fixed to the hair of the head, but when an officer's hair is not long enough for this purpose, he may be allowed to fix the queue otherwise, until the hair is sufficiently long, but this is not to continue longer than two months on any account.

ROADSIDE FAIRIES.

HAVE you ever seen the fairies
That live in roadside ditches?
They wear the Lady's Mantle
With spider cobweb stitches.
They lie on Yellow Bedstraw,
The hedgerow is their town,
And for a clock to tell the time
They have the thistledown.

The nettle is for ailment,
The docken-leaf for cure;
The rich have gold of colt's-foot;
The garments of the poor
Are the leaves of Ragged Robin
With blushing crimson face;
And those who go a journey far
May take the Speedwell's grace.

They sup from off the toadstools
On hips and rowans red;
Their music's from the blackbird
That perches overhead;
The road it is their ballroom
With dusty floor and white,
And for their lamps and candles shine
The gipsy fires at night.

CHRISTINE G. M. ORR.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

IT might sometimes be better at the holiday season to make a plan for the gathering of some extra moral strength, rather than to scheme for new stocks of physical vigour, which may be less essential for future happiness and content. For the most part the people of this time, despite war sufferings, are tolerably well in body; often with their minds and spirits it is not the same, for they have apprehensions and vague dreads. They experience the feeling of a fearsome insecurity and doubt. They think there is in the world, in our own islands, more evil in many forms than ever there has been before, and that it prospers as nothing else. In the political game cynicism and insincerity are carried to their farthest; faith and religion tremble; manners and conduct are wild; goodness and simplicity are rare. So it is not remarkable that one of the philosophers of the time should devote himself to an examination of the question—what is progress, and whether, indeed, what we think of as progress can have been any part of the scheme of the Creator, since with civilisation (as some had fancied) at its most advanced point it seemed to crack, and there was then a rapid retrogression. As we turn back the pages of history, the question is insistently presented—how are we of these times better than those of other civilisations of long, long ago? The Great War finished, the inventors became busy, and it was speedily announced with much enthusiasm in Britain and France that there had been fashioned a gun which would kill at a longer range than any other, and that Britain and France were to have the advantage of this weapon which would cast a shell about a hundred and fifty miles. So, then, what is progress? And if the progress of humanity in goodness and beauty is at present negative, then men and women, who are driven in these days to think as never before, are confronted with a question in a fearful form as to what is the value of progress, and what is the good of goodness. The problems of Time, of Hope, of the Future, have aspects they did not present in more careless days. It is found that to think now is to be troubled. People wonder if effort in goodness is worth the while. And is it a thing commendable and satisfying in itself? If

time and life do not lead on to some supreme achievement of the universe, if there is no ulterior object, is, then, the effort in goodness, as we call it, still worth the while? Is it a grateful and a satisfying thing in itself to be good?

* * *

Where is the progress? The question was analysed with fine reflection by Dean Inge in the course of his Romanes Lecture at Oxford recently. He pointed out that physically there had been no progress in the species for many thousands of years; the Cro-Magnon race lived, it may be, twenty thousand years ago, and was at least equal in size and strength to any modern people. The Dean considers that the ancient Greeks were a handsomer people than we are, and better formed, and that he would be a bold man who would claim that we are intellectually equal to the Athenians or superior to the Romans. This philosopher reflects: 'The laws of Nature neither promise progress nor forbid it. We could do much to determine our own future; but there has been no consistency about our aspirations, and we have frequently followed false lights, and been disillusioned as much by success as by failure. . . . For individuals, then, the path of progress is always open; but, as Hesiod told us long before the Sermon on the Mount, it is a narrow path, steep and difficult, especially at first. There will never be a crowd gathered round this gate; "few there be that find it." For this reason we must cut down our hopes for our nation, for Europe, and for humanity at large to a very modest and humble aspiration. We have no Millennium to look forward to; but neither need we fear any protracted or widespread retrogression.' . . . But Herbert Spencer, in his optimism, sang out: 'Progress is not an accident, but a necessity. What we call evil and immorality must disappear. It is certain that man must become perfect;' and again: 'The ultimate development of the ideal man is certain—as certain as any conclusion in which we place the most implicit faith; for instance, that all men will die.' But those who contemplate what has followed upon the Great War find their field of comprehension too limited to grasp this idea of certain progress. Then without progress there shall be no room for hope. And then? Life would be but a comic chaos. Such uncer-

tainties are troubling the minds of people of conscience now. They are disturbed, uneasy. They feel the need of strengthening their hopes and beliefs, of fortifying their character. They wish to believe that men and women, life and effort, are of some importance after all, despite the new truth that has seemed to burst on their imagination, the truth embodied in the most tremendous lines in any hymn :

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone.

They cannot believe, looking upon the mysterious stars on a summer's night, that, even though there is retrogression now, even though the living world about them is but an affair of a speck and a second, they and their labours and their yearnings do not matter anything at all. Because, if that were so— . . . But, for their conviction that goodness is of value, for their own personal effort, they feel they need a strengthening of their character, of their spirit, of their belief in a standard of good as it was set up of old. They yearn for a kindling of moral enthusiasm. They would like to fix their standards aright again, to cease to admire or approve or countenance that which is knavery or trickery, mean and base, material and utterly selfish, as has become a custom in political, commercial, social, and other departments of the general life.

* * *

It is a good thing at such a time of stress to move away from the works and evidences of our modern civilisation and effort, and resort to the matchless purifying influences of simplest nature. The shimmer of sunlight on green fields, the crooning of a summer breeze through the leaves of trees, the music of a brook, the glory of floral colour, the prospect of mountains, with the suggestion, among all these, of beauty, strength, and eternity, are the best physic for the soul in times of doubt. Here in the half-silence of Nature, without the newspapers and their perpetual story of human error, one may sit in the sunshine and think, and be the better for it. It is even better if in this stillness and purity we may contemplate some of the circumstances of a noble life carried through in faith, simplicity, and goodness to a splendid end. Such a story at such a time should be stimulating, helpful. But at this season it should not be too ponderous a story. It should be dreamful, delicious. It should be new and, as we say, entertaining. And it should be warm with human love. Where, then, is such a story?

* * *

A story of this kind, one of the finest, is to be found in a book that was lately written by a daughter of her mother. It is the beautiful story of the life of Mrs Gladstone, written in honour and with love and tenderness by Mrs Drew. To dwell upon these pages—a proper supplement of Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone*,

one of the finest works of biography in any language—is, to a spirit troubled in such a way as has been suggested, like entering into a majestic cathedral with its vast spaces of silence and solemnity, hearing then the sounds of dim and distant music, that seems as if it came from the walls and the pillars and from the gloom above, soothing the soul, yielding to it a heavenly sympathy and consolation. This was a woman in her true womanliness very great indeed. Last century could produce nothing finer. There is a picture reproduced in Lord Morley's work—based, as it would seem, on a photograph printed in Mrs Drew's—of Mrs Gladstone at forty-four years of age, in which the spirituality shines on those glorious features as in few other women's portraits that one can recall. It has been likened to a Romney picture of Lady Hamilton. In later years, if the eagerness that we see on such a portrait is softened, the general charm is in no wise lessened. Love and duty maintained the beauty, for Mrs Gladstone was a lover all her life. Pictures like these recall to me many memories of some childhood days near Hawarden, when often I saw the splendid pair, and, like all the other people of those parts, was happy to touch them as they came out from the parish church on Sunday mornings, and have the privilege of a hand-shake from the Grand Old Man. One remembers how she always tended him, was invariably by his side when it was convenient she should be; how suddenly, one evening in the 'eighties, he appeared unexpectedly in a village chapel, two or three miles away, at election-time, and made a great speech in support of the candidature of Lord Richard Grosvenor; how word of the coming was passed over the country-side; and how closely and affectionately Mrs Gladstone then held to his side when he was speaking, for he was not at his best in health. One sees her walking in the beautiful park of Hawarden and through the streets of a village not spoiled as, to some extent, it has been since. Many memories, and sweet ones. The story of her mother's life by Mrs Drew is truly the best reading we could have at such a time as this, and it has all the charm of a perfect love-story. She came of a noble race, and by her quality the most rabid of Democrats in these fierce days would be persuaded that there is more in breeding than he cared to admit. Twenty-fourth in descent was her father, Sir Stephen Glynn, from William de Percy, a Norman chieftain who came to England in 1066 with the Conqueror, and the blood of many famous statesmen ran in her veins. But these things do not matter to the story, after all; nor perhaps do the details of her childhood and young womanhood, sweet as they were. Mr Gladstone said in his diary that Catherine had reigned in her beautiful home a very queen. She was twenty-six years of age when that first period in her life came to an end.

'Her mother's feeling for her,' writes Mrs Drew, 'was little short of adoration, and with her radiant beauty and impetuosity of will she carried everything before her; her mother, her brothers, her sister, all moved as planets round the sun. It would not be easy to exchange this position of freedom and power for the more subordinate rôle of a wife, for the duties and responsibilities of marriage and motherhood. But she fell in love.'

* * *

Mr Gladstone met the Glynnes at Naples in November 1838, and he saw much of them there, and in Rome shortly afterwards. His intimacy with Catherine and her sister Mary (to whom she was most intensely attached, and who married Lord Lyttelton, the friend of Gladstone, on the same day as Gladstone himself married Catherine) grew, as we are told, in depth and devotion. They met most days, and he spent Christmas Day with them. One day they went to the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, and they spoke there of the immense and costly amount of labour lavished on its embellishment. Catherine contrasted our own parsimony in the service of God and the extravagance of our secular luxuries. 'Such speculations,' says Mrs Drew, 'are now constantly in the very air we breathe; but at that time, now nearly eighty years ago, they seemed little to trouble the richer classes. "Do you think we can be justified in indulging ourselves in all these luxuries?" she said to him. He was profoundly moved. "I loved her for this question," he wrote in his diary. "How sweet a thing it is to reflect that her heart and will are entirely in the hands of God! May He, in this, as in all things, be with her."' Lord Morley's book is one of a great career, of thought and philosophy and mighty exertion; it is not pre-eminently a book of soft and sweet sentiments, and the tale of the courtship is passed lightly by. Mrs Drew yields to us some of the secrets, as her mother revealed them to her, and tells of the 'tragedy' of her father's first declaration of his feeling. It was only a few weeks after the pair had first met, and it was on a moonlight evening in circumstances and surroundings the most glorious and romantic, in the Coliseum in this Eternal City. If time and the world were searched for the ideal place for such a declaration as between two such young and earnest people, surely this would have been the choice. But Catherine then hesitated; she failed to respond. That was the 'tragedy,' as she put it to her children. But very soon afterwards she realised her destiny. Her interest in the man was intense; she inquired discreetly as to his political and other movements in every possible way. She became absorbed in his first book on *Church and State*, and copied long extracts for her private use. 'Nothing could express more honourable feelings and taste than the letter he wrote me,'

she says. But Gladstone himself, then just beginning to flash brilliantly on the political world, and being clearly destined for the greatest achievement, was, as always with lovers, too doubtful, and he spoke in his diary of 'his precipitancy, of his incorrigible stupidity, and of the worthlessness of his affections.' In the spring, in London, he saw much of them again; and once in May he wrote: 'But what I ask is next to an impossibility.' A week afterwards he told his father of it all, for 'concealment became too heavy for me.' But his heaven was opened to him only two days afterwards. Lady Shelley gave a garden-party at Fulham, to which they were both invited, and there Catherine Glynne told William Ewart Gladstone that 'all doubts on his part might end.' 'I went down with the Glynnes, and here my Catherine gave me herself,' he wrote. Mrs Drew tells us that they walked apart in the garden by the river, and he revealed to her his own story, and what had been the passionate desire of his heart—to take holy orders. All this, we are assured, produced a revulsion in her pure and lofty spirit. She asked for the earliest Communion 'that we might go together to the Altar of Christ.' 'May I have from my God a due sense of the value and the sweetness of this gift,' wrote Gladstone. 'Led by her questions, I have given her these passages for canons of our living'—and then there followed two passages from the *Paradiso* of Dante, which have been translated thus:

Love for each plant that in the garden grows
Of the Eternal Gardener. I prove
Proportioned to the goodness He bestows;

and:

In His Will is our peace.

* * *

The daughter remarks that her father's powerful intellect and pitiful heart appealed to a girl brought up, as Catherine Glynne had been, in the love and fear of God. In his diary the lover wrote a few days later: 'At the end of a long and chequered day—chequered with joy, business, and excitement—I sit down to write and think a little. First, how much have I thought of God to-day while my hand was coursing over the paper? How little have I thought of Him to thank Him! My blessing is, indeed, great. At two, she and I went to the Archbishop's by his desire, and he kissed Catherine.' Shortly before the wedding, which was only a month later, he and the other happy man, Lyttelton, went to Hawarden, and there they stayed until the eventful day. 'To quote the diary again: "'Kenilworth" aloud with dearest—much real intercourse. What am I, to charge myself with the care of such a being, and to mingle her destiny with mine? Instruction and profit on this earth do not usually come on the wings of joy so unmixed.' And then, on July 25, the wedding: 'Every

house a bower, the road arched and festooned with flowers, the deepest interest in every face—bands, processions of societies, the crowd thickening as they approached the church, the road carpeted, the churchyard-path strewn with flowers by the hands of children.' One knowing Hawarden of the more peaceful days when the Gladstones dwelt at the Castle can imagine something of that joyous scene. Gladstone said that the music broke down what little self-control he had left as he walked up the crowded church with Lord Lyttelton. At the altar he found his beloved, and they were married first. And at five in the afternoon he took up his diary again: 'The beloved sleeps on the sofa. We have read the lessons together. She sleeps gently as a babe—oh, may I never disturb her precious peace!' The next day they read the Bible together, and he wrote that he trusted that the daily practice would last as long as their joint lives. Looking back, then, upon the wedding-day, but one day gone, he reflected: 'How can I express the sense of the scene of yesterday?—it may seem extravagant to dwell so much on the accompaniments, but it is because they did ennoble and sanctify the scene, and did really, for the time, raise the heart to a high level according with the spirit of the great mystery of Christian marriage;' and again, on a subsequent day: 'Not only every day, but nearly every hour, convinces me of the brightness of my treasure, her pure enduring brightness.' Lover's ecstasy indeed, but the judgment of Gladstone was never more sure, nor his sense of values more correct.

This is but an episode in the joint lives, though the most important. It brought those two beings to their most splendid fruit, and we may be sure it had something to do with the history of this country. Gladstone, tremendously conscientious, stern self-disciplinarian, magnificent in effort and sense of duty, would have been great in any circumstances, but one cannot read this beautiful story of love and helpfulness and tranquillity, with certain old memories, slight and fleeting as they may be, without realising that much of his greatness and achievement sprang from her, the sweetness of her love and assistance, the nobility of her character. Early in their married life there came to him an important letter from the Prime Minister, embodying something of a secret. Then a question arose. Was she to be told all or nothing? And it was agreed that always she should be told everything. . . . The Lytteltons and the Gladstones remained ever the most intimate friends, in constant association with one another; and we are told that in 1847 there were eleven children in the house under seven years of age—six Lytteltons and five Gladstones. As Mrs Drew remarks, 'one can scarcely imagine how any one could safely cross the room with such a crowd about the floor.' . . . How through her life, by her sweetness and goodness, Mrs Gladstone was the joy and happiness of all who knew her is one great part of this story; her devotion to her husband, her admiration and belief in him, is another. They must both be read for the moral strength we gather from such an exemplary record.

VENGEANCE VALLEY.

PART II.

VII.

IT was now practically dark, and as Kid Peters slipped silently along in the cover of the pines he knew just what he was going to do. He rightly judged that whoever was in the shanty would be at supper, and as he went he got out his knife. The white mule, he perceived as he drew closer, was also at supper.

The Kid left the shelter of the last pine-bole, and advanced with extreme caution. His one fear was lest the camp should include a dog. Fortunately for his design, the fear proved groundless. The mule was so intent upon its supper that it did not see—at all events it took no notice of—the stealthy figure gliding in the darkness along the wall of the shanty, until the smart sting of a well-aimed stone striking its hind-quarters caused it to utter an angry squeal, fling its heels in the air, and start up the valley at a canter. There was nothing to stop the canter, because the Kid,

before letting fly the stone, had thoughtfully cut the tethering-rope.

As the Kid had calculated, the noise of the white mule's abrupt departure brought a man hurriedly to the door of the shanty—a tall, black-bearded fellow, carrying a Winchester rifle. The moment Mr Peters perceived the muzzle of that rifle emerge from behind the woodwork, he realised that the situation called for action rather than argument. Without a word, he sprang from his concealment and landed the shanty-proprietor such a tremendous blow on the side of the head as laid him senseless. Snatching the gun as it fell, the Kid stepped back into the shadow to await developments.

None came. The Kid therefore poked his head cautiously inside. A moment's inspection satisfied him that it contained accommodation for a single gentleman only, whose supper, barely commenced, was set out on an upturned wooden box beside the truckle-bed.

Hurrying outside again, and finding the pro-

priest still lying quietly where he had left him, Mr Peters possessed himself of what was left of the white mule's tethering-cord, and took the precaution of securing the shanty-owner's hands and feet with it before dragging him into the candle-lit interior to examine the state of his health.

Standing up after completing this job to his satisfaction, the Kid set his hands to his mouth and shouted into the night, 'Ahoy! Miss Hester!'

Then he dragged the man inside and propped him against the bed.

VIII.

The candle-light fell full on the captive's bearded face, and a few drops of blood just below the right temple marked the spot where the Kid's fist had landed. He was alive. His recovery from that knock-down blow would be a matter of only a few minutes. But Kid Peters stood rigid and staring, and as he stared a black frown deepened on his young face. The man groaned slightly, and the lids of his closed eyes quivered.

'Sid Morgan!' shouted the Kid. He stooped and picked up the Winchester, and instinctively his finger felt for the trigger. For the moment he had forgotten everything but the vengeance which he had nursed through two years of wrong. 'Sid Morgan!' he shouted again.

Sid Morgan opened his eyes, and stared, at first stupidly, into the terrible young face confronting him. Stupidity slowly gave place to terror as he gazed.

'You know me?' asked Peters.

'No,' said Morgan obstinately. 'Never saw you before.'

'Liar!' said the Kid. 'Jog your memory, Sid. I'm the man you saw that night with the red heifer from Murchison's ranch—you swore it, you know, in open court—the same heifer whose hide you put on the fence of my corral with your own hands. You got me sent to Deerlodge for two years. Two years, you perjured coward! And every day of them I swore I would hunt you down, and every day since I quit jail I've been hunting you. I've come a long way, but I've found you.' He slewed the rifle round so that it covered his enemy.

'Stop!' cried the wretched man. 'Kid Peters, are you going to murder me in cold blood?'

'I'm going to kill you, sure. Why not? You've murdered me. I was an honest man. You made me a jail-bird. You branded me for life. The law will never avenge me—you saw to that. I'll avenge myself.' Kid Peters raised the rifle.

Beads of sweat showed on Morgan's forehead. 'Wait!' he cried desperately. 'I'll make it up to you, Peters. Every minute of it—every second! I'll make you a millionaire this very night. There's a fortune in this shanty, Peters—

a fortune in sapphires. And a dozen more in the ground around. Spare me, and it's yours! Look for yourself, man!'

'All the sapphires in the Rocky Mountains won't pay me for two years in Deerlodge,' said the Kid as he rammed the butt of the rifle to his shoulder. And then, in the very act of firing, the present swept vividly back upon his consciousness, which the sudden cloud of vengeful memories evoked by the encounter with Morgan had momentarily obscured. Perhaps it was the mention of the jewels that had broken the spell, letting in reason's ray upon the black darkness of his passion. Jewels connoted woman, and since last night woman had but one name for the Kid. And she was outside. Any moment she might be in the shanty. There was one thing, and only one, which in his present mood Kid Peters dared not do, and that was to figure as a murderer in the eyes of Hester M'Cleod.

He lowered the rifle, and strode to the door. Listening, he could detect faintly in the distance his horse's footsteps. He re-entered the shanty, and paced up and down, the Winchester in his hand, wrestling with the problem. Morgan, on the ground, watched him furtively with alternate terror and hope.

'Look at them—for God's sake, look!' he urged. 'There's a gripful of stones by the oil-stove there. First-grade ultramarines every one of them, with the live spark, Kid. I didn't trouble to pack the commoner stones.'

He ran on with desperate praise of the jewels with which he hoped to buy his life, but Kid Peters never so much as glanced towards the bag.

'I was prospecting for gold,' pleaded Morgan. 'The gravel promised well by the stream-bed—all underlaid with clay and rotting limestone, Kid. I didn't find any gold, but I hung on. My horse died, and I went clean out of grub, but I had a kind of sense there was something rich right here. I was pretty near starvation, and it's fifty miles from here to Hat Creek; but I wouldn't quit. There's a woman camping down the other arm of the valley, thirty miles nearer the settlement than me. What does a woman want prospecting? I went down to get some grub from her. She wasn't at the cabin, but her mule was tied there, loaded up with a new lot of stuff. I brought the mule along with me. The woman can easily get back. She's only fooling around, anyhow; and I'll pay her for the beast one day. And the very same day I struck the gems—pockets and pockets of them, Kid. And they're all yours, every stone. Kid, you'll let bygones be bygones?'

Kid Peters halted suddenly in front of his enemy.

'Morgan,' said he, 'I've changed my mind. Not because of the stones—curse you! I brought a friend with me when I came here. If I had known you were here, I'd have come alone,

and you would be a dead man now. My friend knows nothing about you, and very little about me, but more about justice, I guess, than the two of us together. You shall have a fair trial. We will put the facts before my friend—the facts, and nothing else. And what my friend decides shall go. Do you agree?’

‘Agree!’ exclaimed the captive wretch. ‘God bless you for a white man, Kid Peters!’

IX.

There was a sound of hoofs outside. The Kid seated himself on the bed beside the food.

A minute later Hester M’Cleod came in, and stood in the doorway taking in the scene.

The Kid sprang up, and with polite, if somewhat theatrical, alacrity handed her to the seat he had just vacated.

‘Supper is served, Miss M’Cleod,’ he announced. ‘It’s *your* supper, every crumb of it.—That so, Mr Morgan?’

‘I’m afraid it is, miss,’ answered Morgan. ‘I robbed you, and that’s a fact.’

‘And the mule will be along by-and-by,’ said the Kid cheerfully. ‘She won’t stray far from her feed. This is the gentleman who stole her, and he says he is very sorry, and will be pleased to pay compensation.—That so, Mr Morgan?’

‘Quite right,’ said Morgan.

The Kid, as he talked, was busily supplying his wondering companion with the food already prepared.

Hunger proving too strong for speculation, Miss M’Cleod began to eat with relish while awaiting explanations, and the Kid ran on with assumed gaiety.

‘I had Mr Morgan rather at a disadvantage when we met, so I had to tie him up. He wasn’t expecting you, but he’s very pleased to welcome you to his place.—Aren’t you, Morgan?’

‘Delighted, I’m sure,’ said Morgan with a wry grin.

‘We had a few minutes to spare while we were waiting for you, Miss M’Cleod, and to pass the time away we got to chatting about old pals. There was a particular case of two fellows we both knew pretty well. One was a friend of Mr Morgan’s, and the other was my own pet chum. These two guys fell out, and Morgan and I both sided with our own man pretty warmly. It’s rather a queer story, and I was telling Morgan here about the finish of it, and we very nearly quarrelled about it ourselves as to who was right; but we settled to ask your opinion as an unprejudiced outsider.—Didn’t we, Morgan?’

‘We did, miss,’ said Morgan.

‘Hadn’t you better both have some supper?’ asked Miss M’Cleod in bewilderment.

‘Ladies first,’ said the Kid, smiling amiably. ‘Morgan and I felt we couldn’t eat till we heard your opinion. It was like this. Morgan’s friend was a ranch foreman up in the Continental Divide, and my friend was a fellow who set up

homesteading in the neighbourhood of the ranch. Morgan’s friend played the dirty on my friend—that’s agreed—and got him sent to two years’ penitentiary on a faked charge of cattle-thieving. My friend served his two years, and when he came out he set about looking for Morgan’s friend to kill him. Well, he found him after a bit; but the Devil looks after his own, and in the meantime Morgan’s friend had made a rich find of gems in the mountains. My friend caught Morgan’s friend unawares—pretty much as I caught Morgan himself to-night—and had got him at his gun’s end, when Morgan’s friend offered to buy himself off with the fortune he had discovered. That was the situation we were discussing when you came in.’

X.

Hester’s bright eyes shone with interest. ‘And what happened?’ she asked eagerly, pausing between two mouthfuls.

‘Before we tell you that,’ said the Kid, drawing back out of the candle-light, ‘we want your impartial opinion on the justice of the case. We both feel that we are too keen each on his friend’s behalf for our notions to be unprejudiced. Mr Morgan will correct me if I have left anything out.’

‘Mr Peters has put it quite straightforward, miss,’ said Morgan. His brow was damp, and his face livid under its tan.

There was a tension in the air that made Hester suddenly grave. But she did not hesitate. ‘Nothing could compensate your friend for the injury done him,’ she said, turning her brown eyes on the Kid. ‘If Mr Morgan’s friend had a conscience, he would never be able to forget that he had robbed an innocent man of his character. The gift of a fortune might be good for a man, or it might not. It would depend on the man. But Mr Morgan’s friend was right to offer the only thing in his power. Then, if he wanted to get square with himself as far as he could, he should have confessed his perjury publicly, and taken the consequences.’

‘I don’t know if he was just that sort of guy,’ said the Kid. ‘Was he, Morgan?’

‘I guess he wasn’t,’ answered Sid Morgan. ‘He was kind of weak in the conscience, miss.’

‘Morgan means he was an infernal coward; only, he don’t like to put a name to it,’ explained the Kid. ‘It wasn’t repentance the guy was suffering from, but blue funk. The sight of that gun put the wind up him properly—didn’t it, Morgan?’

‘I guess he was pretty badly scared,’ Morgan admitted.

‘But what happened? How did it end?’ demanded Miss M’Cleod. There was suppressed excitement in her question, for there was, she felt, something in this sinister story which she did not understand.

Kid Peters walked over to the large leathern

bag lying beside the oil-stove, and opened it deliberately. As he did so, he replied to the girl's question in a level voice.

'It ended, Miss Hester, just as you thought it ought to end. You see, my friend was kind of weak. He didn't want the gems, and he would rather have seen Sid Morgan's friend stretched out with a bullet in his heart than own all the jewels in the United States. But he happened to have a lady with him when he fell in with his enemy, and he didn't want the lady to think too badly of him. So the finish of it was that he decided to close with the other fellow's offer, and sell him back his life.' The Kid had opened the bag, and as he went on talking he was holding a handful of sparkling gems in his open palm to catch the glint from the candle. 'That reminds me—do you know anything about the law of grub-stake, Miss Hester?'

'Law of what?' With a heightening colour, as a dim suspicion of the truth began to dawn upon her, the girl leaned forward, staring at the Kid's open palm.

'Grub-stake,' repeated Peters without looking up, and carefully turning over the jewels with his fingers. 'Tell Miss M'Cleod the law of grub-stake, Morgan, as laid down by the legislature of Montana.'

'The grub-stake takes one-third of the claim,' said the bound man.

'Mr Peters,' said Hester with spirit, 'you are talking over my head, and I don't think you are at all polite. Have the goodness to descend to the level of my understanding.'

'It's really quite simple,' said the Kid. 'It has been held over and over again in the courts that the individual who lends to a prospector the cash, or its equivalent in food or horse-flesh, to enable him to carry on his prospecting, is entitled to a third share of whatever find the prospector may make. Morgan here stole your mule and

outfit, and as the result he has made a big find of sapphires. He owed me his life, and I have taken his jewels for the debt. But one-third of them is yours by law. You and I between us own this claim. To-morrow morning we'll start away for Virginia City, and get it registered.'

There was a minute or two of silence in the cabin, during which Miss M'Cleod sat studying her two companions, and endeavouring to acclimatise herself in the strange situation into which she had been swept, as it were, on the wings of destiny. She had a rather breathless sensation.

'You seem to take me very much for granted,' she said at last. 'And what about Mr Morgan?'

'Morgan and I agreed to abide by your verdict,' said the Kid, throwing back the jewels into the bag. 'You've given judgment, and that holds good.—Don't it, Morgan?'

'It sure does,' said the prisoner fervently.

'Very well,' said Hester, with a sudden little air of decision. 'Then there's only one thing more. Untie Mr Morgan, and let me see you two shake hands.'

'I don't think that would be very safe,' protested the Kid, 'in the interests of the partnership.'

'There won't be any partnership if it is not done,' said Miss M'Cleod very firmly. 'Untie him, Kid!'

Kid Peters met the judge's eye, and his blood ran quick in his veins. A few seconds later he had cut his enemy's bonds, and the two men somewhat sheepishly clasped hands.

'Now come and have supper,' ordered Hester.

'Yes—partner,' said the Kid.

The Vengeance Valley Sapphire Syndicate, to which some months afterwards Mr and Mrs Peters disposed of their joint interests, is a flourishing concern. Sid Morgan is still foreman of the workings.

THE END.

THE COLOUR OF THE SEA.

By HERBERT LUSS.

THE colour of the world of waters has been vaunted by poets and writers of all ages. Homer described the sea as 'wine-coloured'; Denham speaks of its 'amber foam and golden gravel'; whilst Byron, in that splendid poem of his, 'The Ocean,' refers to it as 'dark blue:'

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain.

But these are only a few of the hundred hues which the great deep can assume. 'In every clime and every season,' writes Professor Downes, 'it bears the stamp of changeful beauty.' In bright weather, while its face is gold and white with the large light upon it, you will see under the side of a ship, or even of a small boat, a

patch of shadow colour so delicately blue, or so divinely green, that sapphire and chrysoprase are but foolish terms whereby to indicate them. Nor can you decide which combination is more exquisite to the eye, the dark blue of the deep water, laced with the broken silver of the foam; or the leaf-green loveliness of an inland gulf when the glitter of each lifting emerald ripple is backed by violet and gray; or the glory of the calm expanse under a golden sunset when the seascape is a far-stretching splendour of glass, mingled with fire. But the changeful glory of the sea ever mocks the poverty of words. We can only accept it, and thank the Great Creator for it as something worthy of His measureless beneficence. Byron sings:

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form

Glasses itself in tempests: in all time—

Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,

Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime

Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,

The image of Eternity, the throne

Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime

The monsters of the deep are made; each zone

Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless,
alone.

The bluish tint of the sea is rendered visible to the eye only when the light penetrates through a stratum of water of considerable depth. This may be easily ascertained by experiment. Take a glass tube two inches wide and two yards long; blacken it internally with lamp-black and wax to within half-an-inch of the end—the last mentioned being closed with a cork. Drop a piece of white porcelain into the tube, which, after being filled with pure sea-water, must be set vertically on a white plate; and then, looking through the open end, you will see the white of the porcelain changed into a light-blue tint.

In the Gulf of Naples we find the inherent colour of the water exhibited to us by nature on a most magnificent scale. The splendid 'Azure Cave,' at Capri, might almost be said to have been created for the purpose. For many centuries its beauties had been veiled from man, as the narrow entrance is but a few feet above the level of the sea; and it was only discovered in the year 1826, by two Prussian artists accidentally swimming in the neighbourhood. Beyond the portal the cave widens to grand proportions, a hundred and twenty-five feet long, and a hundred and forty-five feet broad; and except a small landing-place on a projecting rock at the farther end, its precipitous walls are on all sides bathed by the influx of the waters, which in that sea are most remarkably clear, so that the smallest objects may be distinctly seen on the light bottom at a depth of hundreds of feet. All the light that enters the grotto must penetrate the whole depth of the waters, probably several hundred feet, before it can be reflected into the cave from the clear bottom; and it thus acquires so deep a tinge from the vast body of water through which it has passed that the dark walls of the cavern are illumined by a radiance of the purest azure, and the most differently coloured objects below the surface of the water are made to appear bright blue.

All profound and clear seas are more or less of a deep-blue colour; while, according to seamen, a green colour indicates soundings. The bright blue of the Mediterranean, so often referred to by poets, is found all over the deep pure ocean, not only in the tropical and temperate zones, but also in the regions of eternal frost. Scoresby speaks with enthusiasm of the splendid blue of the Greenland seas; and all along the great ice-barrier which, under 77° lat., obstructed the progress of Sir James Ross towards the South Pole, that illustrious navigator found the waters

of as deep a blue as in the classical Mediterranean. The North Sea is green, partly from its water not being so clear, and partly from its sandy bottom mixing with the essentially blue tint of the water. In the Bay of Loango the sea has the colour of blood, and Captain Tuckey discovered that this results from the reflection of the *red ground soil*.

But the essential colour of the sea undergoes much more frequent changes over large spaces from enormous masses of minute *algæ* and countless hosts of small sea-worms floating or swimming on its surface.

'A few days after leaving Bahia,' says Mr Darwin, 'not far from the Abrolhos islets, the whole surface of the water, as it appeared under a weak lens, seemed as if covered by chipped bits of hay with their ends jagged. Each bundle consisted of from twenty to sixty filaments, divided at regular intervals by transverse *septa*, containing a brownish-green flocculent matter. The ship passed several bands of them, one of which was about ten yards wide, and, judging from the mud-like colour of the water, at least two and a half miles long.' Similar masses of floating vegetable matter are a very common phenomenon near Australia.

'On the coast of Chili,' says the same author, 'a few leagues north of Concepcion, the *Beagle* one day passed through great bands of muddy water; and again, a degree south of Valparaiso, the same appearance was still more extensive. Mr Sullivan, having drawn up some water in a glass, distinguished, by the aid of a lens, moving points. The water was slightly stained, as if by red dust; and after leaving it for some time quiet, a cloud collected at the bottom.

'With a slightly magnifying lens, small hyaline points could be seen darting about with great rapidity, and frequently exploding. Examined with a much higher power, their shape was found to be oval, and contracted by a ring round the middle, from which line curved little setæ proceeded on all sides, and these were the organs of motion. Their minuteness was such that they were individually quite invisible to the naked eye, each covering a space equal only to the one-thousandth of an inch, and their number was infinite, for the smallest drop of water contained very many. In one day we passed through two spaces of water thus stained, one of which alone must have extended over several square miles. The colour of the water was like that of a river which has flowed through a red clay district, and a strictly defined line separated the red stream from the blue water.'

Remarkable as it may appear, in the neighbourhood of Callao the Pacific has an olive-green colour, owing to a greenish matter, which is also found at the bottom of the sea, in a depth of eight hundred feet. In its natural state it has no smell; but when cast on the fire it emits the odour of burnt animal substances.

Near Cape Palmas, on the coast of Guinea, Captain Tuckey's ship seemed to sail through milk, a phenomenon which was owing to an immense number of little white animals swimming on the surface, and concealing the natural tint of the water.

The peculiar colouring of the Red Sea, from which it has derived its name, is due to the presence of a microscopic *alga*, floating on the surface of the sea, and even less remarkable for its beautiful red colour than for its prodigious fecundity.

Many more examples might be given where, either from minute *algæ* or from small animals, the deep-blue sea suddenly appears in stripes of white, yellow, green, brown, orange, or red. For fear, however, of tiring the reader's patience, we shall merely mention the *olive-green* water which covers a considerable part of the Greenland Seas. It is found between 74° and 80° N. lat.; but it varies in position with the currents, often forming isolated stripes, and sometimes spreading over two or three degrees of latitude. Small yellowish *medusæ*, of from one-thirtieth to one-twentieth of an inch in diameter, are the principal agents that change the pure ultramarine of the Arctic Ocean into a muddy green.

According to Scoresby, they are about one-fourth of an inch asunder, and in this proportion a cubic inch of water must contain sixty-four; a cubic foot, 110,592; a cubic fathom, 23,887,872; and a cubic mile over 16,000 billions. From soundings made in the situation where these animals were found, the sea at this part is probably more than a mile deep; but whether these substances occupy the whole depth is uncertain. Provided, however, the depth to which they extend be about two hundred and fifty fathoms, the immense number of one species mentioned above may occur in a space of two miles square; and what a stupendous idea must we form of the infinitude of marine life when we consider that those vast numbers, beyond all human conception, occupy, after all, only a small part of the green-coloured ocean, which extends over twenty

or thirty thousand square miles! It is here that the giant whale of the North finds his richest pasture-grounds, which at the same time invite man to follow on his track.

The crystalline clearness of the Caribbean Sea excited the admiration of Columbus, who, in the pursuit of his great discoveries, ever retained an open eye for the beauties of nature. 'In passing over these splendidly adorned grounds,' says he, 'where marine life shows itself in an endless variety of forms, the boat, suspended over the purest crystal, seems to float in the air. On the clear sandy bottom appear thousands of sea-stars, sea-urchins, molluscs, and fishes of a brilliancy of colour unknown in our temperate seas. Fiery red, intense blue, lively green, and golden yellow perpetually vary. The spectator floats over groves of sea-plants, corals, and sponges, that afford no less delight to the eye, and are no less gently agitated by the heaving waters than the most beautiful garden on earth when a gentle breeze passes through the waving boughs.'

Surely, then, the sea is one of the glories, as it is the chiefest of the guardians, of Britain. The track of the Atlantic steamer is the avenue to our palace-front. The mighty murmur of the ocean strikes the patriotic vein in us. We have discovered and peopled continents by our mastery of the sea. As it stretches before us, the stout, brave galleons, the 'wooden walls' of Old England, pass before the mind's eye; the guns of the Armada, of St Vincent and Trafalgar, boom in the mind's ear; the spirits of Drake, Rodney, Collingwood, and Nelson move upon the face of the waters, and thrill us with the memories of their valour.

Other things change and decay, but the sea changes without decay. Time writes no wrinkle on its azure brow. It is the symbol alike of Infinity and Eternity:

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore.

MARGARET AND MARRIAGE.

By WILLIAM FREEMAN.

I.

YOU can't bluff Destiny. I've tried it, and I know.

I met Margaret Thewson first at the Vamberys', and afterwards we met at intervals and in all sorts of places, because it was intended that we should meet.

The Vamberys were young, and very modern, and, so far as I've been able to gather, they married because their steps suited, and really good jazzing partners were scarce. They'd no

patience with housekeeping, or babies, or any other out-of-date domesticities of that sort; and when, about the end of the fifth month, they found themselves without a maid and pretty considerably bored with one another, they invited Margaret, a poor relation of Netta's, to come and live with them. And Margaret came. She was one of those slight, fair girls who look frailer than they are; too hard-working to give her prettiness a chance, and an excellent foil for the dark brilliance of Netta. And she'd tact, and sympathy, and a phalanx of the lesser

virtues, and she stayed with them until the smash came.

I had my first real conversation with her on the day when George Vambery called me in to see what could be saved from the wreckage—though, of course, we'd met before. I'd spent the morning going into figures. It had been a depressing business, and the main fact that had emerged after some four hours' solid work was that the Vamberys wouldn't have more than about a couple of hundred between them to live upon. As a matter of fact, Netta didn't propose to live on it at all. An uncle—Sir Samuel Mellish, the Caramel King—was in need of some one to supervise his household, and was prepared to pay well for the job. And Netta had written and announced that she was taking it on.

'And you?' I said to Margaret. We were standing in the hall, looking through the open doorway on to the yellow sweep of the drive. There were still the grooves in the gravel where the motors had come up for the big party the Vamberys had given the week before.

'I must get something else to do.'

'Any particular preferences?'

She shrugged her shoulders. 'If I have, they mustn't count. I've no capital, and very little experience. I used to be considered fairly good at figures, and so forth.'

'What about a Government post?'

'I'm over twenty-five—too old to make a start at anything that matters.'

'I was thinking of a berth under the Board of Production. Waveling, a man I happen to know there, was telling me yesterday that the department's in need of temporary help. The pay, I gathered, would be somewhere in the region of three pounds a week. One can live on that.'

'Of course. I'd be most grateful for an introduction.'

So I took her the next day to interview Waveling. He's a permanent official, with all the permanent official's limitations, but a good fellow, and he was willing enough to give her a trial. She was, it seemed, leaving the Vamberys' at once.

I took her to Buffoni's to lunch, and then, by the sheerest luck, was able to find her decent rooms.

'You've been most awfully good to me,' she said when we parted.

'The boot's on the other foot,' I told her. 'You've furnished me with a whole series of excuses for a half-day's escape from the office.'

'I thought—her eyes twinkled—'that lawyers hated to be kept away from their parchments and deed-boxes.'

'It's a tradition, and tradition dies hard. But in this weather—only, for Heaven's sake, keep the thing secret!—every solicitor in London is racking his brains for an excuse to go somewhere else.'

'By the way,' she said—this was as we were about to part—'I owe you—how much is it?—for my lunch.' The keen April wind and a touch of excitement had brought an unusual dash of colour to her cheeks, and she looked very earnest and kiddish and pretty.

'That's all nonsense. You mustn't'—

'Please, Mr North!'

'But why insist upon spoiling a man's simple pleasure in acting as escort to'—

She cut short the discussion by producing five shillings.

'Invest it,' I told her, and made her put the money back in her purse.

I went on to the office, meditating on the queer streaks that run through a woman's character, and wondering if I should ever see Margaret Thewson again.

II.

When I did, it was four months later. The *affaire Vambery* had ceased to be an *affaire*. Their furniture had been sold by auction; the house had been let; Netta was with her caramel-making uncle; Vambery himself was loafing about, looking—not too strenuously—for a job, and wondering why four pounds a week had so devilish little spending in it. Then some business took me to the Board of Production, and in one of the corridors I ran against Margaret. The overworked housekeeper-companion-secretary had developed into a striking-looking young woman, alert, well dressed, obviously capable. She laughed and flushed as she held out her hand—I fancy my gasp of astonishment was audible—and presently began telling me about herself, quite simply and frankly. She persisted in regarding me as the originator of her good fortune.

'I've been promoted,' she said, 'twice. Mr Waveling has been kind—they've all been kind—and the work appealed to me. I'm going to be moved into the statistical branch in November. If it hadn't been for you in the first instance'—

'That's fudge!' I said. 'Or mayn't one use such expressions to a higher official?'

'But temporary,' she reminded me; 'merely temporary.'

'I decline to believe it. His Majesty's Government has its deficiencies, but it knows a departmental bargain when it sees one. . . . In the meantime, what about a light and sustaining luncheon at Buffoni's?'

But she declined. There were, I gathered, innumerable matters that claimed her attention for the next hour or so. And—well, she wouldn't come, anyway. So I lunched by myself, and thought about her a good deal, and for the next few nights dreamed about her as well. I wanted to see her often; to talk to her long enough to knock away all the silly barriers of formality that convention and habit set up between a man

and a woman. But it was another month before I did see her, and then it was where connected conversation was next to impossible.

She was crossing the Strand from one side as I crossed it from the other, and we found ourselves marooned on the same island amid a clattering stream of traffic that for some minutes made escape impossible. I thought she looked as though she needed a holiday, and was tactless enough to say so. But she shook her head.

'But what I do need,' she confessed, 'is new lodgings. My landlady has a married daughter coming to live with her, and the result is—expulsion. If you happen to know of a place that's falling vacant by the 29th'—

As it happened, I did know of a place, and told her so.

'It's in St Martin's Mansions, the big block of flats fifty yards from my own digs,' I explained. 'A client is giving up the rooms next week.'

'And the rent?'

I didn't know, but I offered to find out, and did, the upshot being that she took the flat. After that, I helped her in various small ways in connection with the furnishing—it was all natural and inevitable enough—and again when the landlord stepped in, a week or so later, and demanded all sorts of preposterous repairs. I told her to disregard the demand; and after that we discussed the sitting-room carpet and the disadvantages of anthracite stoves. And then, without the least premeditation, I found myself asking her to marry me. I told her that I'd never cared a row of pins for any other woman, and never should.

She refused me, kindly, but quite definitely.

'Is there any one else?' I asked.

She shook her head. 'It isn't that—or because I don't like you. There's only one reason. I'll tell you—it's fairer. I won't marry you because I'm not sure of myself, and because our liking for one another is almost entirely a matter of propinquity. I haven't many friends—and neither, I think, have you, though perhaps it's a hard thing to say'—

'But true,' I admitted.

'When we meet, it's by accident.'

'Not always,' I said.

She flushed faintly at that, but went on: 'These chance encounters don't carry one beyond the acquaintance stage'—

'The happiest married couples were only acquaintances once. I'd give you all the happiness I could. It's a stereotyped statement, but I mean it.'

'I know. We'd both do our best to play the game. Perhaps in the end it would be a success. Perhaps! Think of the Vamberys—or of the Tudor-Smythes, who lived almost opposite. . . . I'm afraid; I've seen so many shipwrecks. Do you understand?'

I suppose I did. At any rate I said so.

'But isn't there a chance?' I asked.

'Do you want kindness, or just the truth?'

'Isn't it possible to combine the two?'

She shook her head. And I knew that it wasn't any use arguing further—then. But I went back to my rooms feeling as though the best and biggest part of my life had withered and shrivelled. I'd never realised before how much I wanted her. The fool who wrote somewhere that any decent man could marry any woman, provided they were of the same social stratum, hadn't met Margaret Thewson.

She meant to climb, and women of her intelligence and grit who mean it don't usually fail. The publication of the next Honours List emphasised *that* point. I called at the office to congratulate her. It was a bigger one than she used to occupy, with an Axminster carpet instead of linoleum, and magnificently massive mahogany furniture.

'It's delightful of you to call,' she said; 'but it's really nothing. I happened to be able to produce certain facts that a certain politician wanted at a rather crucial time, and the rest followed.'

'It's definite recognition,' I insisted.

'Pooh! Or mustn't one use the expression to a solicitor? I'm still only temporary. I've no real status. I'm liable to be dispensed with at any time.'

'In which case'—

'I shall look for another berth.'

'There's a permanency waiting.'

'I should have to spend all my life under the same chief. And that, according to officialdom, means slackness.'

A typist came in with a batch of important papers, and I had to go. But for the rest of the morning I found settled work a difficult matter.

III.

The next day was one of summer brilliance, when even in the City the sunlight was dazzling, and confinement in an office sheer misery. I knew I could leave things to Jeens, my managing clerk—he was no more affected by the seasons than the office copying-press—and I left them to him, and took the train to Dorking, and spent the day prowling about the green slopes of Leith Hill. I had tea at the little wooden chalet on the summit, and walked back to the station as dusk was falling. The train was packed with a big East-End school-treat. The children were tired, and dusty, and thirsty, and noisier than it seemed possible for any crowd of children to be. But I'd have given something to have been as happy.

At the station I bought an evening paper. A paragraph on an inner page caught my eye. 'It was unexpectedly announced in the House of Commons this afternoon,' it stated, 'that owing to the increasing necessity for stringent economy, the Statistical Branch of the Ministry of Production will in future be undertaken by

the Ministry of Supply. The permanent officials of the first-named branch will be transferred elsewhere, while the services of those acting in a temporary capacity will be dispensed with.'

That gave me plenty to think about during the interminable journey back to London. I took a taxi to my rooms, and from there walked on to Margaret's flat. She had just come back from a shopping expedition, and looked white and fagged.

'Yes,' she said, 'I've been given my month's notice. Some of them got only a fortnight. My chief was tremendously apologetic and sympathetic'—

'And helpful?'

'He said he'd do his best. But the best isn't likely to amount to much. There are the claims of the ex-service people to be considered first. That's as it should be. But it complicates things for the woman who's playing a lone hand.'

'Not if she's willing to exercise her prerogative, and change her mind.'

She sighed. 'I'd hoped you wouldn't say that.'

'You shouldn't have given me an excuse. But you must let me make amends, and help you.'

She said she would. But she didn't. I think she had developed a sort of terror of dependence, that made her at times almost cruel. Days passed, and I heard nothing, and eventually I called again at the flat. It was locked up—empty. All the furniture, the lift-attendant explained, had been taken away the day before. He had a note for me.

It was brief, and written in extreme hurry and confusion. The number of my rooms had escaped her memory, or she would have posted it. She had heard unexpectedly of a berth on the farther side of London—that of organising secretary to the Woman's Advancement League—and had every hope of getting it. There were quarters attached; in any case, she wouldn't be able to stop at St Martin's Mansions. Ecclestein, the dealer in second-hand things, at the end of the road, had offered her a good price for the furniture, and there was a tenant waiting to enter the flat, and willing to pay a premium. She would write to me again as soon as things were settled, and in the meantime she hoped I shouldn't think that she'd treated me badly.

Well, that was *that*. She had dropped out of my life again, and I could only wait.

I waited for a fortnight without hearing, and then went to the flat again. Her letters, which were to be called for—there were only one or two—hadn't been called for. The attendant could give me no information at all. I inquired, by proxy, on the 'phone, the name of the newly elected secretary of the Woman's Advancement League. The garrulous and amiable lady who replied told me that there had been keen competition, but that 'her Grace' (I never found out who she was) had intervened very actively

at the last moment on behalf of a candidate of her own, which candidate had got the berth. The name? No, it wasn't Margaret Thewson.

I followed that up by a visit to the office of Margaret's late chief. But he had been abruptly transferred to the north of England—Government departments have a trick of doing that sort of thing—and his successor couldn't—or wouldn't—help me. And there the trail ended. But Destiny, grinning, still held the threads of her life and mine, and waited to interweave them again.

It was late autumn when I saw her—at the Caledonian Market, of all places. It had been a sunny morning, but the sky had clouded over, and a keen wind was sweeping over the wide, cobbled space. She was buying groceries at a stall near the clock-tower, and I watched her for some time before she saw me. She was thinner, paler, shabbier. There were lines of suffering at the corners of her mouth and eyes. She became aware of my scrutiny, and turned sharply. The colour rushed into her cheeks, and then away again.

'You!' she said, and smiled.

'I.'

'Are you curio-hunting? Or is it books?'

'It was both. But now I want to talk to you.'

'I mustn't stay long.'

'Why not? No—wait until I've found somewhere where we can sit down. There's a bench outside that refreshment-stall. It's reserved for customers, but if you'll let me get some coffee and cakes'—

She nodded. I fetched the coffee, and we sat down. Over the steaming cups she began to explain.

'You've heard of Bragge Brothers, the big Camden Town drapers? I'm an assistant there, at the ribbon and lace counter. I was lucky to get the job. . . . It seems a long way from St James Square to Camden Town, but when once you've started'—

I interrupted her. 'Why didn't you write to me? You promised.'

'I—I was afraid. I know I've been horribly ungrateful, and a hundred other things, but that's the truth.'

'Afraid of what?'

'That my resolution might snap.' Then she went on quickly: 'I've explained that I'm a shop-assistant. I live in—they believe in the living-in system at Bragge's—and we're looked after with great thoroughness by the housekeeper. Every fourth Friday, provided I've behaved properly, I'm given a half-day's extra holiday. That's why I'm here this afternoon.'

For a minute I found it difficult to speak.

'Look here,' I said at last, 'this mustn't go on. It sha'n't. You've no right to wreck your own life, and mine. If you care at all'—

'I care for you too much to face the risk of disillusioning you later on. The Vamberys'—

'The Vamberys aren't a horrible example any longer. They've come together again. A relative left him a house in Yorkshire and three thousand a year, and he wrote to Netta, and'—

'And the Caramel King has had to look out for a fresh housekeeper? Well, I'm glad—awfully glad. But it doesn't affect the argument. . . . And now I must be going.'

I walked with her to the market gates, and saw her into a bus which stopped at the Bragge premises. And after that I went home to think things over. I'd found her—that was the essential fact—and I wasn't going to risk losing her again. Until late that night I sat smoking and making plans—plans that had nothing at all to do with a solicitor's profession. I remember winding up with a preposterous decision to ask old Jeens to be best man.

IV.

But I didn't ask him. Jeens himself scuppered that scheme. He was away from the office the next day, and the day after that was Sunday. On Tuesday morning I'd a letter from him. To this hour I don't understand why he took the trouble to write it, unless he'd some sort of sneaking regret—though regrets don't usually afflict men of the Jeens type. He told me, more or less in detail, that 'availing himself of a growing and lamentable laxity' on my part, he had made certain 'financial readjustments' to his own advantage, and that by the time I received the note he would be comfortably beyond pursuit.

Investigations followed. They showed that the readjustments had been on a big enough scale to wreck the firm irretrievably. It's difficult to recall the order in which things happened after that; they merged in one prolonged nightmare. I did my best to straighten out the tangle, and some of the people concerned were decent—more than decent. But there were plenty less charitable, and there was a certain amount of publicity. And the end was a physical collapse, and a bad one.

I was barely convalescent again when I'd my first unofficial visitor—Margaret. She came into the room panting a little—the climb up from the street-level was a stiff one—and bringing with her a big bunch of bronze chrysanthem-

mums. She crossed to the couch, and stood looking down at me.

'It's good of you to come,' I said lamely at last.

'Good of me! If I'd known you were ill—but I only heard by chance, through a line or so in one of the papers.' She spoke jerkily, almost harshly.

'It was my own fault. Or, at any rate, I'm not going to blame any one but myself. And, after all, I'm not too old to make a fresh start. . . . Sit down—the chair by the fireplace is less rickety than some—and let's change the subject.'

But she didn't. She stood surveying the wretched little bed-sitting-room with steady, critical eyes.

'How long have you been here?'

'A month. I came the week before I crocked up. I suppose you got the address from the porter at my old digs. I was lucky to get these. The landlady's quite a decent sort, when she isn't'—

'Don't amplify—I met her on the stairs. . . . Listen! You're going to get well as quickly as possible, and after that make a fresh start. But in your old profession. And I am going to supply the capital.' I gasped, but she went on quickly: 'It sounds nonsense, doesn't it? But it's true. Do you remember the five shillings you refused as my share of our lunch at Buffoni's?'

I nodded.

'Well, I didn't want the money, and in a moment of recklessness I invested it in a big charitable lottery. It was before schemes of that sort were declared illegal. Yesterday I'd a visit from the organising secretary. He brought me a cheque for two thousand pounds—the first prize.' She opened her purse, and showed me the slip of paper. 'The money is yours—yours and mine.'

'I can't accept it.'

She refolded the cheque. I could see that her dear hands were shaking.

'Not as my wedding-present?' She slipped down beside the couch, and laid her cheek against mine. 'Jim dear, are you going to break my heart by telling me that I've come too late to exercise my prerogative?'

God knows that she wasn't too late. I'm spending the rest of my life trying to tell her so.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE COLD VULCANISATION OF RUBBER.

EXCEPT in thin sheets or layers rubber can be vulcanised only by the application of heat; at least this was the case until Mr S. J. Peachey, M.Sc., of the Manchester College of Technology, discovered a new process, whereby rubber can be vulcanised at ordinary temperatures. For

the benefit of readers who are not familiar with the manufacture of rubber goods, it may be explained that the raw rubber is intimately mixed with varying proportions of sulphur according to the quality desired, and heated to a temperature of 266° to 302° F. for from one to three hours. The results are the various types of rubber in everyday use, which possess qualities

not found in the raw material. A process involving the application of such high temperatures greatly restricts the choice of colouring matter and filling materials which can be mixed with the rubber. For instance, with few exceptions, it has proved impracticable to use dye-stuffs made from coal-tar for colouring rubber; while animal or vegetable substances, such as leather waste or sawdust, cannot be mixed with it. By the new process, rubber (either by itself or mixed with other materials and colouring matter) is vulcanised by exposure to two gases—sulphur dioxide and hydrogen sulphide. These diffuse through the rubber, and, according to Mr Peachey, their interaction produces a particularly active form of sulphur, which is capable of combining with and vulcanising the rubber even at ordinary temperatures. Rubber vulcanised in this manner is said to possess remarkable strength and toughness; but the most important advantage accruing from the process is the free choice of colouring matter obtained, which allows of the production of rubber goods in colours quite unobtainable by the old process. Moreover, materials such as wood-meal can be mixed with a small proportion of rubber, resulting in low-priced floor-coverings having greater flexibility and durability than linoleum. Similarly, re-formed leather, closely resembling the genuine article in appearance, could be produced from leather buffings and shavings bound together by rubber. The new process can also be applied to rubber solutions; consequently articles built up of re-formed leather could have their seams vulcanised instead of stitched or riveted.

A NEW ICE-CREAM FREEZER.

Almost every one likes ice-cream in hot weather, while to not a few it forms a welcome addition to a good dinner at any time. Hence this delicacy is prepared in many households. Hitherto the containers for freezing the cream have been somewhat cumbersome, and often not of the best form for easy cleaning. These drawbacks are eliminated in the apparatus known as the 'Auto Vacuum Freezer,' which consists of a double cylinder of tinned steel with an air-space between the two parts. The ice-cream container projects downwards through the top of the inner cylinder, leaving a second space, which, when the apparatus is in operation, is filled with a mixture of salt and ice. The container is fitted with a lid having a cross-bar, the ends of which engage under catches and lock it tightly in position. This inner vessel has a rounded bottom, so that no scraps of cream are left in corners from which they can be scraped out only with difficulty. Such a shape also lends itself to easy cleansing. At the bottom of the inner cylinder is an opening with a movable door similar to the lid already described, but provided also with a joint ring to make it water-

tight. When the freezer is to be used it is turned upside-down, and a supply of ice and salt is put in between the inner cylinder and the container. After the movable door has been put in place and tightened under the catches, the freezer is reversed, the cream is put into the container, the lid fastened down, and in half-an-hour the ice-cream is ready without any further effort. Very little loss of cold takes place in the case of this contrivance, owing to the air-space between the two cylinders. In appearance the 'Auto Vacuum Freezer' is by no means unsightly the outside being finished in white enamel.

A NOVEL MOUSE-TRAP.

To most people a trap which can catch and drown a dozen mice without being reset or rebaited will appear something of a marvel; yet such a performance is well within the capabilities of a device known as the 'Mysto' automatic mouse-trap. Except for a wooden base, the whole contrivance is made of tin and wire. The entrance is provided with a door which slides up and down between vertical guides. When, tempted by the bait, the unsuspecting mouse creeps through the doorway, he finds himself in a species of lobby with the bait fixed at each side near the far end. On his making further progress towards the attractive morsels in view, the floor suddenly gives way with his weight, and in doing so pulls away a trigger which holds up the sliding door; the latter immediately drops, and the mouse is a prisoner in so far that he cannot go back the way by which he came. Neither can he eat the bait, which is behind a grating. But there is apparently a way of escape upwards through a vertical wire-gauze shoot. About half-way up he pushes aside a lightly balanced flap, which swings back into place after he has passed, thus effectively cutting off his retreat. At the top of the shoot is a hole which seems to offer an outlet, and the mouse eagerly enters, only to find that he has encountered another untrustworthy floor, which this time collapses entirely, and precipitates him into a tank of water. This floor is hinged near the top of the shoot, and it is balanced by a wire lever on which hangs the sliding door. Therefore, as the mouse goes down with the floor the lever goes up, and the entrance-door with it, thus allowing the lobby floor to tip back into place with the trigger which holds up the door, and setting the trap ready for the next victim.

EASY STARTING FOR MOTOR-CARS.

Every motorist occasionally experiences some difficulty in starting his car, and this has become more frequent of late, owing to the indifferent quality of the petrol obtainable. Sometimes the difficulty can be overcome by priming each cylinder with petrol through the compression-

cock; but not infrequently this plan fails, because it gives only one explosion behind each piston. What is wanted is a priming device for the induction-pipe close to the cylinders that will keep up the supply of petrol for a number of revolutions. This requirement is exactly met by a supplementary carburetter which has recently been put on the market. It consists of a small cylindrical container, filled with absorbent material, and having a tap at the bottom and a perforated cap at the top. The cap is in two parts, closely fitting into each other, and is in the form of a well, into which the petrol can be poured without spilling. When the outer cap is slightly rotated, holes in it are brought into coincidence with corresponding holes in the inner cap, and petrol is poured in until the container is brim-full and the absorbent packing is saturated. The supplementary carburetter is screwed into the top of the induction manifold, where it branches off to two or more cylinders. When the engine is to be started, the throttle is set to the slow-running position, and the tap turned on at the bottom of the supplementary carburetter, the holes at the top being left open. Upon turning the engine with the starting-handle air is drawn in, and becomes charged with petrol-vapour as it passes through the packing to enter the induction-pipe, and thence the cylinders, in the form of mist. This, under compression, is an ideal combustible mixture which will be ignited with certainty by the spark. The engine can be run for quite an appreciable time by the supplementary carburetter, but so soon as it is well under way the tap is turned off, and the cap rotated to cover the air-holes and prevent the entrance of dirt. Means are provided for increasing or decreasing the amount of absorbent material to suit the suction of the engine, it being wound loosely round a spiral spring, which is removable with the inner cap.

OIL-FUEL IN THE 'AQUITANIA.'

Every one must be familiar with the fact that in all recently built ships of the Royal Navy oil-fuel is burned in the boiler-furnaces instead of coal. Many people know also that oil-fuel is being adopted rapidly in our big passenger-liners, the latest to be converted being the giant Cunarder *Aquitania*. The oil-fuel installation in this vessel is easily the largest ever constructed; hence some facts regarding it may be of interest. No fewer than twenty-one boilers are employed for supplying steam to the huge turbines which propel the ship, and each has eight furnaces, making a total of 168 to be fitted with oil-fuel burners. These take the form of jets, to which the oil is supplied at a pressure of sixty pounds per square inch. When passing through the jets the oil is vaporised and is given a spiral motion, so that it enters the furnace as a cone of spray or mist.

Before reaching the burners the oil is heated, and the spray lights readily at a point about six inches from the jet, producing a roaring flame of intense heat. If oil were taken on board at each end of the voyage, as with coal, the original bunkers in the *Aquitania* would have been more than large enough, as much less oil than coal is burned, while the former stows into a smaller space. It is intended, however, to purchase oil only at New York, where the price is much below that asked in the British Isles. The bunkers have to be sufficiently large, therefore, to hold enough oil for the round trip, or 7600 tons. Alterations to the bunkers include stiffening the flat surfaces to withstand the pressure, making the joints oil-tight, and fitting wash-plates to prevent violent surging of the oil with the motion of the ship. In addition to the original wing bunkers along the sides of the ship in the way of the boilers, large athwart-ship bunkers have been constructed. Even with these the capacity was insufficient, and part of the space between the inner and outer skins of the ship has been utilised for carrying oil. Four pipe connections are provided on each side of the vessel for filling the bunkers, which can be carried out in six hours from either side. The quantity of oil in each tank at any time is indicated by a 'pneumercator' gauge, while bells are rung by electric float-alarms when the amount reaches 95 per cent. of the full capacity. As an additional precaution, overflow storage tanks are provided to receive the surplus from the main tanks should too much be pumped into them. The oil is forced from the bunker-tanks to settling-tanks in duplicate sets, each having sufficient capacity to run the boilers for fifteen hours while the oil is settling in the other. There are four boiler-rooms, the first three containing six boilers apiece, while the fourth contains three. Two powerful direct-acting steam-pumps are provided in every boiler-room, those in the three larger having capacities of 100 tons an hour, while in the smaller each can pump 70 tons. From the settling-tanks, another series of steam-pumps draws the oil and delivers it through heaters and filters to a ring-main in every boiler-room at the correct pressure for the burners. For raising steam from cold boilers a pump driven by an electric motor is fitted in one boiler-room, electric current being derived from the emergency electric-lighting plant on the ship or from the shore by cable. The work of conversion has been carried out in thirty weeks, during which 300 tons of old material have been removed, and 650 tons of new steel-work have been put in. The length of the piping required was in the neighbourhood of sixteen miles. Among the advantages of oil-fuel over coal are: a reduction in the number of firemen by two-thirds; greater power from the boilers; almost perfect cleanliness owing to the absence of ashes and smoke; quick bunkering

without the noise and dust which form so prominent a feature of 'coaling;' a big saving in the cost of running the ship.

DAMAGE BY DOMESTIC SMOKE.

Much has been said and written concerning the wasteful use of coal on domestic hearths, and the Committee on Smoke and Noxious Vapours Abatement appointed in 1914, and reconstituted last January, has recently issued an interim report containing some very interesting statements concerning the losses and damage traceable to this source. The most important conclusions arrived at may be gathered from the following excerpts: 'We are satisfied that domestic smoke, which is produced by the burning of raw coal, causes serious danger to health and damage to property. Moreover, the burning of raw coal is, from the national point of view, a wasteful proceeding. Not only are the valuable by-products of tar oils, ammonia, sulphur and cyanogen compounds lost, but, in addition, a large proportion of unconsumed fuel escapes in the form of soot owing to inefficient appliances. . . . It has been established that methods are available for warming rooms, cooking, and the provision of hot water which avoid much of this waste, which produce little or no smoke, which are hygienic and economical, and which save labour. . . . A number of important witnesses have stated that even in industrial areas domestic chimneys contribute, at the least, 50 per cent. of the total smoke nuisance, and that at least 6 per cent. of the bituminous coal ordinarily burnt in domestic fireplaces escapes unconsumed into the atmosphere as soot. Taking 40½ million tons as the amount of coal burnt annually in the United Kingdom in its natural condition for domestic purposes, the loss amounts to 2,430,000 tons, or more than half the total amount of fuel required to heat the metropolitan area for a whole year. That is to say, nearly 2½ million tons of soot escape into and pollute the atmosphere every year from domestic fireplaces alone. Domestic soot contains a considerably higher percentage of carbon and tar than factory soot, and, by reason of its large proportion of tar, it adheres to every object upon which it falls, and is, therefore, more obnoxious and destructive than soot emitted from factories. . . . Statistical evidence shows a close relation between the death-rate and the atmospheric conditions; the number of deaths from pulmonary and cardiac diseases is shown to increase in direct proportion to an increase in the intensity and duration of smoke-fogs. . . . The health of urban communities is most injuriously affected by the loss of sunlight due to coal-smoke. It has been estimated that, broadly speaking, 20 per cent. more sunlight is experienced in the country than in a smoky town. . . . There can be no doubt that smoke and noxious vapours have a highly injurious effect on vegetation;

. . . the heavy deposit of acid soot on pasture causes damage to live-stock. The same cause . . . tends to deteriorate the quality of milk produced in or near smoky districts. . . . A valuable investigation was made in 1918 by the Manchester Air Pollution Advisory Board into the comparative cost of household washing in Manchester—a smoky town—as compared with Harrogate—a clean town. The investigator obtained one hundred properly comparable statements for Manchester and Harrogate respectively as to the cost of the weekly washing in working-class houses. These showed an extra cost in Manchester of 7½d. a week per household for fuel and washing material. The total loss for the whole city, taking the extra cost of fuel and washing materials alone, disregarding the extra labour involved, and assuming no greater loss for middle-class than for working-class households (a considerable under-statement), works out at over £290,000 a year for a population of three-quarters of a million.' With regard to the damage to buildings some striking evidence was given by Sir Frank Baines, this being supported by reproductions from photographs showing the rapid decay of the stone in the case of various well-known London buildings. The remedies suggested comprise the use of anthracite, ordinary gas-coke, 'low temperature' coke, oil, gas, and electricity. Finally the Committee recommended that the Central Housing Authority should decline to sanction any housing scheme submitted by a Local Authority or Public Utility Society, unless specific provision is made in the plans for the adoption of smokeless methods for supplying the required heat, as suggested in the body of their report.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

OUR OPPORTUNITY.

'Twas not made for you or me,
This mystic world of ours;
Life's harvest, then, will either yield
A crop of thorns or flowers.
For in the state we find it all
We're not compelled to take it,
So try to fashion and improve
And fairer still to make it.

PHYLLIS CONSTANCE CAVENDISH.

. TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

SHELVERDENE'S PLOT.

A TALE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

By G. APPLEBY TERRILL, Author of *Within Touch*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—LANARK: JUNE 1679.

I.

HAVING seen to it myself that the sentinels were posted as I had ordered, I returned to the house, and to the chair wherein I had passed most of the day. Glad enough was I to sit down again, for the pike-wound under my arm, though no longer giving me those pangs which were almost unbearable, pained me nevertheless in a dull, steady way that caused me by now to feel very weak. Old Spanton brought me some wine, and, being my family servant as well as my senior sergeant, was urgent to dress the hurt with a fresh pad, against the doctor's next visit, which would not be until morning. Whereat I found that my humour was as sore as my body—the thought of the kindly but heavy fingers at the wound setting me to revile the poor fellow so harshly that he went forthwith from the room, forgetting to light the candles.

The open window beside me looked upon the west, and for a while I sat gazing thither, quite content to have no glare of tapers, since the closing of darkness about me, and the cool, pure hue of the sky for a space above the skyline, were, somehow, soothing to my pain. The sun was gone, and across three-fourths of the heavens was a spread of dense cloud, touched here and there with violet, but most lowering and black with night. Between the edge of it and the earth, however, was a void of clear and lovely green; and this I watched until its colour was fading and the stars shone whitely in it.

The evening was very still, but not a sound of life came to me from the face of the country. I heard nothing save, in and around the house, frequent voices of my men, Shelverdene's Regiment of Horse, and now and again the blowing or whinnying of our beasts.

At length I was disturbed from my ease by two questions which rose, well-nigh together, in my mind. Why was not Louis Stuart come to me for my night-orders? Why were the troopers yet astir, when I had bidden them lie down early, to be ready for any length of riding and skirmishing to-morrow?

NO. 510.—VOL. X.

I stood up and called for Spanton.

Sundry voices echoed the cry, and soon he opened my door, a lanthorn in his hand. Discovering my dark state, he walked quickly to the table, craving my pardon, and unfastened his lanthorn to light the candles therefrom.

'Where is Mr Stuart?' I asked.

He looked up, his face strongly illumined by the flame beneath it; and there seemed to be something of apprehension in his eyes.

'I have been to his quarters, sir, but he is not yet rode in.'

'Rode in?' said I sharply. 'Whither is he gone?'

'He and his corporal went to the forge—where the Scots company from Graham's Brigade are being shod.'

I laid one hand on the table to steady myself, his words having given me such surprise and instant dread that I was turned somewhat giddy.

'Spanton, man!' I said; 'how durst thou suffer him to ride out thus? Two English miles, and he gone with but a corporal! Wert thou mad as he?' I drank from the wine-cup before me, and got to my chair. I leaned back in it, trembling, and knew for the first time how thoroughly my wound had sapped me. 'Wert thou mad, Spanton?' I repeated.

Holding a candle aslant, with the flame stretching high and the grease sputtering down, he had observed me anxiously—afraid, I think, that I should swoon; for his relief when I was settled in the chair was very plain. Not until then did he speak.

'Under favour, sir, I heard no word of this till Mr Stuart was an hour gone. And I hoped that your Honour might be getting some sleep, so came not at once to trouble you.' He put down the candle and closed the lanthorn. 'But I have mounted twenty men, and now, by your leave, I will take them and meet Mr Stuart on his road home.' Going towards the window, he added, 'Tis not yet dark, and Mr Stuart would be much delayed at the forge.'

He spoke as one who felt no real alarm, but he pulled hard on his gray moustache as he frowned into the dimness without.

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SEPTEMBER 4, 1920.

'Shall I start forth?' he asked.

'This moment,' I said vehemently. 'Leave Sergeant Kirwan here with the men—and race as fast as the ground will let you. I have Kyle Cleod in my mind.'

'Ay, your Honour, I was thinking on him when I horsed the men.'

He saluted and left me; and in the briefest time there reached my ears a jingle of steel equipment, and then the roll of a fairly good canter.

II.

I slid lower in the chair, lifted my legs on to a stool, and so waited, near to groaning aloud at Louis Stuart's folly and my faulty care of him. Louis was seventeen years old. On my preparing to bring my regiment from Sussex to the north his mother had entrusted him to me, to be shown some soldiering. I wished rather that the lad should begin his warfare on the Continent, but she would not be dissuaded, for all my telling her what a sorry business this crushing of the men of the Covenant was like to be. Pah! and what miserable work it had proved! I shifted my feet impatiently as my thoughts fled back over the last ten days. For no other liege than King Charles (though I risked my head for disobedience) would I have allowed Shelverdene's Horse to charge and chase and rove after an enemy so little to my taste—religious, honest men the bulk, despite their rebel spirit; men who had been treated ill; yet with some pretty villains in their midst and some vile thieves on their skirts; and all so mixed that, when I gave no quarter to some that seemed the worst, I perhaps did learn anon that they were such as I would fain have spared.

Nevertheless, there was one rogue of many crimes whose face both Louis and I had seen, and whom I meant to hang without shrift—the fellow that the countryfolk called Kyle Cleod. We had been within an inch of taking him, but he had gained a copse and dodged my troopers, crying before he vanished that Shelverdene should pay for hunting him. And thereafter he and certain others would contrive to draw near my lines at night. They fired on and wounded three of the sentinels; they shot at, but missed, Sergeant Kirwan, who had run forth in the dusk after a horse which was broken loose; and they would get clear away from the pursuits which I launched upon them. It was because of Kyle Cleod that I feared so for Louis.

I turned in the chair, my armpit throbbing nastily again, and stared down the length of the room. I had known some wretched shelters when fighting for France in the English Brigade; and I was wont to take a pleasure in the comfort of this lodging, the more in that the house was not filched from a hapless owner, but lent to me by a loyal gentleman. Though the chamber

had been mine only a short while, yet, with my trunk and my strong-box, my two or three books and my papers, all to be seen about, it had ere this acquired a familiar air, which would cheer me much as I rested from my repugnant employment, and wondered how long it would last.

But now I found the room changed, become utterly mournful and desolate; and I felt that if evil chanced to Louis no place on earth would ever be otherwise than desolate to me. His mother's sorrow would haunt me.

Eighteen years ago, when I was a boy (and she soon to be wed and lost to me), I had loved her dearly; and though I was long since quit of that mood, yet was she a sweet friend that I had liefer die than harm. In entreating me to take Louis she had told me divers reasons for her desire. The most of them were but coaxing toys, such as that she would have him grow to be like none other captain but myself. Amid them, however, was her true reason, very earnestly spoken. She knew that, for her sake, I should guard him tenderly.

And a jab from a half-pike had made me forget him!

I shut my eyes, and tried to believe that by now he was met with Spanton, and safe. Faith! not again should he play a trick of this sort. I would forbid him to go beyond my call. This very night should his bed be fetched hither and he sleep within a yard of me.

From far out in the gloom there was borne to my ear a faint sound—'plup!' Again 'plup!' . . . 'plup!' And then no more.

In a moment I was at the window, hanging hard upon the sill by my elbow, my legs so shaking that I scarce could stand. Three pistol-shots—away towards the forge! There was warranty for the despair that sickened me. Fearing to fall, I raised my other arm to the sill, getting a bad stab from my hurt, and took a few deep breaths of the night-air, now turned cool. Being somewhat revived by them, I faced round. I could stay idle no longer. I must ride forth and learn all. But when I made a pace, the room looked to jerk this way and that, and I stumbled and reeled—and presently discovered myself lying sideways in a chair, with a vague belief that I had lain thus for some minutes.

And I had! For horses were stamping and voices mingling loudly under the window, and heavy steps were at my door.

'Louis!' I cried.

III.

The door was flung open. I saw not Louis, but I saw a face I was so unprepared for that I stared at it in complete bewilderment, giving heed to nothing else. It was the face of a child, a maid of nine or ten; a most pretty chit, with great blue eyes and tossed-about hair that was between chestnut and gold. Her head was

thrown back and her little teeth were clenched angrily; and she caught at the doorpost as if to stay herself from coming farther. And then I saw that Spanton's arm was about her and he was half-carrying, half-pushing her to me. A yard from me he allowed her to find her feet, and released her. But immediately another's hand darted forth and gripped her shoulder. Raising my eyes to find who held her, I perceived Raylish, the corporal who had ridden to the forge with Louis. He was bare-headed, with the bright-red patch of a fresh wound in his hair, and with his left eye closed and (from the blood about it) badly harmed. He appeared not to heed his injuries. His mien was full of excitement and rage; and in the faces of the two troopers who were behind him I saw the same blending.

As for the child, whose cheeks, I now noted, were wet from tears—she stood looking at me with her teeth still clenched and her colour radiantly high. Despite that she breathed as though on the point to break into sobs, despite the fright which I could read behind her helpless, indignant anger, she strove to show me nothing except anger. The words of my old first commander anent noble courage in children being a sure proof of gentle birth crossing my mind, I said to myself that this slip of a girl whom my men had for some purpose seized was no mean fellow's daughter.

I spoke to Spanton. 'Mr Stuart?' I asked; and, notwithstanding that recollected homily on courage, and the example before me, that should have shamed any man from cowardice, I flinched in dread of what he should say.

'Taken off by Kyle Cleod—to be flogged and hanged; so Raylish heard Kyle shout when he and his thieves sprang on them. Taken off'—He pointed to the child. 'And she knows whither, this whelp of evil. We might save him, and she will not tell! Ah, would I not have laid into her with a stirrup, but she is softly dressed, so I feared who she might be. Ask her, sir. I deemed she would tell you.' He bent over the maid. 'Hearken,' he said menacingly; 'this is his Worship the colonel, the Right Honourable Sir Edmund Shelverdene. An you answer not, he can kill you.'

'Cease that!' I said, getting up. 'Was Mr Stuart taken some fifteen minutes since, when three shots were fired?'

'Ay; and within three minutes we were at the place. They heard us bearing down, and fled off with him—tarried not to finish Raylish, who was in the ditch, stunned.'

'They had three, or more like two, minutes' start of you?'

'Ay, your Honour, but on ponies over quiet turf, and the night fallen thick of a sudden.'

'What did you?'

'Sent three pursuits, six men each—one party riverward, one the opposite way, and one

on down the road, lest they swerved back to it; and two men stayed by me and Corporal Raylish.'

'She was there, sir,' cried the corporal, and he swung the girl nearer me. 'She was there—stood by the road-edge with a lanthorn; and when I lay in the ditch I was not so senseless but I heard her speak to them, and them answer as they moved off, but all so Scotly said I could not know the meaning.'

I motioned his hand from her, and set mine gently where it had been. 'You understand English, child?' I asked. 'You are not of the high lands?'

She held her head stiffly in wilful silence, her eyes averted. Then her teeth relaxed, but only to bite her nether lip.

'She speaks it as well as I,' said Spanton.

At that she let her lip go free. 'I am English,' she said, softly but clearly. 'My father is Mr Denis Irby, that will sore punish you for stealing me.'

The name made plain to me whence came her spirit. Well I knew Denis Irby by repute—a stubborn, fearless man of old family, a supporter of Lord Shaftesbury, and exceeding bitter in Parliament against the King. He was possessed of land on either side of the Border, and having a house not far from this very one, wherein some English officers were lodged, had hastened thither, it was reported, with great truculence, 'to see that no harm was done to his goods,' the authorities, though little pleased at one so disaffected being in the midst of the troubles, not caring to gainsay him.

All this, however, but flashed into and from my mind. I had no thoughts to spare for Denis Irby. I turned the child slightly, wishing to judge her truthfulness by her eyes while I further questioned her, but she would not lift them above my sash.

'Did Kyle Cleod's men—they that fought with the young officer—tell you to what place they were carrying him?' I asked, having no belief that they would do so aimless a thing.

She hesitated, and then: 'I heard them say among themselves. Therefore Kyle Cleod bade me run aside from Shelverdene's soldiers, and to tell no word to them, if they caught me.' Without warning she fixed her eyes on mine—fixed them defiantly. 'I will tell no word,' she said.

IV.

Her knowledge brought a cry to my lips. Scant hope did the parties that had been despatched to search blindly give me. But here verily was the chance to snatch Louis from death.

'Mount a dozen men,' I said to Spanton; and in the stress of my mind I shook the child roughly. 'You knew!' I said. 'You knew, and would not tell my men, though you could have saved this poor young gentleman! Tell me now—now!'

She jerked herself from me, and stood putting back the edge of her gown to her throat, whence I had dragged it. Her eyes filled with tears, yet shone furiously at me.

'I will not tell,' she said, her voice gasping, because of her sobs, but rising shrill. 'I would not save a Shelverdene bully. I wish him dead.'

There was an oath from Raylish, the corporal, who started forward, casting up his hand to strike her.

'Stand off!' I commanded, throwing out my arm. And on his obeying, with a gulp of consternation at having almost struck me by mischance, I reproved him not for his unruliness, being aware of the deep affection he had for Louis. 'Child,' I said, 'you must tell; for my soldiers have never harmed you, save to bring you here.'

'They—you'—her breast heaved desperately as she fought for her voice—'you hanged Jim, that was Edith's father—she whose cottage I ran from my bed to, this night; for she is ill of sorrow. You hanged innocent Jim—Shelverdene beast!' She was beside herself now, her teeth clicking, her hands tight-gripped, and I thought she would leap at me. But, after another straining of her breast, she suddenly fell calmer, and, for all her tears, was more coolly taunting than I should ever have credited of a child. 'And you think to hang Kyle Cleod. . . . Ah, no; he was Jim's friend, and he gave me my six birds. . . . Ah, no,' she said again, linking her hands behind her, and regarding me with a marvellous grown-up demeanour. 'For I will tell nothing—nothing. I am no poor Covenant girl that you dare beat, Shelverdene coward! My father will put his boot on your neck.'

'Sweetheart,' I said, 'you have well scolded me. Now forgive, and say where is my friend. Look you, I will spare Kyle Cleod. Ay, in troth I will.'

I meant my words; and I was sure the pleading of my tone must touch her. Eagerly I waited for her reply, conscious that Raylish and the two troopers, leaning forward, were rigid in their expectancy. She also was still, her head a little drooped. For seconds nothing moved in the room save (door and window being open) the candle-flames, and our shadows jumping up and down the wall. And then she shook her head.

That sign, which declared that with her utmost will she would resist me and ensure that Louis should die, was more than I could endure. Spanton's coming with her had rallied my strength for a time; but in those moments of suspense I had felt it slip from me, and my wound fluttering and pulsing as though a barb were writhing in it. I intended that when she answered, saying where Louis was, I would immediately go to my chair. Then her refusal,

firm as a stone fence, rallied me again—and more.

'Where is Kyle Cleod?' I shouted; and, passing one hand behind her, I caught her arm with the other, and lifted it and began to bend it cruelly, not caring how I hurt myself so long as I pained her into discovering the truth.

'Where?' I shouted again, bending harder.

Her face was upraised to me. She breathed agonisedly through her nostrils. Her lips dropped apart and she groaned; but her blue eyes, speaking to mine, told me that I might murder her, but she would not tell.

I loosed my hands from her, stepped back quivering to the nearest chair, and sank therein.

'I cannot,' I said despairingly.

'Leave that to me, your Honour,' cried Raylish. But, seeing him go to her, with his teeth bared, I would not have it.

'Twas then that Spanton spoke from the doorway, whither he had come from ordering the new mounting. 'Sir, what of the Bootkin, that the gentleman from the Council brought yesterday?'

His face was furrowed grimly, yet he winked, and I read his plan. To find her leg in the Boot would surely terrorise a child, though she were Denis Irby's wonderful daughter.

'Ay, put her to it,' I said; and I rested my brow on my hand, conjuring horrid visions of what was being done to Louis, and anon determining to grip this child and beat her raw. But my strength was finished.

The setting-down of something before me caused me to lower my hand. I looked at the Boot, a device I had never seen, which appeared to me liker a clumsy, warped bucket than a boot; and I noted it was new, so that the iron garters had a dull polish and the wood smelt. Truly, it was a revolting thing. I waved it from me, and Raylish bore it some yards off, Spanton following him, holding a great wooden hammer and wedges.

I glanced towards the child. She was pale, yet not overmuch; she returned my scrutiny, and smiled—ay, smiled! Perchance she deemed there was to be no more than this show.

'I think you will meet my father in the morning,' she said.

Raylish asked if the Boot should not be screwed to the floor. I answered we had no time for that. Whereupon he put a chair by it, and drew a length of rope from his pocket.

'Nay,' I said; 'how can she sit and be booted, and she so small? She must be stood in it—you hold her, Spanton. . . . Raylish, begone and have your hurts looked to.' For I would not trust Raylish to have any handling of her; and I knew 'twould save me trouble if he were well away from the room.

'And quick, quick, Spanton!' I added. 'Think on the minutes we waste.'

(Continued on page 655.)

PAPER: THE TEXTILE OF THE FUTURE.

By FREDERICK A. TALBOT,

Author of Inventions and Discoveries, When Britain went to War, &c.

I.

PERHAPS no war-time expedient in Germany provoked the British man in the street to such mirth as the resort to paper as a textile substitute in consequence of the blockade. But is the vision of paper-clad *Frauen* and *Herren* so ludicrous as it appears at first sight? The general conception of the characteristics and the possible applications of paper is so confined in this country as to preclude full appreciation of the true import of the German development, or of the part paper technically described as 'cellulose yarn' is likely to play in future industry. This material is popularly regarded as being a product born of the war, doomed to disappear with the return to normal peace conditions. The suggestion that paper is capable of seriously challenging the supremacy of generally accepted textiles, such as wool, cotton, linen, silk, hemp, and jute, would by most people be dismissed as utterly absurd.

Now, many of the fantastic claims advanced by the German and Austrian interests exploiting this substitute must, of course, be discounted; but in estimating the future of paper textiles it should be borne in mind that paper yarn is neither a war-product born of deprivation, nor is it a German invention. Here, as in other lines of endeavour, the German has been content to copy and develop the pioneer efforts of others, and has only partially succeeded in the process.

Before the war Germany and Austria imported Indian jute to the value of one hundred and twenty-two million marks per annum. The overseas sources of supply of this fibre being completely cut off, the textile factories of Mittel Europa were faced with the prospect of a spell of enforced inactivity. This grave disaster they surmounted by resorting to paper, and they appear to have succeeded to an extraordinary degree. By the end of 1917, according to a professor of the Munich Handelshochschule, there were thirteen thousand persons employed in the German paper-yarn industry, turning out one hundred thousand kilograms (or one hundred metric tons) of paper yarn during one working-day. In November 1916 the Teuton War Raw Materials Department estimated the requirements of the army administration as one thousand wagon-loads of this commodity a month, for the making of sand-bags, straw-sacks, forage-sacks, tent canvas, and so forth. Then there was the civilian demand to be satisfied as well.

Long before the war Germany and Austria had extensively developed the manufacture of

paper yarn as a substitute for familiar textiles. Two products in particular achieved wide popularity, 'Textilose' and 'Textilit.' (To these another, directly due to the war, was added later—namely, 'Textilon.') But the German jute-manufacturing industry did not view this development with a friendly eye, so it brought pressure to bear to throttle the new enterprise. For the time being it succeeded in its efforts; but when, thanks to the blockade, there was no raw jute to exploit, paper yarn came into its own.

The German interests in those pre-war days even essayed to woo Britain to the new product, and in a measure they succeeded. But unfortunately for them, when they commenced operations in these islands, they found themselves pitted against a native rival that was producing a vastly superior fabric, at a lower cost, so that the path of commercial progress was not found to be so smooth in sleepy Britain as had been anticipated. The rival, firmly entrenched at home, was equipped with machinery and processes far in advance of the German installation and methods, with the result that the invader experienced a hard struggle to hold such ground as was gained.

Paper-spinning is probably one of the oldest arts and crafts, although it made no very pronounced advance during the flight of centuries until contemporary times. It was known in Japan and China, and even practised in those countries when the people of Europe were content to resort to woad for clothing. The hustling traveller, rubber-necking the East, may recall how deftly the Japanese, with their fingers, can spin the Bronsonnetia paper into a yarn, and how successfully this material fulfils the exacting tasks imposed on it. Paper yarn, then, is no invention of the much-vaunted Teutonic super-brain. Only ways and means have been evolved in the West to produce it by the aid of machinery, and upon such a scale as to constitute quite a new industry.

II.

When the Germans set out to manufacture this product commercially, they followed their characteristic methods. They did not attempt to adapt the new development to the established order of things, but devised special and weird, as well as expensive, machinery to achieve their ends. But originality of thought is not a Teuton forte, and their enterprise did not bring them materially nearer their goal. They discovered that many other brilliant minds had tackled, and were still attacking, the self-same problem, as

consultation of the Patent Office files will prove. The German did not experience the full brunt of this competition in brains until he essayed to capture the British market, when, as the American picturesquely has it, he came 'full up against it.' Curiously enough, it was an American inventor, Mr George Seaton Milde, one of sunny California's sons (long residence, however, in this country had made him almost a Britisher), who proved the most formidable obstacle in the would-be invader's path. Mr Milde had identified himself with this line of research for many years, quietly advancing step by step until perfection was achieved, and patenting every vital development as it established its value.

In view of the dexterity with which the Bronsonnetia paper can be twisted into a yarn, the perfection of a mechanical process to achieve the same end, but at an accelerated rate and on a cheaper scale, may not appear to present many pronounced difficulties. Such a line of reasoning is sadly fallacious. It was no simple task, and demanded all the ingenuity of a practical paper-maker, one thoroughly conversant with the technics of the paper-making craft, and possessed at the same time of a wide knowledge of the intricacies of spinning and its many complex problems.

The German machines, as has been said, were expensive, and the products they yielded were far from being cheap, owing to the low speed at which the spinning operation was conducted, and the enormous amount of waste incurred in the process. Paper yarn, being essentially of the character of a substitute, obviously could aspire to commercial success only by competing favourably with the staples which it set out to rival, notably cotton, hemp, and jute.

The paper, which is delivered in rolls similar to those for a web-printing or a newspaper press, has to be cut into narrow strips and wound on large discs. It is then transferred to the spinning-frame to be made into yarn. The German cutting-machines for carrying out the work—some manufactured in Sweden—were heavy, cumbersome, and very expensive, costing five times as much as the corresponding British appliances. The knives represented an expenditure of about thirty-five shillings per pair. On the other hand, the British Milde machine is of very simple construction, and can be worked by unskilled labour. Its knives cost only about one shilling. In capital outlay, therefore, the German product is completely eclipsed. But this difference in first cost is not its only disadvantage. Whereas the German knives for cutting the paper into the necessary strips require frequent withdrawal for resharpening, in the Milde machine the knife is made self-sharpening, and never demands renewal unless breakage is recorded through a latent flaw. On some machines knives have been in use

for several years. The susceptibility of the German knife to become dull of edge leads to wastage, inasmuch as the deteriorating edge fails to cut the paper as neatly as desired. The jagged strips have to be thrown out, so that wastage under this heading, unless unremitting vigilance be maintained, becomes appreciable. Moreover, the necessity to stop the machine at frequent intervals occasions considerable delay, which tends to increase the cost of production.

III.

In the Teuton method two systems of spinning are practised—dry and wet respectively. Under the wet process the paper has to be stored in a humidifying room for two or three days to become sufficiently pliable to permit spinning to be carried out. When withdrawn, the paper has to be cut up and spun without further delay; otherwise loss of paper is incurred.

The greatest advantage presented by the Milde process is the high spinning speed attained. Two methods are practised—namely, ring and fly spinning. Under the first named the speed can be varied from two thousand to five thousand revolutions per minute (from twice to thrice the speed attained on the German machine), while with fly spinning a speed of four thousand revolutions per minute can be achieved.

Besides, the British appliance has another advantage. The paper is placed direct on the spinning-frame from the cutting-machine, no matter whether the paper to be spun be of hard or of soft finish. The machine itself has a moistening apparatus, by which the paper, while being spun, is softened, hardened, and water-proofed, as may be required. The machine can be adapted to meet any requirement in regard to the number of twists, from two to eight per inch of yarn, so that there is no necessity to have a different machine for each line of goods. In other words, design has been so perfected as to enable the smallest number of machines to produce the widest variety of goods. By this arrangement, naturally, capital outlay is very materially reduced, thus permitting the process to compete with the equivalent operation in the working up of jute, hemp, or cotton. Individual stop-spindle motion is also incorporated. Should a paper yarn break, only the one spindle is affected, and stops—which, by the way, similarly affects the attendant devices, so that no waste of paper results. Consequently there is no necessity to arrest the whole machine to enable the break to be repaired.

The paper generally utilised as being best adapted to the process is that known as 'Kraft' paper—pulped Canadian spruce or pine. This grade of paper is not only comparatively cheap, but has a very high tensile strain when spun, it being possible, even in the spinning, to submit it to greater strains and stresses than could be safely resorted to when spinning fibres. Owing

to the inability to secure the necessary supplies of raw material from Canada during the war, it was found necessary to have recourse to Scandinavian Kraft paper.

Once the yarn is obtained, the subsequent operations in the preparation of the fabric do not differ materially from those practised with the more familiar staples. One feature deserves mention. If desired, the paper may be rendered waterproof and fireproof. These ends are achieved by impregnating the raw material, before it is spun, with a solution of suitable chemicals.

IV.

What of the fabrics which can be prepared from paper? Their variety is endless. The material has been extensively utilised for military and munition work, as well as for other official purposes. Sand-bags, yarn for the manufacture of explosives, containers, camouflage material, twines, cords, and ropes have been contrived therefrom. The diversion of jute to more vital duties resulted in paper being used for the fabrication of bags and sacks for grain, potatoes, flour, seed, and fertilisers. So far as ordinary commerce is concerned, it is being employed for the bagging of coffee, sugar, borax, salt, cement, soda, and other commodities. The authorities submitted the British fabric to exacting tests, and having established its equality with, if not superiority to, the ordinary accepted fibres, allowed the latter to be diverted to other fields of service.

Coming to general industry, we find paper yarn being used for other purposes, some of which at first sight may appear incredible. It provides excellent material for boot-laces, braiding, webbing, and belting, being not only stronger than the ordinary materials therefor, but having the additional advantage of being fireproof and waterproof, so that it will neither contract with damp nor stretch with dryness. It is a first-class insulator, and so is being employed for insulating flexible electric wire, the wire being threaded through the outer paper casing or armour. It makes a capital stair-carpet, being more durable and substantial than jute for this purpose, while any desired pattern and colouring can be obtained in the weaving. It not only offers a good upper for tennis and other shoes where canvas or jute is ordinarily employed, but can be used for soling purposes, as a leather substitute, with every success. Its ability to pass through a printing process after being woven renders it an excellent art fabric for covering walls and for other domestic purposes. Dressed with a varnish and given an outer surface, it can satisfactorily take the place of rattan cane, and be employed in place of popularly accepted substitutes for costly leathers in upholstery and binding. It also assists in the manufacture of trunks and bags.

But its domestic applications are by no means

limited to the decoration of walls and the upholstery of furniture. At the moment it is being exploited for the production of art carpets, and in this respect holds out many inducements. Wear and tear are appreciably less than in the case of woollen carpets. A paper carpet is not only far more durable, but is every whit as warm; and it is more hygienic, inasmuch as the covering may be washed. While the paper fabric may be made as flexible and pliable as desired, it can also be presented in a hard, solid form and of any desired thickness. Consequently it will develop into a serious competitor for household favour as an alternative to linoleum and other floorcloths. Here, apart from equal wearing qualities, it will be able to offer serious competition to the article of this character contrived from cork and other materials—not omitting linseed-oil, which for some time to come must command a high price. The paper linoleum can be presented in many forms. The pattern can either be woven right through, thereby offering a rival to the inlaid linoleum, or only printed on the surface, in which field it comes into competition with the cheaper grades of floorcloth—and with overwhelming advantage. It can even be woven into a kind of board, quite as good in every respect as three-ply wood, and free from splitting, shrinking, or buckling.

V.

What will my lady say to delicate lace curtains wrought from paper, carrying all the fragile-looking tracery of the cotton article, to grace the windows of her house? Yet it is perfectly feasible. Or how about the snowy-white tablecloth and its lustrous finish? Paper can fulfil the purpose as well as damask linen. We have long since used Japanese paper serviettes, but they are primitive creations compared with those obtained from spinning and weaving the paper. Whereas the pretty Japanese articles can be used only once, ere being consigned to the waste-paper basket or the fire, woven paper articles may be used again and again. Paper table-cloths, curtains, and the like may be safely laundered, scrubbed, and boiled without suffering more than their fibre counterparts in the process. As a matter of fact, it is scarcely possible to mention a single article at present wrought from fibre which cannot be reproduced with equal success in woven paper.

One exception may, indeed, be instanced—wearing apparel. It is quite feasible to produce tweed suiting or a costume in paper, and in such a manner as to defy ready detection; but the paper suit or dress, while having good wearing qualities, would probably reveal its composition within a short time; creasing would assert itself in a somewhat aggressive manner. Some brilliant mind may overcome this objection, inasmuch as at the moment

research and experiment concerning the possible applications of paper textiles to wearing apparel constitute one of the most fruitful fields of endeavour.

Paper yarn possesses one other distinct virtue. It can be blended with hemp, jute, and cotton in the weaving of cloth, either in the warp or the weft, and this proportion can be varied within wide limits. Thus the German 'Textilose' is a fabric composed of 90 per cent. of paper to 10 per cent. of cotton, and is declared to have unlimited wearing capacity.

That the British Government is fully aware of the prominent part paper textiles are destined to play in our complex social and industrial world is revealed from the assistance it has given for the securing of the requisite raw materials. As is well known, the importation of paper into this country was reduced during the war to a small proportion of the supplies available in 1913. Despite this fact,

the authorities were so convinced of the importance of spun and woven paper as to grant the British company exploiting this field a special licence to satisfy its requirements in regard to raw material.

Paper textiles, which many were apt to regard as a 'last hope' on the part of a war-exhausted enemy, are certain to remain with us, now that peace has been restored. Inventiveness has made too big a stride to be arrested by the *post-bellum* competition which is likely to ensue from the release of greater quantities of fibres ordinarily employed. A new industry has been established in Britain, and there is every indication that in the future there will be a severe struggle for supremacy, not necessarily between paper textiles and fibre textiles, but between the paper products of Britain and those of Germany. We have entered the paper textile age, and the future of the trade in these islands is amply secured.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

II.—CHINA, 1871-75.

By C. E. GIFFORD, C.B., R.N.

I.

FROM 1866 to 1869 I was serving at Devonport, in the office of the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir William F. Martin, Bart., K.C.B., my former chief in the Mediterranean. In August 1869 I went to Halifax in H.M.S. *Revenge*, bearing the flag of Vice-Admiral Sir George G. Wellesley, K.C.B. We spent some months there, and thence proceeded to Bermuda and the West Indies. Whilst at Trinidad we met Canon Kingsley, who was writing his book *At Last*, and took him to the celebrated Pitch Lakes. After a cruise round the West Indies, we returned to Bermuda and Halifax.

On the occasion of the outbreak of war between Germany and France, Sir George was ordered to return to England to take command of the Channel Fleet. He hoisted his flag in the *Minotaur*, and cruised during the next twelve months in the Channel, off the Spanish coast, Gibraltar, and Madeira.

The unfortunate grounding of the *Agincourt* on the Pearl Rock off the coast of Spain, almost opposite to Gibraltar, led to the trial of the captain of the *Agincourt*, and was followed by the supersession of the two admirals. Thus in July 1871 Admiral Sir George Wellesley's command of the Channel Squadron came to an untimely end, with the consequent dispersion of his staff.

I was busily engaged on board the *Minotaur* packing up my traps on the afternoon of the

day on which Mr Goschen's fateful minute on the *Agincourt* court-martial arrived, ordering both admirals to strike their flags. The postman brought me a letter in a handwriting which it took me long to decipher, but with which, during the forthcoming three years, I was to grow very familiar. It was from Vice-Admiral Sir Charles F. A. Shadwell, K.C.B., F.R.S., inviting me to go with him to China. My old Mediterranean friend, W. B. Hutchison, who as a youngster had done midshipman's duties for some years under Captain Shadwell (to whom he was always 'Jaggers'), was to be secretary, and I was offered the senior place in the office.

Nothing could have pleased me more, for not only had I a strong wish to see China and Japan, but also those were the days of 'death vacancies'—that is, the Commander-in-Chief on a foreign station had the patronage of promotion into vacancies caused by death; and China, of all naval stations, was the most productive of such advancement. The prospect, therefore, of a change from the somewhat dreary Channel Squadron cruises to the novelties of the Far East, with a chance of promotion thrown in, was very attractive. I accordingly accepted the admiral's offer enthusiastically, and left at once for home on leave of absence.

H.M.S. *Iron Duke*, then at Devonport, was to be the flagship. She was one of a class known as 'box and belt ships,' having her main battery of nine-inch muzzle-loaders protected in a box of armour-plate, and having a belt of armour at the water-line.

There had been vague rumours as to her stability, and a day or two previous to our sailing some miscreant posted a notice on the main gates of Keyham Dockyard that 'Mails for H.M.S. *Captain* should be sent at once on board the *Iron Duke*.' This was twelve months after the disastrous foundering of the *Captain* in the Bay of Biscay; and if the object of the scoundrel who posted the notice was to scare the relatives of some of the crew of the *Iron Duke*, he was, no doubt, successful.

II.

We left Plymouth Sound on the 16th September 1871, and met with an Atlantic gale off the Portuguese coast, during which our ship behaved splendidly.

Under the rigid Admiralty rule for economising fuel, based on a calculation that ships could steam farther per ton of coal at a speed of four or five knots than at faster rates, we spent three months in reaching Singapore.

We were the first ironclad to pass through the Suez Canal, and Monsieur Charpy, the French 'Chef de la Navigation du Canal,' who was on board, left us at Suez, rejoicing that she had been so cleverly steered as not once to have bumped against either side of the great ditch.

After the heat of the Mediterranean, the cool night-temperature of the sandy desert through which the Canal runs was very refreshing. There was, too, the novel experience of spending a night on board an ironclad in a desert, jackals howling around, and the first dawn of light bringing into view a caravan of camels bound to the east. Lake Menzaleh was white with myriads of pelicans. Until, through a spy-glass, one could see their great wings flapping, it was not easy to believe that there could be such a mass of birds.

Our passage through the Red Sea was saddened by the loss, when off Mocha, of three of our stewards from insolation (heat apoplexy). The heat was very great, the sea-water temperature being eighty-eight degrees; and, at our crawling rate of speed, it took ten days to steam the twelve hundred miles between Suez and Aden.

Aden interested me greatly; but what a desolate spot! We paid an early morning visit to the celebrated tanks, on which our Government has spent a million pounds. They occupy the whole of a ravine in the hills at the back of the town, a series of walls and buttresses having been built across it to save every drop of water that falls. Alas! there had been no rain for twelve months, and the tanks were dry. Moreover, on our returning three years later, they were still dry, and we were assured that there had been no rain during that period. The natives appear to make their living by carrying about water for each other in pig-skins.

The run—I should rather say the crawl—across the Indian Ocean was very pleasant; a

smooth sea, gentle breezes, and a temperature of from eighty to eighty-four degrees in the shade.

Our admiral, a Fellow of the Royal Society, devoted to astronomy, having announced that in the rarefied air of the Indian Ocean Venus would be visible in the day-time, the blue-jackets were all lying on their backs searching for her. True enough, she was visible every forenoon for a week. The admiral was also searching in broad daylight for Mars and Saturn, so as to verify the ship's position by his observations, but he was not successful in discovering them.

Our men caught several hawks which had perched, exhausted, on the rigging, and found that 'a few days on chillis and baccy-smoke tamed them'! Is there any living thing of which a bluejacket will not make a pet?

The middle of December saw us at Singapore, where we found Admiral Sir Henry Kellett flying his flag in the *Ocean*. Sir Charles Shadwell at once assumed command of the China Station, and my long holiday came to an end. We had been seventy-six days at sea, as against twenty in harbour; and it speaks well for the naval scale of victuals that the doctor's weighing of the crew showed an average gain of seven pounds.

Singapore is very attractive, and we landed daily for exercise after the afternoon tropical downpour of rain was over. The Botanical Gardens were in all their glory, the water-lilies being magnificent.

We had a visit from the King of Siam, P'ra Chulalongkorn Chawn Klaw Chao Yu Hua, who brought with him on board the *Iron Duke* a lot of little brothers, all clothed in purple and fine linen, with splendid feathers in their head-gear, white-silk stockings, and shiny shoes three sizes too large. His Majesty, accompanied by thirty of his great officers and nobles, was on his way to Calcutta, and was said to have voted himself £150,000 for the trip. It came to an untimely end owing to the cruel murder of the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, by a convict in the Andaman Islands.

III.

And now began that round of visits to the various ports of the station which went on so unceasingly for the next three years. No stranger would have suspected our admiral of possessing such untiring energy. His age and physique rather suggested a desire for a quiet life. But no; wherever the *Iron Duke* could go, he went in her. Where the water was too shallow for an ironclad, he took the *Salamis*, a paddle-wheel yacht appropriated to his use.

During the commission we visited every place of any importance between Penang, in the Strait of Malacca, and Nicolaevsk, on the Amur River, many of them yearly. We ascended every navigable river—the Menam, in Siam; the

Mekong, in Cochin-China; the Canton River, the Min, the Yang-tze-kiang, the Shanghai River, the Pei-ho, in China; the Amur, in Russian Tartary.

So far as the state of affairs in the region would permit, we visited the tropical parts of the station in the winter, worked our way up the China coast as summer approached, crossed to Japan for midsummer, and in the hottest months cruised to the Gulf of Tartary.

They were three years of great interest, which made a lasting impression on my memory. True, there were no great wars going on, or other wild excitements, and piracy, the suppression of which had actually employed the squadron in earlier days, was quiescent; but the modern development of Japan, which has created such wonderful changes in the Far East, was in full swing, and China was beginning to train officers and men for a modern fleet. The political barometer, generally speaking, was at 'set fair.'

The admiral had a large squadron of small vessels under his orders, a few of them corvettes, but the greater part gun-vessels and gunboats. They were stationed principally at the treaty ports in China and Japan, always ready to show the flag wherever British interests appeared to need support.

Sir Charles Shadwell had a long experience of China as a captain, and his crew had suffered from that scourge of the station—dysentery. Almost his first order was that in no circumstances, and for no purpose whatever, was any water to be obtained from the shore; all drinking-water was to be distilled from seawater by the ships' condensers. The result was remarkable; from the date the order reached the ships dysentery ceased to trouble them. Two years later a gun-vessel at Shanghai had two bad cases, one fatal, amongst the officers. On inquiry it was found that to escape the great heat caused throughout the ship by using the condensers in the month of August, water, guaranteed pure, had been brought from the shore!

IV.

In April 1872 we left Hong-kong on our first cruise to the northward; it lasted until the end of the year, and included visits to Swatow, Amoy, Foo-chow, and Shanghai on the China coast, and also to Japan. After a fortnight at Nagasaki, we enjoyed a perfect yachting tour through the Inland Sea; a pleasant stay at Yokohama, and then we proceeded farther northward to Hakodate, in Yesso, calling at Nambu.

In September we visited the Gulf of Chih-li, part of the Yellow Sea, as it is well called, for the volumes of yellow mud brought down by the Hoang-Ho (the Yellow River) spread far and wide, and not only give to the sea a greenish-yellow colour, but also are steadily filling up the whole gulf.

Chi-fu, at the entrance of the Gulf of Chih-li, was at this time 'the Brighton of Shanghai,' to which the wives and the children fled in summer to escape the great heat. We turned over to the *Salamis*, and crossed in her to Taku, at the mouth of the Pei-ho.

We had some trouble in getting to Tientsin, which lies about seventy miles up the river, for the whole country extending over one hundred miles to the westward was under water, and it was not easy to distinguish the banks. At one turn the *Salamis* ran her nose into a Chinaman's onion-bed! The European concession of Tientsin was reduced to a strip of land two hundred yards wide, the English church and club were accessible only by boat, the race-course had eight feet of water on it, and the cemetery was entirely submerged; so that there was no public worship or amusement for the living, no burial for the dead. And this had been allowed to go on without any serious attempt to remedy it. An English engineer submitted a scheme to the Chinese authorities, but it was rejected; a votive offering to the River God had been erected in a temple, and all would be well.

During our stay at Tientsin we became greatly interested in the fate of a mandarin who had been paid a sum of money to repair a breach in the river-bank a mile below the city. He had scamped the work and pocketed the greater part of the money (a common proceeding in China, well known as a 'squeeze'), with the result that a stream some sixty feet broad, and six or eight deep, was at this point flowing over the country. The mandarin was given to the end of the month to dam back the water, with a certainty that failure to do so would result in the loss of his head. We visited the spot daily, and found him seated in a big barge, placidly smoking his pipe, and occasionally shouting to the gangs of coolies who, in the most futile manner, were trying to construct a dam of millet-stalks and clay, which the current immediately swept away. The end of the month was approaching, and there was still a breach of some thirty or forty feet, through which the water rushed like a mill-stream; but the mandarin continued to smoke his pipe, apparently with equanimity. Just in time it was suggested to him that he should buy a junk, fill it with stones, and sink it on the river side of the dam, and so check the rush of water. He did so, and saved his head. (I asked our consul if it was true that for fifty dollars a mandarin condemned to death could find a substitute to take his place on the execution-ground. He said that he did not think so—that the price had gone up, and that it would probably cost one hundred dollars!)

V.

Li Hung-chang, then Viceroy of Chih-li, the province in which Peking is situated, paid an official visit to Sir Charles Shadwell on board

the *Salamis*. He came attended by a retinue of mandarins of every grade, from pink-button to brass-button—that is to say, from the highest State official to an army non-commissioned officer. He himself wore the yellow jacket presented to him by the Emperor for the capture of Soochow from the Taeping rebels. In front of the chair in which he was carried marched his eight executioners with drawn swords, apparently sharp and ready for use. His pipe-bearer, who brought up the rear, lost no time in making his way to the ship's galley to get from the cook a light for his Excellency's pipe. These interviews with great Chinese officials were of a very formal nature. It is part of Chinese politeness to ask visitors, 'What is your honourable age?' and to express surprise that so young an appearance should claim so many years.

At the Tientsin church the service was ordinarily conducted by missionaries of various denominations. A Church of England clergyman said prayers of his Church, and a New York Free Church minister preached an eloquent sermon, a combination which evidently appealed to the congregation.

Human life is held very cheap in the East, and Tientsin has a very bad reputation in this regard. We noticed a small crowd collected one morning on the side of the river opposite to the settlement, and learned that a soldier was being executed on the spot where his offence had been committed.

A secret society existed at that time in Tientsin, qualification for membership being to have committed a murder. The horrible murder, in 1870, of the members of the French Sisterhood of Mercy, who had founded an orphanage in Tientsin for Chinese children, was said to be the work of these scoundrels. The sisters, anxious to fill their orphanage, had, very imprudently, offered a reward for every *bonâ fide* orphan brought to them. The city was placarded with posters stating that the children were to be fattened and killed, and their livers made into an ointment with which Chinamen would be blinded and converted to Christianity! An attack was made on the orphanage, which was burned to the ground, and fifteen French sisters and one English sister were assassinated.

We had a somewhat disastrous trip down the river, which was so swollen by the floods that the current nearly took us on to a turnip-field, and caused serious damage to one of the paddle-wheels.

We spent a quiet afternoon at Ninghai (now known as Liao-tung), where the Great Wall of China runs down to the sea. So determined were the Chinese to keep out their northern foes that they carried the wall one hundred yards out to sea, so that the Manchurians should not come round the corner. The wall is about thirty feet

in height, and the same in width; every hundred yards or so there is a big buttress, and defensive outworks occur at intervals. The wall was, however, falling into decay, after an existence of over two thousand years. I brought away a large brick as a memento of our visit, and it is a curious proof of the unchanging nature of things Eastern that the characters stamped on it were at once recognised by our Chinese steward as meaning 'this side out,' a direction to the workmen as to the placing of the brick. From the beach the wall stretches for some miles across a plain, on the other side of which we could trace its zigzag course up the side of hills seven thousand feet high.

Our next port of call was New-chwang, then a small settlement on the banks of an extraordinarily muddy stream. It is frozen in for four winter months, and cut off from all outside communication. Amusements consist of skating, and shooting geese, which are most abundant.

After a flying visit to Nagasaki, we returned to China, with the intention of spending six weeks in the Yang-tze-kiang.

VI.

In 1872 there were only three treaty ports on the great river at which there were European concessions—Chin-kiang, Kiu-kiang, and Hankow. Near the sea the stream is seven or eight miles wide at parts; at others it flows through narrow gorges with startling rapidity; whilst in the neighbourhood of Hankow, six hundred miles from the sea, it varies from one to two miles in width.

At Chin-kiang we saw a review of Chinese troops, and had no difficulty in crediting the stories we had heard of the defeat of whole armies of them by a handful of Europeans. Captain Roderick Dew, in the *Encounter*, a corvette with a complement of 175 men, with a gunboat also under his command, once reported to his commander-in-chief as follows: 'Sir, I have the honour to inform you that I have found it necessary to capture the city of Ning-po. Your very obedient servant, RODERICK DEW, Captain.' Ning-po, he it remarked, was a walled city with a very large population.

Of the companies of one hundred men whom we observed at this review, about twenty carried old-fashioned flint muskets; there were two or three gingalls (long tubes firing a small round shot, requiring three or four men each to work them) to every company; another twenty men carried long bamboos with pikes at the end; and, so far as we could see, the remainder, who constituted the majority, were banner-bearers, and carried no arms. My memory is not clear enough as to these details to state them with certainty, but I know we came away impressed with the belief that the marine detachment of the *Iron Duke* would have easily put to flight

the whole force under review! China, however, appeared to be waking up to the necessity of reform in the arming of her troops, for shortly afterwards at Nanking we saw a modern arsenal, in the charge of an Englishman, where the latest patterns of rifled guns, rockets, &c. were being turned out. As illustrating Chinese procrastination, I may quote a statement in Sir R. K. Douglas's work on China, published in 1899, that many regiments of their troops were still armed with bows and arrows!

Our next anchorage was close under the walls of the great city of Nanking, which are twenty-five miles in circumference and sixty feet high. A broad canal runs round the greater part of the city. Inside the walls was desolation; not a third of the area was built over, and in the so-called Tartar City one saw high, bare hills where pheasants might be shot.

Close to the arsenal were the remains of the once celebrated Porcelain Pagoda, formerly a magnificent building faced with ornamental porcelain, now a heap of ruins.

We walked to the tombs of the emperors of the Ming dynasty—A.D. 1368 to 1616—a mile from the city, built on the side of a hill which is surrounded by a high wall. The tombs, though of imposing size and solidity, are of no architectural beauty, being in this respect in strong contrast to the magnificent resting-places which Indian princes have built for their wives and themselves. They are approached through an avenue (a mile in length) of huge animals carved in stone; these are placed in pairs facing each other across the avenue. There were two

horses, two elephants (at least twenty feet high, each carved out of a single stone), two lions, two dromedaries, and many pairs of nondescript monsters.

Nanking, the ancient capital of China, was the headquarters of the Taeping rebels, who captured it in 1853, and held it until 1864, when Gordon, with his 'ever-victorious army,' recovered it for the Chinese Government. He found the city a heap of ruins, the surrounding country laid waste, the inhabitants exterminated. It is even said that during the rebellion the Taipings (whose name, forsooth! means 'Princes of Peace') massacred a million of their fellow-countrymen.

As we saw it in 1872—eight years after the rebellion was suppressed—the country surrounding Nanking was as bare as Dartmoor, and full of game; we shot pheasants under the walls of the city, and on our walk to the tombs we saw several deer.

Hankow, the highest point to which the state of the river gave access to the *Salamis*, was in 1872 the centre of the tea and silk industries, and a very flourishing port. The river is thirty or forty feet higher in summer than in winter, and, as our visit was in November, we found ourselves in the *Salamis* out of sight of the Concession at the bottom of a long flight of steps.

The houses of the European community showed every sign of wealth and luxury, whilst the Chinese merchants were said to have acquired such a taste for champagne that they drank it (or what passed for it) in larger quantities than were produced in all the vineyards of France!

(Continued on page 650.)

WILD FLOWERS IN MACEDONIA.

TO many of us who have been there, Macedonia will generally be associated with mud, dust, flies, mosquitoes, and malaria; but as an offset to these unpleasant features it has many points of interest and beauty which it is good to remember. Among the best of these are the wild flowers. Mindful of the fact that their day is short, Nature seems to make a special effort to atone for the long barren summer, and in spring brings forth a wealth of flowers of such beauty, purity, and delicacy of colour that they are a joy to behold.

Up near Mount Hortiach, about ten miles from Salonika, there are some rolling hills and a meadow where wild flowers in endless variety abound. In April cream-coloured dwarf irises with brown veinings are to be found on emerald slopes, where starry white saxifrages tremble on their slender red stems. Here grow also hosts of wild orchises, among them the pale butterfly orchis. In May the meadow reveals new beauties from day to day. Trails of delicate shell-pink and white ground convolvulus with

tiny pale-gray leaves clamber everywhere; and heliotrope vetches with fairy-like foliage stretch out curly tendrils to tall lemon-coloured mulleins with downy leaves and stems. The vetches, indeed, vie with the orchises in variety of shape and colour, some being rose-colour, some purple of different shades, and others yellow. Tangled masses of wild clematis bear claret-coloured flowers, set off by vivid wild roses, and clumps of queen-of-the-meadow. Among the grass are to be found rose-campions, pink gladioli, and china-blue love-in-the-mist, in its veil of hazy green. Perhaps the most striking of the meadow flowers are the blue iris and the lemon thistle. Very light and delicate are the pale-lilac and pink scabious; and there is an exquisite sky-blue flower, the name of which I could not discover, so fragile that it withers at once when picked. Many of our own familiar flowers, such as poppies, corn-flowers, and daisies, grow on this meadow, but by June the best are over.

Farther up-country are other and more wonderful flowers. I have heard rumours of

beauty almost too fantastic to be believed—such as fields full of languorous milk-white poppies and deep-purple irises.

In early June I have gathered among the rocks and prickly-oak in the gulleys sheaves of white madonna lilies, with their voluptuous scent and their look of perfect purity. In sharp contrast to these are fly-catching plants which seem too uncanny to be merely vegetable. The maroon-coloured flower is of the size and shape of an arum lily. The spadix or tongue is red, and covered with a sticky substance to catch the unwary fly, which the flower attracts by exhaling an odour of carrion. The prisoner being secured, the fleshy trumpet closes over it, and not until the pollen is shed does the flower slowly unfold again, allowing the insect to proceed on its fertilising career.

By July the barrenness of summer has set in; still in the early morning the chicory is all starred over with blue flowers. These barely survive an hour in the sun, but for a time every day brings a fresh crop.

After that Nature takes a rest until in September pale-lilac autumn crocuses sprinkle the meadows. Following the stream which flows under the Roman aqueduct (which still supplies a portion of the city with water), one passes thickets of sloes, hips and haws, half-strangled by trails of old-man's-beard and sprays of tinted vine. Past yellowing fig-trees, the path leads upwards to the groves of ancient Spanish chestnuts, between whose gnarled trunks and twisted roots sinister and grotesque faces peep at dusk. Higher up are beech-woods where in spring primroses are to be found, and in autumn tiny pink cyclamen with mottled leaves, hiding beneath the bracken. On the top of Mount Hortiach are rough gray rocks, among which I have seen myriads of lavender colchicums in full bloom. Near the narrow ridge between Hortiach and Kotos is a well where the donkey-boys—Demetrius, Apostolos, or Christoph, as the case may be—water the mules. From here is to be seen on one side Mount Olympus, rising white and shimmering out of a sapphire sea; on the other, Lake Langaza, with its gipsy village of mud-and-straw huts. Here the women may be seen weaving rush mats and baskets from the reeds that grow in the lake, while the men and the little naked brown babies enjoy a prolonged siesta. Bulrushes, too, abound in the lake; but I have looked in vain for water-lilies. Curiosity compelled me to lift a stone out of the water, but I quickly dropped it on finding it covered with leeches. Beside the lake is a Roman tower on which storks build. In spring I have seen the father-bird, black and white, with scarlet legs, giving sage advice to his two unwieldy and downy-headed offspring, recalling the tales of Hans Andersen. Magpies flit about, goldfinches rise in flights from the

thistles, little blue butterflies hang on the grasses, and the air is full of the whirr of tiny wings. The variety of insects—particularly those of the grasshopper kind—would give a natural historian much scope for study. Among the sun-baked rocks on the hillside lizards dart about—some of them gray, with flattened heads and repulsive, bulging eyes; others bright green. This is also the home of tortoises. Higher up are vultures; and at night jackals come down from their mountain homes, and break the silence by their savage howling.

Some miles nearer the city is a dilapidated house—now used as a shelter for monks—with a neglected garden and orchard. Many, many years ago the then Sultan of Turkey was entertained in this house, at that time the property of an Englishman, John Abbot, who, it is said, amassed a considerable fortune by rearing leeches. Many kinds of fruit are grown here—figs, almonds, grapes, quinces, red and white mulberries, also melons, pumpkins, and other gourds. There are shrubs of pink oleanders, and in October apricot-coloured persimmons glow among their glossy green leaves. The fruit is not ripe till December, when the leaves are shed, and it has become red and pulpy and of a cloying sweetness. Nothing, however, is so decorative as the pomegranates, with their red blossoms set in a scarlet waxen cup, or with their ruddy fruit, which, when it has been too fiercely kissed by the sun, displays rows of fleshy pink seeds.

As you travel southwards from Salonika towards the Gulf of Corinth, the scenery gradually becomes more wild and mountainous. In April the fields by the lakes are full of pheasant-eye narcissus, smaller than our garden variety, but with a scent of more penetrating sweetness. Sunrise among the Greek mountains is a sight to be remembered—the snow-clad peaks, pink and glowing, and the goat-bells faintly tinkling. From Bralo, near the pass of Thermopylæ (where in ancient days Leonidas led the Spartans against the Persian hosts under Xerxes), runs a mountain-pass, thirty miles long, to Itæa—once a famous seaport—on the Gulf of Corinth. This pass among the heights of Parnassus is of the most majestic beauty and grandeur. From the road, which runs at a dizzy height, one looks down on a pale-green stream bordered with maples, which in autumn are vividly tinted. Bright-green slopes lead up to dense forests of black pine, above which tower precipitous gray rocks, the whole being crowned by snowy peaks. One picture in this wild setting stands out in my memory—a youthful goat-herd, black of eyes and hair, with shaggy coat and naked brown limbs, looking with his long crook like a young David, driving his flock to the pasture.

Through groves of olives, said to be among the oldest in the world, Itæa is approached.

In spring the ground below the olives is thickly sown with scarlet anemones. From the steep hillside the ancient town of Delphi (which seems to grow out of the rocks on which it

stands) looks down on the sunny gulf, with its mother-of-pearl islands and its translucent blue water—a fitting site for the temple of Apollo.

A. DOUBTFUL ADVENTURE.

By R. M. V. SWANN.

I.

I STAINED my face and attired myself in the habiliments of an Indian prince. I yawned. A bed would have been a fitter place for me than a fancy-dress ball with its fatiguing excitement. I was weary from want of sleep. My lot in life forbade me to choose my own breakfast-hour, and for a month I had been dancing with senseless frequency. I was half-determined that after to-night I would abstain for some time to come.

But, jaded though I was, I could not resist the allurements of this ball. I had a vain predilection for gorgeous attire, and it was only on such occasions that I was able to gratify it. To-night I found myself in the temporary possession of raiment almost unsurpassable in splendour. It was no mere stage fustian—it had been the ceremonial apparel of a great Indian potentate. Who he had been, and how he had come to part with his costume, I knew not. Something subtle—it may have been an odour—lingered about the garment, and set the mind wandering amidst scenes of splendour—princes and their captains, cavalcades and retinues of glittering soldiery.

I finished the tiresome business of adjusting the odds and ends of my exotic costume, and surveyed my appearance in the mirror. The effect was pleasing. I was transformed from an ordinary-looking clerk into a fine romantic figure of an Oriental ruler. My pasty face—the thing that annoyed me most—had vanished beneath the stain. I looked vigorous and forceful, and not a little mysterious. Something, however, was lacking. I did not quite look the part. I conjured up pictures of the few Orientals I had seen, and tried hard to alight on the deficiency. After a few moments I discovered it. I returned to the mirror, and bared my teeth.

I was startled. I looked sinister and terrifying. I was a perfect imitation of the real Asiatic. But withal I yawned once more.

I set out to walk the short distance to the dancing-hall. I had put on a long, heavy overcoat over my costume, so as to attract as little attention as possible. But no one seemed to be about as I stepped forth into the long, quiet street. This was somewhat strange, considering the hour. The respectability of my neighbours rose in my estimation. Their houses, I noticed,

seemed as quiet as their street. In those windows alone which the shadow of a dressing-table mirror proclaimed as belonging to a bedroom was there any light. And in many houses there was absolute darkness.

As I proceeded along the pavement, however, I became aware of a house ahead of me, on the opposite side of the street, out of which shot forth the rays of a strong illumination.

'Here, at all events,' I said to myself, 'are some people who do not go to bed at this ridiculous hour.'

I felt a sort of friendliness towards these persons, whoever they might be. Their window was a cheerful sight in that gloomy parallel of dark houses. Sociable people like myself, I thought, with enough zest in life to remain awake a little longer than their joyless neighbours.

But a moment after, when I had got opposite that house, I found that the reality was far removed from the pleasant. A horror gripped hold of me when I looked up at that bright window, and saw, unmistakably clear, as weird a betrayal of a crime as was ever afforded to mortal eyes. On the blind of the window was the silhouette, grim and uncanny, of two men in the throes of a murderous struggle, which seemed to be fast approaching its termination. One man had all the advantage. He was armed with a poniard, and it could be only a matter of moments ere he succeeded in driving it into his antagonist. The other was making frantic endeavours to ward off the fatal blow. But his bulk seemed smaller on the blind, and apparently he was weaponless.

I did not pause to deliberate. I rushed across the street. Providence seemed to provide for my intervention. The door was lying close to, and I pushed it open without noise. Immediately I found myself in a brightly lit hall. Above I could hear the sickening, beseeching cries of the man who was being killed. I tore off my heavy overcoat, and bounded up the stairs, three at a time. I needed no guide to direct me to the room. A shriek, more hideous than the rest, met my ears as I reached the lobby, and I rushed straight for the room from which it came.

I was just in time. It would have been all over in another moment. The large man had overcome his feeble opponent, and, unresisted, he was about to drive the dagger into his heart. As it was, I should have been too late to prevent

the deed by direct intervention. He could have done it, and been ready to turn upon me, before I could have got across the length of the room, obstructed as it was by all manner of knick-knacks of furniture.

But my appearance had the most astounding effect. The poniard dropped from the man's hands, and he surveyed me with undisguised terror. It was now his turn to scream.

'Gandarah!' he cried, or some such sound, and he retreated to the wall, where he cowered and trembled with abject fear. The other man by this time had recovered sufficiently to take a new interest in life. To my surprise, he regarded me with no less distaste than had his enemy. He uttered the same word as had the other, and relapsed into a like condition of miserable timidity.

I rather enjoyed the situation. It was clear that I was confronting a pair of scoundrels. Somehow I felt I knew a lot about these men. They were of middle age, each old enough to be my father; yet for the moment I was completely their master.

For a little time I made no move, but stood regarding them intently. They watched me with nervous apprehension.

'You damned rascals!' I said at length, and went forward slowly. The man whose life I had saved uttered a cry at this.

'Stop! stop!' he begged me. 'I will restore it, Gandarah. It is here. I will give it you.'

'Let me see it,' I said sternly.

It was obvious that they mistook me for some bloodthirsty person prepared to deal with them in the most desperate way. 'You will not touch me?' he cried in a cowardly voice.

'Let me see it,' I repeated, fixing upon him a look which cut short his hesitation on the instant. He went submissively to a cabinet across the room, and took from the top of it a little vase, which he upturned in his hand. A small key tinkled into his palm, and he replaced the ornament.

At this the other fellow, who had been regarding his enemy with the most ferocious hatred, snarled like a savage cur, and made to spring upon him. A word from me, however, admonished him effectively; and the man with the key, who had once more been seized with an access of tremulousness, at this demonstration took heart of grace, and proceeded on the business of restoring the mysterious 'it.'

He came over to a table beside which I was standing, and put his hand beneath it. I heard him turn the key.

A moment later I was gazing with amazement at a ruby of marvellous size and weight, which glistered in my hand as if alive with flame.

Whether it was my astonishment which betrayed me or his cupidity which overcame his fear, I do not know. The murderous rascal at the wall sprang forward suddenly, and before I

could do aught to prevent him, had repossessed himself of the dagger.

In another moment I should have been stabbed to the heart, when the unexpected happened. . . . I awoke—in my bedroom.

II.

I started from the chair in which I had been dreaming, and looked at my watch. To my dismay, it was one o'clock in the morning. After all my elaborate preparation, I had missed the best part of the dance. I was horribly disappointed, and cursed my stupid landlady in her abysmal basement for not noticing that I had not left the house. By turning up so late I should have lost my chance of obtaining a prize for my costume—a thing I had coveted, and had almost expected to receive.

I refused, however, entirely to be balked of my night's pleasure. I put on my overcoat hastily and crept down the stairs to the hall. The other boarders were evidently in bed, for the house was dark and silent, and in the hall the gas was lowered, for me to put out on my return.

I left the house with as little disturbance as I could, and set forth at a smart pace along the deserted street. The houses, for the most part, were in darkness, except for a subdued light here and there from a bedroom window. It was just as I had dreamed it, but, to tell the truth, I was too much annoyed by the circumstances of my sleep to think much about it. I strode onwards, cursing my bad luck, and wondering how much fun I had missed.

But I now saw something which filled me with a vague apprehension. Some distance ahead, a bright light shone from a house on the opposite side. The incidents of my dream came into my thoughts. I felt uncomfortable and anxious as I walked forward.

It was as I had feared. I was asleep again, and was enacting my dream once more.

On the familiar blind was the silhouette which on the previous occasion had caused me to shudder with such consternation. But I was now in a hurry to be awakened, and I refused to be alarmed. I had had enough of this sleeping, and I must get out of it. I shook myself, and endeavoured to return to reality. To my disgust, I shook and squirmed in vain. The street would not resolve itself into my bedroom; the shadows on the blind persisted in my sight.

I saw that I should have to play right through this game of dreaming to its appointed end—the sudden assault upon me by the taller rascal—before I could awaken. I hurried across to the phantom house to achieve this object. I opened the willing door and entered the hall. There was no need to hurry. I knew exactly what was happening upstairs, and what my part was to be. I kept on my heavy overcoat. To take it off would make no difference.

A hideous yell greeted me as I ascended the

stairs, and then there was silence. This was rather different from the first time, when a continuous series of screams had been my accompaniment. But the discrepancy was of small importance. I was really in the same dream, and it would soon be over.

I entered the room, prepared for the spectacle of Death averted by my intrusion. But, to my surprise, there was no struggle in progress, and I could see only one man, who was engaged in the comparatively prosaic task of opening a cabinet. He seemed, however, genuinely alarmed at the sight of me. His face paled, and he desisted from his employment to put a greater distance between us.

'Well,' I said angrily, 'where is the other rascal? I can't see him.'

The man made no reply, but it seemed as if his astonishment and dismay were greater than ever. I had no patience to repeat the question.

'Never mind,' I said. 'Give me the stone.'

'The stone?' he echoed, as though he had not understood.

'Yes,' I said, 'the stone. Confound you! The ruby—give it to me. Do you think I don't know all about it? Hurry up!'

'It is in there,' he said, indicating the cabinet he had been opening when I entered.

'Who put it there?' I asked.

'That is where it is kept,' he answered lamely.

'You are a liar,' I said sternly. 'It is kept in the wood of this table, in a small panel.'

The man regarded me with increased bewilderment.

I took the key out of the lock of the cabinet, and groped with it beneath the table.

'Where the devil is it?' I cried angrily, as I felt for the keyhole in vain. For a second or two I had my back to the man, and he took immediate advantage of my position. When I turned I was facing his revolver.

'That's right,' I laughed. 'Shoot. It will not hurt me, and it will put an end to this pantomime.' The man gaped at me with an absurd incomprehension. 'Shoot, confound you!' I said, as I saw his hesitation.

But the fool let his revolver slip from his hand to the floor . . . and I still dreamed.

I threw myself upon him, determined to hurt myself in a struggle with him, and thus awaken. But he eluded me with the swiftness of a cat, and was at the door in a flash. I pursued him furiously, out of the room, down the stairs, and into the street.

He raced along at a terrific speed, and completely outdistanced me. A curious feebleness invaded my limbs. With the utmost energy I was unable to force them to any vigour of action. I felt as if I was running on a ball. He thus escaped with ease, and soon I was left alone in the street.

Then everything was blotted out, and I remembered nothing more.

III.

When I awakened my brain was clear. I knew precisely what had happened. I had twice fallen asleep, and now I was in all probability too late to go to the ball. I made to spring to my feet to ascertain the time.

To my amazement, I found myself in my bed, and undressed. My Indian costume was hanging over the back of a chair. I was greatly bewildered. The light had been turned down, and my landlady had provided me with the unusual luxury of a fire.

A few moments later my cousin entered the room. He informed me that I was an invalid, and must remain in bed. I had been unconscious for fifteen hours, he told me, and my condition was somewhat serious.

'Bosh!' I said. 'Just loss of sleep. I've only been asleep.'

But I fell back weakly upon my bed.

I cannot make up my mind about the murder of Morrison, the Indian explorer. The facts are these. He was murdered in his house along the street by some person on the night of the fancy-dress ball. It is not known if anything was stolen.

I was picked up in the street unconscious, not far from my own door. I may really have been in Morrison's house on the occasion when I thought I was dreaming for the second time. If so, it was my dilatoriness which cost him his life, for with haste I could easily have intervened in time. Though I did not notice his body in the room, that is no reason against its having been there. I was too preoccupied with the other man to see it.

But I know perfectly well that if nothing had happened that night, my reason would have been quite satisfied with the explanation that all the transactions had been dreams, and my opinion would unhesitatingly have pronounced the first dream more real than the second, which, it might seem, was indeed reality itself. Therefore, as I have said, I cannot make up my mind.

ROYAL OCTOBER.

GOLDEN are the sands, and the sea is azure—

Sky and sea a-sparkle in the rain-washed air;
Sun and shadow racing across the broad spaces,
Chased by the West Wind from his far-away lair.

Silver are the sails of the boats returning,

Silver the flashes of the gull's wide wing,

Silver the foam-tips on the dancing waters,

And silver the high clouds where overhead they swing.

Nature's robes are royal on October mornings—

Trimmed with shimmering silver is her azure gown.

Golden is the carpet for her fleeting footsteps,
And diamond-studded is her shining crown.

B. NOËL SAXELBY.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE OYSTER.

By WILLIAM GOSSE, M.D., D.P.H., Camb.

I.

THE history of the oyster can be traced back to the Tertiary period, where the common shell found is that of a gigantic oyster, sometimes a foot in diameter. Near Reading there is a fossil oyster-bed which covers six acres and is two feet thick, but this is composed of shells of the same shape and substance as those we find on our shores to-day. There is an oyster-shell island off Corsica; while on the western coast of South America, which is being gradually raised by seismic forces, these beds are from sixty to eighty feet thick and some forty miles long.

In the early Stone Age man lived mainly on roots, fruits, and shellfish. The débris of their meals is found buried on our shores, and in what are known as kitchen heaps or middens, which contain hundreds of thousands of shells, together with palæolithic flint instruments. These indicate the remote period at which the oysters were consumed. Such remains have been found on the coast of Elginshire, where now hardly any of these molluscs survive, showing among other things that the climate must have become colder.

The oyster was known to the Greeks; it is from them we get the word. The Romans not only knew the oyster, but appreciated it; for its shells, as well as those of the edible snail, another of their delicacies, are found in the sites of Roman settlements. They were the first to cultivate oysters, and their methods are still in use. They introduced oyster-culture into Britain; and Sallust (c. 50 B.C.) said there was 'some good to be got out of the poor Britons—they produce an oyster.' Under Constantine, when luxury was rampant, and later under the last of the Cæsars, millions of bushels of oysters were consumed in Rome; our 'natives' were most prized, being brought all the way from Richborough in Kent. The Patrician Roman was a man of leisure, and chewed his oyster, thus getting the full flavour.

So the humble oyster can claim the most ancient lineage; it has always moved in the most aristocratic society; and therefore its blood is found to be of the palest blue. The oyster may be compared to the 'Honest Lawyer,' being headless, which explains the old saying, 'As stupid as an oyster.' It has no eyes and no

ears, although it has a mouth and four lips. Yet it has some sense that can detect the passing shadow of a boat, or an alarming noise, such as a thunder-storm; so it is true that 'a noisy noise annoys an oyster.'

When an oyster is opened the unaided eye sees in the centre the closing-muscle, where it has been severed from the shell; and around it the beard with its five or six gill-plates; and on the beak side, the large mass of liver; and close to the hinge, the minute mouth with its hood and four labial palps. On more minute examination we find that the oyster is covered with a fine lace mantle, which is composed of fat and connective tissue.

The oyster having no neck, the mouth opens directly into the stomach, which is merely a bag and is surrounded by the liver. The intestine on leaving the stomach is comparatively short, and winds through the liver and even the heart before it reaches its termination. The heart is placed in a cavity reserved for it near the adductor muscle. It receives the blood from the respiratory apparatus and circulates it through the other organs.

The respiratory apparatus is of beautiful structure, peculiarly adapted for extracting the oxygen from the water instead of the air, so keeping the home-fires burning. This is popularly known as the beard, but is really the gills, which act in the same manner as those of a fish. They consist of gill-plates, between which are tubes lined with cilia or minute hairs, which continually wave, threshing the water through the enveloping network of blood-vessels. This serves a double purpose, extracting the oxygen for the blood, and filtering out the minute algæ and other nutriment for the stomach. Huxley says: 'I suppose that when the sapid and slippery morsel—which is, and is gone like a flash of gustatory summer lightning—glides along the palate, few people imagine that they are swallowing a piece of machinery (and going machinery, too) greatly more complicated than a watch.'

II.

All the conchiferæ have shells. The oyster has two, and is, therefore, a bivalve mollusc. The shells are irregularly circular, with a crescentic tendency, pronounced in some varieties. The lower shell is more convex than the upper,

and the average size is some three inches. The outside is rough, and the colour a dirty brown. The inside is in marked contrast, being perfectly smooth and pearly-white. Near the centre of each shell there is a scar; that is where the adductor-muscle is inserted, which, on contracting, closes the valves of the oyster. The muscle is large for the size of the animal, being, it is stated, the most powerful in nature, and capable of resisting nine hundred times its weight; hence the necessity of an oyster-knife.

Just inside the beak may be seen the insertion of the cartilages which form the hinge ligaments—for there are two, an external and an internal. When the valves are closed the external ligament is in a state of strain, while the internal is compressed. So, when the adductor-muscle relaxes, the shell opens because of the tension of the external ligament and the expansion of the elastic internal ligament, both forming a beautiful contrivance of passive elasticity.

The fool in Shakespeare asks King Lear, 'Dost know how an oyster makes its shell?' Fools often put posers, but we now know how it is done. It is done much in the same way as we deposit lime-salts in our own skeleton; as the oyster has no bones, he utilises his waste-products by building himself a house.

The oyster's organ of selection and excretion is its mantle, for, as the edge of the mantle protrudes as it grows beyond the edges of the shell, the calcareous matter which is always present in sea-water is first secreted, and then deposited in a soft state on the extreme edge of the shell, gradually hardens, and enlarges the diameter of the shell. The process begins at the boss, and is repeated at intervals as needed by the growth of the oyster, layer on layer like a pen-wiper.

On careful examination, each layer will show fine thread-like lines, which are called strizæ; these are parallel, but in each layer are arranged obliquely to those in the one above and below, on well-known mechanical principles, strengthening the shell as steel girders bind concrete walls. The oyster pays little attention to outside decoration, so long as it does not clash with its surroundings, and on our shores it is usually of a brownish tint and rough cast. But the inside is a very different thing, and there the oyster shows its exquisite taste; the shell is lined with mother-of-pearl, which is secreted by all the external surface of the mantle except the edges, and is called nacre. This is an iridescent pearly-white, as velvety to the touch as the finest old Worcester china, and as free from chinks and corners as an ideal operating-theatre.

The iridescence, with its beautiful play of colours, is not due to any pigment, but is demonstrated by the microscope to be caused by minute structural corrugations, some thousands to the inch. Sir Isaac Newton showed that a series of fine grooves break up a beam of light into its constituent colours, in a similar manner to a

prism. Curiously these tiny ridges and furrows, with their iridescence, are not obliterated by chipping or even grinding.

The nacre is not only decorative, but useful. Being deposited layer by layer over the whole interior of the existing shell, it increases the thickness of the shell. It sets into a very hard and firmly laminated shield, and consists of layers of organic matter impregnated with lime, and is well called mother-of-pearl, of which so many artistic ornaments are made, besides numbers of things which we handle daily as common necessities, such as pearl-buttons, of which myriads are made, broken, and lost. Yet never a question occurs in our minds—Of what are they made? How is the material supplied? As a matter of fact, the source of supply is becoming exhausted; for the mussel-beds in the Mississippi and other rivers show signs of failing, and means of restocking by artificial propagation is under consideration by the Bureau of Fisheries.

III.

In reviewing the oyster's life-history we must begin with reproduction. *Ostrea edulis* is hermaphrodite, first producing its eggs as 'white spat,' and afterwards fertilising them with a darker spermatozoic exudation called 'black spat,' which to the touch is viscid and gritty, being albuminous, and serves the purpose of the white of an egg in nourishing the embryo oyster. If a small portion of this slimy substance be examined under a low-powered microscope, the grit, which appears like slate-pencil dust, will be found to be young oysters. These are now to have the time of their lives, brief but exciting, for they are suddenly ejected by the parent oyster into a wild waste of waters, and they are free; and, more, they can swim and dance up and down in the water. But this lasts only for a few days; then the spat falls and the power of locomotion ceases, for as the shell grows it gets heavier and sinks to the bottom, where it usually rests on its left side, which becomes attached to the site it alights upon. This is what the fisher-folk call 'the fall of the spat,' and is the first and most important fact in the life of the oyster. It was always a mystery from where and how the spat came. When the minute oysters are seen safely anchored to the cultch (as the floor of the bed is called), the future prospects of the ground are good. They have then become visible as white dots on the surface of the substance to which they have adhered; these dots are found, on closer examination, to be flattened discs one-twentieth of an inch in diameter, which rapidly take on the distinctive characteristics of the oyster.

Here again Nature is to herself true. As Tennyson puts it:

So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of a single life.

For myriads of the floating spawn are scattered by the winds and the tides, myriads killed by an

unexpected snap of cold weather, without mentioning the depredations of voracious enemies that abuse the 'freedom of the seas.' However, Nature makes some provision for this, as every healthy adult oyster is capable of producing annually from one to two million fertilised eggs, and the amount of spat produced by a recognised oyster-bed must be enormous.

We left the little mite fixing its permanent residence on a concrete foundation, a sound example followed by all good builders. If the conditions and the surroundings have been favourable, in six months it will have attained the size of a threepenny-bit, and in twelve months it may be an inch in diameter. After that oysters increase about an inch a year, until they reach three inches, when they may be regarded as adults, and any further growth is chiefly in thickness of shell. This applies to our home variety of edible oysters, and is a rough guide to the age of the oyster up to three years, the normal growth being an inch a year; beyond this the oyster must be judged by thickness of shell. An oyster is supposed to be in its prime when five years old, and its average life is less than twenty years.

IV.

The oyster-ground is gone over methodically by the trawlers as a field is ploughed by ploughmen, until an adequate supply is obtained for the market. The dredge resembles a common clasp-purse with a framework of iron, covered with net. It is so contrived that the mouth is kept open and the lower edge scrapes the bottom. When sufficiently filled (which can be told by the drag), it is hauled on board and emptied. The bag is usually a mixed one; not only oysters of various sizes, but stones and shells, pots and pans, crabs and lobsters, are found. These are sorted and treated according to their deserts.

Before the man of Kent became infected with modern scepticism, talking was forbidden during dredging; but the fishermen chanted:

'The herring loves the merry moonlight,
The mackerel loves the wind;
But the oyster loves the dredger's song,
For he comes of gentle kind.'

There are many varieties of oysters, for there are no fewer than 170 named species, and of these there are several sub-varieties.

Of the well-known edible varieties our 'natives' naturally come first. Now the Whitstable beds are most famous; they are supposed to contain fifty million oysters. The estuary of the Thames forms an ideal bed of London clay covered with clean shingle and shell, lying in salt shoal-waters in a temperate zone. Milton-on-the-Swale had the reputation of supplying the finest English oysters. Colchester has still an annual feast, but sends few oysters to the London market.

Among other popular varieties the 'Royal Native' and the 'Victoria' are naturalised

aliens, being bred in France and fattened on English beds. Then there are Dutch oysters, Holsteins, Portuguese, and the Mediterranean oysters. Of American oysters the large 'Blue Point' is best known, and is so called because of the blue scars left on the shell when one is opened by cutting the closing-muscle.

As a modern exception and a geological commonplace, I mention the Australian oyster (*Costrea Lincolni*), which is as big as a dinner-plate, the largest edible oyster in the world. Another curiosity is the tree-oyster, which is found growing on the stems of mangrove-trees on tropical shores.

The ingenious and industrious Chinese grow their oysters on bamboo, planting them in mud as a gardener plants his cuttings. They take a split piece of bamboo about two feet long, again split it about half-way down, wedge it open with a shell and bring the split ends together, fasten them with a perforated shell over the top—and in four or five months the bamboos are hid by clustering oysters.

The pearl oyster must be mentioned, although not strictly an edible oyster. In fact, it belongs to a different family. Its scientific name is *Meleagrina margaritifera*. It is really a pearl mussel; but pearls have been found in many varieties of oysters.

V.

Already most phases of the life of an oyster have been described. We now come to the struggle for existence, which in the depths of the sea is even more ruthless than on land.

The few that escape the causes of infant mortality and settle down to build their homes in congenial surroundings are beset not only with inanimate enemies such as cold, sand, mud, &c., but by predatory animals of great cunning and resource. Among the chief enemies are skates, rays, octopods, starfish, crabs, whelks, mussels, and even sea-worms; and some birds, such as the oyster-catcher, gulls, and crows.

One of the most common pests is the starfish, a member of the horrid octopus family, which is called by fisher-folk 'Five Fingers.' In view of the difficulty we have in opening an oyster, the bivalve would seem an insoluble problem to the starfish; but the Rev. J. G. Wood, as the result of repeated observations, informs us that the starfish starts as we do, by clasping the oyster with its five fingers; then, not having a knife, it places its mouth over the hinge, and ejects some saliva, which paralyses the hinge-muscle and causes the shell to open slightly. But the most important part of the problem remains unsolved—how to extract the luscious contents. Fortunately the starfish has a capacious and accommodating stomach just behind the mouth; you step directly out of the hall into the dining-room. As the starfish cannot get the oyster's body into its stomach, the stomach is expelled

out of its mouth, envelops the oyster, and proceeds to digest it. This done, the starfish draws its stomach back again into its body. The wildest flights of Oriental imagination never equalled this perfectly true history of the oyster and the starfish.

One of the oyster's greatest enemies is the dog-whelk. This shellfish's tongue, called a radula, is a most murderous stiletto, which can protrude and bore a hole through the thickest oyster-shell, and is said to be able to select the site of insertion of the adductor-muscle, which relaxes, whereupon the whelk ravenously devours the shell's contents.

The common edible whelk is not so destructive, as its weapon is effective only against the young or the weak. Each enemy has its own method. The crab tries to crush a weak shell with its claws, or cunningly waits for the oyster to open, then puts a spoke in its wheel.

One of the sea-urchins, called the 'burr,' when out of the water resembles a bunch of harmless dried grass; but hidden underneath it has four sharp points, with which it drills numerous minute holes into the oyster's shell, until it becomes worm-eaten and crumbles.

Birds detach oysters from their beds when the tide is down, mount with their prey in the air, drop them on a rock, where they shatter, and so secure their dainty. Monkeys in the Tropics also feed on tree and other oysters, breaking their shells by hammering them with stones.

VL

The digestibility of raw oysters is well known. The raw oyster takes two hours fifteen minutes to digest; the stewed, two hours thirty-five minutes; while most fish take three hours, the

exception being boiled sole, which takes only two hours five minutes.

It is to be regretted that such a valuable and favoured delicacy should be under a cloud of suspicion, but it is well founded, for the oyster has been known to harbour the germ of typhoid-fever. This is due to the sanitary complications of our modern civilisation. Before seaside towns had water-sewers with their outfalls in estuaries or in the sea itself, the sewage was unable to injure or pollute oyster-beds. As we have to live under present conditions, it is useful to know that the oyster, if placed under hygienic conditions of a clean bed and water-supply, will purify itself in twenty-four hours, and will then be found free from objectionable bacteria. This safeguard is well worth the expenditure. Where there is any doubt (and there usually is), it is wiser to take the simple precaution of washing the oyster, after being opened, under the stream from a tap; for the juice in which the oyster lies consists of impure water, probably tainted with its own excreta.

Roman epicures used to chew the oyster, but modern ones prefer bolting the luscious morsel in the raw and natural state. Still, it would be safer to cook them, and there are many ways of so doing—over sixty are given by Dr Philpota. A good old English way is as follows, and is called the Colchester Carpet-Bag. Take a square slab of rump-steak about two inches thick. Cut lengthwise into one side so deeply that a margin of only an inch is left all round—but without removing any part of the meat—and open the steak into something like a bag in shape. Stuff the cavity full of oysters, well season with salt and pepper, add a lump of butter, sew up carefully, and grill on the gridiron.

MIRIAM DECIDES.

By CHARLES SIDDLE.

PART I.

I.

I SUPPOSE most people would admit without hesitation their delight in any suggestion of romance. Personally, as might be expected of a bachelor of fifty or thereabouts, I revel in it. So do you, I dare say. Our difficulties would commence only when we attempted to reconcile our definitions of romance. For example, these newspaper men can smell a romantic situation in an affair which drives me to Jeyes' Fluid and a hot bath.

The engagement of my goddaughter Miriam to Alan Cowen was not as bad as that, but I could never persuade myself to regard it as anything but disastrous folly. Miriam is the only girl I can tolerate, and I suppose I am selfish in my attitude towards her. She is necessary to

my comfort, and I have never seen any reason to pretend pleasure when I see some young fool monopolising her attention. Not that I protest; to do so would be foolish and useless. Flirtation is the natural safety-valve for a girl of twenty, and I am not yet mad enough to risk my position of confidant by raving against the breathless excitement of manipulating half-a-dozen jealous adorers. No. My policy has been to pretend an unconcern I do not feel, and to wait with what patience I can for the natural reaction and my opportunity. The scheme worked well until Cowen came along, and he, having neither manners nor patience, introduced a new element into the game and knocked me out in one round.

They met in some ballroom or other, and only a brain full of romantic nonsense could have

conceived any possibility of the acquaintance developing into friendship. Miriam Frances Wymondham Vincent is the daughter of a house that can boast—but never does—a descent from Plantagenet founders. Alan Cowen admits—very freely, confound him!—an ascent from the respectable artisan class too recent to be free from impossible connections with all kinds of five-roomed dwellings. Miriam is as dainty a girl as you'll meet anywhere. Alan is a clumsy, powerful man with a distressing chin and hard, gray eyes. He represents the class which I, for one, cannot tolerate—the successful fighter. You know the kind. Self-made is, I believe, their own phrase, and in my experience they never free themselves from the faults of their own handiwork.

Miriam tells me that her first impression of Alan Cowen was an amazed discomfort. He positively glared at her from across the room, and for the first time in her life she experienced that suspicion, so dreaded by all women, that something about her was conspicuous and wrong. She was being criticised adversely, or she thought she was—which is worse. Her cheerful occupation of keeping three contesting males amused became suddenly impossible and unimportant. The sensation began by annoying, and ended by interesting, her. She asked Cowen's name.

As if he had known that the moment was his, and the fruits thereof, Cowen clinched the impression he had made. Walking heavily across the room, he fixed one of the young men with his domineering gaze—they all detested him, of course—and demanded an introduction. The ceremony accomplished, he showed his gratitude by offering his arm to Miriam and taking her irresistibly away. Miriam repeated his opening sentence to me the next day, and it was typical of the man.

'I do not dance,' he said, 'and I never make a fool of myself by trying. Will you sit out with me?'

My jealousy where Miriam is concerned having been admitted, you will understand that I was quick to read the danger in her manner when she talked about Cowen. His abrupt speech was a new experience for her. She sat on the edge of my table telling me about him, and her eyes positively danced with excitement.

'Wasn't he just too quaint?' she said. 'It was about half-past twelve, and he must have known that my programme was full. I don't look the kind of girl who hides an empty programme, do I? His assurance was not very flattering, and I told him straight away that I was afraid I couldn't manage it; and what do you think he said? He looked at me in a dictatorial kind of way. "You can manage anything if you want to; and if you don't, I'm wasting my time." He did, honestly. Wasting his time! Well, you know, what could I say after that?'

I could think of several very effective things she might have said, but, then, I am not a young girl carried away by the excitement of a new experience. What Miriam really did say was equivocal—but quite sufficient for a man like Cowen. He took her away and talked to her. Of course, he told her all about his struggles and his successes, and I don't doubt Miriam found it very romantic. The story as I have heard it from other sources is one of ruthless determination and cruel disregard for moral scruple. A man does not emerge from the mob in ten years by wearing kid gloves and dealing gently with rivals; but in a broad outline unpleasant details are lost—one cannot blame Cowen for that. Miriam was more and more impressed. So was Cowen. When Miriam is interested her eyes sparkle and her energetic expression makes her little face a positive miracle of delightful inspiration. She is so eager, so transparent. I know exactly how she must have thrown Cowen's imagination into a sudden industry of castle-building. She was just what he had dreamed about, but never believed to exist.

'I told him I thought he was wonderful,' she said. 'He is; isn't he, darling? A real man, able to do things. Fancy Reggie Santella thrown into the position Mr Cowen had to face!'

This was unfair to poor Reggie, who has his points, and is devoted to Miriam. I felt obliged to protest.

'Or me, for that matter,' I said, with just a tinge of bitterness in my voice.

Miriam sprang down from the table and kissed me. 'Why, you silly darling, you are not jealous, are you?' she asked. 'I shouldn't like to think of you fighting anybody. It would be too tragic. Mr Cowen's life has been very exciting and—and romantic, but you—you are my dear god-father.'

I am a fool. I swallowed the sugar and asked for more. The question of Alan Cowen dropped, and we talked of other things more pleasant and soothing. It was not until Miriam was going that she referred to the experience at the dance again. She had said good-bye very prettily, and was at the door, when she turned suddenly on me.

'Do you think'—she began, and then stopped. She was blushing and a trifle confused.

'Do I think—?'

'Oh, nothing.' She hesitated, half in and half out of the room. Whatever the question which was troubling her, it was sending waves of red across her face. She closed the door and came back a little way. 'Mr Cowen is very disturbing,' she whispered, looking at me with troubled eyes. 'He says'—she hesitated again, then went on with a rush—'he says he will look out for me, and make me the next important business of his life.' She repeated this astonish-

ing speech—astonishing both on account of the suddenness of the declaration and the peculiar qualification 'the next important business'—and then seemed to realise how startling it must sound to me, for before I could reply she was gone.

That was my introduction to Alan Cowen as an aspirant for my goddaughter's hand. Possibly the affair was romantic. It was undoubtedly serious, and very distasteful to me. I tried to convince myself that Miriam's common-sense must show her the difference between a stimulating acquaintance and a prospective husband, but I was not surprised when the news came to me that she was engaged. Cowen, consistent, overpowering, masterful, completed his wooing in three whirlwind attacks. Miriam—my Miriam—was engaged to marry a man who presented in all respects a complete contrast to herself; and I was asked to congratulate her. The first act of the romance was complete, and the curtain about to rise on—what?

II.

I called on Miriam two or three days after the announcement. It needed that length of time to make me even reasonably sensible. I am not fool enough to encourage a young girl's wilfulness by opposing it, but I was finding it more than usually difficult to play my part as the indulgent friend. I muttered my congratulation with as good an imitation of sincerity as I could manage, shook Cowen's big hand, winced under his ridiculous grip, and then wandered away from the circle of tea-drinkers to join Reggie Santella. I like him, and could almost have forgiven him if he had been the successful lover.

'Well, Reggie,' I said, 'and what do you think of our little drama?'

He smiled at me with surprising cheerfulness. 'Queer start, isn't it?' he said. 'I feel rather as if I'd missed my cue somewhere, but I've seen plays where a lot of the action takes place off.'

I stared at him. I think I've known him ever since he was a snub-nosed youngster with lanky legs and a cheeky grin, and I recognised at once that something had been happening to him which I'd missed. I hate missing things.

'What exactly do you mean?' I asked, curious as any old gossip at her back-gate.

Reggie was watching Miriam, and had no eyes for me, but I dare say he found it pleasant to have some one to talk to. Anyway, it didn't need half the brains Reggie stowed away somewhere to guess my sympathies.

'I've been pretty keen on Miriam for a long time,' he said, 'but I've had a comedy part all the show. Comic relief—that's been about my ticket. Passing the time until the hero arrived. And here he is, sir; here he is. Strong man stunt, romantic past, everything complete. Ring in his waistcoat-pocket. Exit comic relief.'

His words were bitter enough, and, on the whole, what one might have expected from a disappointed lover; but Reggie was not speaking bitterly. He seemed to be rather amused, merely acting his part. He turned to me suddenly.

'That is what you think, isn't it, Sir John? But I see it differently. Alan Cowen may win through with it or he may not. I think he will not. He is up against a tougher proposition than he imagines, and he is missing his lines wholesale. He does everything wholesale, you know.' This was the only sneer Reggie permitted himself, and I readily excused its bad taste.

'You think, then?' I said tentatively.

Reggie stood up. 'I think he hasn't won yet,' he said, looking at me with quiet confidence, 'and I know he thinks he has.'

He walked away from me and joined Miriam at the tea-table. I stayed where I was. The youngster was giving me food for thought. Theoretically a man has no business talking as he had done about another man's engagement; but, after all, Reggie was first on the field, and if he had the backbone for the fight, I was ready to give him fair scope; my trouble began when I tried to calculate his chances. He had shown no signs of strength or ability up to now. Would the sudden change hold, or must I see my last hope crumple up into mediocrity again? The chances were against the boy, I decided reluctantly.

The other visitors departed, one by one, and soon there were only the four of us left—Reggie, Miriam, Cowen, and I. Reggie was chatting easily, keeping Miriam amused, steadily ignoring Cowen. I tried to engage the older man's attention, but he was too little concerned even to pretend interest. He was watching the others, and he cared nothing for my knowledge of the fact. This magnificent disregard for the opinions of outsiders was one of his strongest weapons, as you will know if you have ever tackled a man strong enough to do it naturally. I was an outsider, and I was not long in realising it and taking my proper place.

'No, Miriam,' Reggie was saying, 'not a single brief! My eloquence is still a-mouldering in my breast, and not a criminal believes in my powers.'

'Oh you poor boy! What a time you have to wait before you sit on the Woolsack or wherever it is!'

I am not surprised at Cowen's ill-concealed displeasure. The two young people made an attractive picture together—Miriam so fair, so eager, so young; and Reggie, straight-backed, cleanly built, obviously in the best of condition, an athlete trained for all kinds of sport, and perfectly modelled for his work. His wavy brown hair and humorous blue eyes removed the hint of weakness which a medium chin and

a lazy mouth would have given to his face. In appearance he was a perfect mate for Miriam, and he knew it. So did Cowen. The knowledge undoubtedly lent sting to his sudden interruption.

'No man need wait for work to come to him,' he said roughly. 'Men who do things go out after opportunity and find it.'

I was watching Miriam keenly, and she betrayed by a sudden movement of startled surprise that she had temporarily forgotten her fiancé. I glanced at him. He had noticed it too.

'Oh, but, Alan,' said Miriam quickly, 'Reggie is a barrister. It isn't just the same, is it?'

'That depends,' said Cowen, 'whether Mr Santella is a barrister merely as an excuse for doing nothing else. If he needs money and he is out to make an income, he needn't wait for briefs. And I think some of my City friends would be glad to see him earning money.'

This was really terrible for Miriam. The man was possibly reckless, driven to brutality by jealousy; but even that was no excuse.

Reggie didn't wink at me, but he let his eyes wander in my direction for a moment before they came pleasantly to rest on his attacker, and I began to understand his optimism. Cowen, dogmatic and aggressive, was allowing his irritation to destroy his discretion, and Reggie was out to encourage him. I looked at Miriam. She was blushing a little, and her eyes were troubled. There were undoubtedly possibilities in the situation.

'As you know so much about my affairs, I may as well admit,' said Reggie, 'that my private income barely pays the interest on my debts. But I don't see what I can do, you know. There is such a thing as professional etiquette.'

Cowen rose and walked over to Miriam's side. He was now very close to Reggie, and as he stood, firmly planted on his feet, strong, dominant, supremely self-confident, he might have stood for an allegorical figure of success. Incredible as it seems, he was blind to the impression he was making on Miriam.

'I have only one recommendation for men in your position,' he said. 'Take your coat off, take your gloves off, forget your miserable profession, and start at the bottom. If you are any good, you'll come up; if you are not, you'll stay down. But at least you will be facing your own problems, and not shuffling them on to some one else.'

I waited for Reggie's reply. None came. I looked at Miriam. She was uncomfortably watching the two men. Now, surely, was Reggie's chance to make a smashing attack on the ridiculous speech his rival had made. The silence was becoming noticeable.

'Really, Mr Cowen,' I said, unable to remain silent, 'don't you think that sort of thing'—

'No, I don't,' he said, interrupting me ruth-

lessly. (I hate interruptions. They leave me suspended in mid-utterance, and are so unnecessary. Like every other middle-aged bachelor, I value my own opinions, and men like Cowen have no sense of fair-play.) 'I hold that every young man should stand on his own feet,' he continued, looking at me, but talking at Reggie. 'Every pound owed is a pound stolen.'

I sat up, positively bewildered. This brutal method of conducting a discussion surpassed my worst expectations. Stolen!

'Oh, Alan dear,' said Miriam, 'I don't think'—

'I'm sorry if I have hurt any one's feelings,' said Cowen, without showing any very marked signs of penitence; 'but I am speaking generally on a subject which affects me strongly. I intend no personal implication.'

Reggie shook his head with a characteristic movement like a frolicsome dog shaking the water from its ears after a swim.

'Don't apologise,' he said cheerfully. 'I'm a careless beggar about money, but I started the discussion, and it's my funeral. You rather took my breath away. I'm not quite used to your methods. Very likely you are right, though.' He looked for his hat and stick.

I rose to my feet, too. The bracing atmosphere was affecting my mental lungs. I'm not used to it.

When we were out in the street Reggie exhaled a deep breath. 'Heavens! what a man!' he said angrily. 'I don't know how I resisted the temptation to go out after him with his own weapons.'

I was feeling pretty sick myself. Reggie had not played up as I had hoped. 'Yes,' I said gloomily, 'you gave him full permission to walk on you. Why ever didn't you stand up like a man, and let Miriam see that you can hold your corner?'

Reggie said nothing for several minutes, and then he laughed suddenly. 'You are not so clever as I thought you,' he said. 'Fancy allowing a youngster like me to give you points.'

I was annoyed. The afternoon had provided several unpleasant incidents, and now I was being patronised by a youngster of twenty-six. 'What do you mean?' I asked irritably.

Reggie stopped. 'I am going in here,' he said. 'Think it over, Sir John; think it over; and see if you don't agree with me that Miriam finds the masterful brute less romantic when he tramples on her friends.'

He left me, and I walked on, thoughtful, and more impressed than ever with the remarkable change in Reggie. The cheerful, empty-headed youngster was developing rapidly into a perfect Machiavelli; and as I let my imagination run on Miriam's impressions of that ridiculous discussion, my spirits rose rapidly towards optimism. The boy might pull it off, after all!

(Continued on page 661.)

THE VISIT OF BEN JONSON TO DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

By the Rev. GEORGE DODDS, B.D.

ONE of the most interesting literary memories which Edinburgh possesses and shares with other parts of the country is that of the visit of Ben Jonson to Scotland from August 1618 to 25th January of the following year. There was, unfortunately, no Boswell to accompany the massive figure of the most famous of English poets living at that date, and to record the story of his pilgrimage; nevertheless, it comes out into considerable vividness towards the end of the tour from the two or three weeks which Jonson was led to spend with Drummond at Hawthornden.

One cannot but wonder how it came about. One wonders more that it lasted so long. One wonders still more that any intelligent person could ever have held the opinion that Jonson made his pilgrimage to Scotland to visit Drummond. The visit was but an incident in the tour, probably hoped for by Jonson, who would know Drummond as a Scottish poet who wrote in English (as distinct from the written and spoken Scottish of the time). And Drummond undoubtedly knew of Jonson as the most famous man of letters of his day. After Ben's arrival in Edinburgh in August 1618 some city functions were arranged in his honour, at which, doubtless, the poet-laird of Hawthornden would be present. It is permissible to suppose that their first meeting may have been at such a function. Other meetings there may have been 'in Edinburgh houses during winter of 1618-19,' resulting in an invitation from Drummond to Jonson to visit his house, perched on the precipice-edge in the most exquisite bit of the beautiful valley of 'the wandering Esk.' But beyond this common interest in the realm of letters there was nothing in character to draw the two together. That the torrential genius of Jonson, then forty-six years of age (Drummond was thirty-three), accustomed to the easy supremacy which he wielded at 'The Apollo' or 'The Mermaid,' could ever have matched the mood of the refined, secluded, and sad poet of Hawthornden is unimaginable. And no one can be astonished that the famous visit ended in relief to Drummond, who must have found, as Professor Masson suggested, that in Ben he had 'caught a Tartar.'

It has turned out that this visit had an importance little dreamed of by either poet. Both of them came near to losing their reputation to some extent as a consequence of it—Drummond through having written his impressions of his visitor, and Jonson through these written impressions when published (partially), sixty-

two years after Drummond's death, having been taken in an uncritical way. In Gifford's *Life of Jonson* (1816) Drummond is treated almost savagely for having written these impressions of his guest. Mr Barry Cornwall, writing twenty years later a memoir of Jonson prefixed to an edition of his works (Moxon), says that through 'the treachery of Drummond the old poet became for many years a byword in biography.' Some ten pages farther on he says the publication of the *Conversations* 'was as complete a piece of treachery as can be found in the history of literary men. Drummond of Hawthornden has written poems of much merit; but we trust that whoever may read them hereafter will never forget that he was a traitor to his friend and guest, and that he has discredited the name of poet, and tarnished the hospitality of his hospitable country.' These are wild and whirling words, not at all representing the true way in which to regard the incident.

The impression made by so great a figure as Jonson, at any place or time, would sooner or later mount up into a position of almost universal interest, especially an impression made on a mind of higher order, in capacity and sensitiveness, like that of Drummond's. No doubt the Scot was considerably surprised to find Jonson the manner of man he was. The great figure of the Englishman could scarce find worse setting than in Hawthornden:

Sweet solitary seat
Where from the vulgar I estranged live,
Contented—

Professor Ward rightly says: 'The two men were, indeed, as ill-adapted to one another as two men of genius could well be. As poets they had little in common: the eminent qualities of the one were usually those in which the other was deficient. As individuals they were even wider apart. This loud, blustering, hard-drinking Englishman, with all his solid worth and real magnanimity, was not a man to attract the gentle, studious, retiring, and perhaps fastidious poet of Hawthornden.'

Professor Masson finds that Drummond had 'the habit of abundant note-making and keeping of commonplace-books.' It was, therefore, inevitable that Jonson would leave himself sketched on Drummond's pages in the way he impressed himself on the Scottish poet's mind. And, all things considered, this sketch could not well have been different from what it is, even though it is 'unfavourable and one-sided.' It is good to get 'Royal Ben' as Drummond saw him and thought of him. 'The morsels of Ben's talk so

preserved for us are worth pages of our dry literary histories of that period, and have helped, indeed, to give those literary histories more flavour than they otherwise would have had' (Masson). Little did Drummond know what an interest would gather round those few pages of memorabilia, probably never destined by him for any eyes except his own, or those of his most intimate friends. But it seemed fit to the publishers of the folio edition of his works in 1711—sixty-two years after Drummond's death—to give to the world about three pages of the *Conversations* of Jonson, and this was all that was known of them or accessible for more than a century later. In 1827 Mr David Laing, the distinguished Edinburgh antiquary, began an examination of Hawthornden MSS. He earnestly hoped to find amongst them the document from which the few pages of *Conversations* had been printed in 1711, but he found only the empty envelope in which they had been kept. Later, however, his search was rewarded by the discovery of a transcript of them in the handwriting of Sir Robert Sibbald, another distinguished antiquarian (1641-1722). This transcript Mr Laing edited with notes for a paper read to, and published by, the Society of Scottish Antiquaries in 1832. It extends to twenty-nine pages, so that it would seem that Jonson's talk supplied Drummond with a considerable amount of material. It was republished, with a preface by Mr Laing, for the Shakespeare Society, London, in 1842, and about nine pages of extracts of great interest are given in Professor Masson's *Drummond of Hawthornden*.

It was Ben Jonson's intention to leave an account of his Scottish tour in a poem, and such an account was written by him. But his London lodging was destroyed by fire in 1620, and the entire contents of his desk were consumed by the flames, amongst the MSS. thus lost to the world being this 'Lochlomond Pastoral.' The unfortunate event has been commemorated in Ben's poem, 'An Execration upon Vulcan,' and the following refers to the loss of the poem on Scotland:

And, among
The rest, my Journey into Scotland, sung
With all the adventures.

Doubtless we should have had the 'adventure' at Hawthornden among the rest, for it bulked so large in Ben's memory and interest that he corresponded several times with Drummond on his return home, and sent him two poems, each of considerable value, and included in Jonson's published works—'On a Lover's Dust made Sand for an Hour-Glass' and 'A Picture of Myself.'

Somewhere about three and a half years before Jonson came to Hawthornden Drummond had experienced a terrible sorrow. For a year or two before 1615 he had enjoyed the greatest happiness as the accepted lover of Miss

Cunningham of Barns (near Crail); but when all preparations were ready for their marriage, she was suddenly snatched away from him by death. The blow overshadowed more or less all the rest of Drummond's life. His own expression, 'Unhappy widowed dove,' well describes his sad, disconsolate days. We take this from Madrigal IV., in 'Poems, the Second Part,' rather than from the sonnet entitled 'The Praise of a Solitary Life' (which appears twice, first in *Urania*, and again, carefully rewritten, in *Flowers of Zion*). In the Madrigal, Drummond compares himself to the 'Unhappy widowed dove' whose cooings in the wood he interprets through the sadness of his own heart:

Poor turtle—thou bemoans
The loss of thy dear love,
And I for mine send forth these smoking groans:
Unhappy widowed dove!
While all about do sing
I at the root, thou on the branch above,
Even weary with our moans the gaudy spring.

Much of Drummond's poetry, and especially his second book (1616), is in this vein—a record of his love and his loss, making him known to the world, like Tennyson, as one deeply bereaved. By the time of Jonson's visit to him there may have been some slow return to a less unhappy state of mind, but the mark of the blow was on him till the end, adding a pensiveness to all his work. During the interval between Miss Cunningham's death and Jonson's visit he had been through a good deal, and he had taken a notable part in the celebration of the return of King James to Edinburgh in May 1617, having written what Professor Masson calls 'by far the finest literary product of the visit,' his poem, *Forth Feasting: A Panegyric to the King's Most Excellent Majesty*. When Ben and Drummond sat together in those long January evenings, three hundred years ago, in one of the rooms of Drummond's perched abode in the beautiful valley of the Esk, they talked about many people and things, and when they came to speak of Drummond's own verses, Ben said that 'he wished, to please the King, that piece of "Forth Feasting" had been his own.'

In 1619 Shakespeare had been but three years dead. Drummond knew of some of Shakespeare's plays—had them in his library, and had read them. But Ben knew Shakespeare personally better than almost anybody else did. What an opportunity for Drummond! There is no more effective page in Professor Masson's notable book on Drummond than that in which he points this out. We may, of course, be quite wrong, but the deepest emotion one has at Hawthornden to-day is that it is the scene of a lost opportunity. Ben Jonson lived there for two or three weeks—and Shakespeare remains as elusive and vague as if he who knew him so well had never set foot in the glen.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

CHINA—*continued.*

VII.

ON our way down the river we passed close to the celebrated Nganking Pagoda, said to be the finest in China. It is almost white, and of very imposing appearance, with its nine balconied storeys and its winding flight of steps leading to the top.

The river was alive with wild duck. I had not imagined there were so many in the world as we saw on one day. There had been a sudden cold snap in the north, freezing all their summer haunts, and they had migrated to the south in myriads. The Yang-tze, the first open water reached by them, offered a welcome resting-place, and as we steamed some two hundred miles down the river with a strong, fair current, making about fifteen knots, there was a continuous flight of ducks over our heads.

The name of Shanghai brings back very pleasant recollections; each year we enjoyed the great hospitality of the community and their delightful late autumn climate.

The *Iron Duke* unfortunately drew too much water for the Hwang-pu (the branch of the Yang-tze-kiang on which Shanghai is built), and anchored at Woosung, a dreary spot nine miles distant. We fortunate members of the admiral's staff lay in the *Salamis* off the Shanghai Bund, as the river frontage is called. The houses of merchant-princes faced us, and their doors were always open. 'John Dent' was still a power in the land, and, as usual, his house provided a home and offices for the Commander-in-Chief.

During one of our visits our admiral was pressed to preside at a temperance meeting. He arrived rather late, beaming with smiles, perhaps accentuated by a moderate libation of Mr Dent's Château Lafitte. On rising to open the meeting, he said he did not wish to sail under false colours; that he was so strong an advocate of temperance in all things that he gladly accepted their flattering invitation to preside; 'but'—and here he laid his hand on a broad expanse of white waistcoat—'I am a humble follower of St Paul, who approved of taking a little wine for the stomach's sake.'

The admiral was deeply interested in the subject of magnetism, and as he moved about took observations recording the Magnetic Dip. In honour of the squadron's visit, our consul's wife at Amoy was giving a party in the pretty consular garden, which ran down to the sea. The admiral verbally accepted her invitation, and added: 'I will come with my flag-lieutenant rather early, that I may take my dip.' The scandalised looks of our hostess, who saw a vision of the admiral in bathing-costume, were

the cause of much amusement, as the story was wafted up and down the coast, where the lady was widely known.

The same lady lamented the somewhat neglected state of the garden, ascribing the fault to the admiral, who wouldn't allow his captains to sentence any of 'the dear sailors' to imprisonment in the Consular Jail, where, she said, profitable hard labour was found for them in her garden!

The admiral used to make up for the absence of hair on his forehead by bringing round long white locks which grew luxuriantly at the back of his head. At the close of a long day's inspection duty these locks had escaped, and were floating in the breeze. 'The fault,' said the admiral, 'of making the afterguard do foretopman's duty.'

I have before me one of the great red visiting-cards, with the admiral's name inscribed in Chinese characters, which the Consulate at Canton designed for his use when paying official visits to Chinese authorities. 'Sha-te-wei' was the nearest approach to 'Shadwell' of which Chinese sounds are capable.

One is reminded of the Hong-kong Hong (House) List, where, for the guidance of the stranger who wants to direct his chair-coolies to Mr Scott's house, for example, the word 'Scott' appears in the form in which they know it: 'Iz-zé-cot-té.' Pidgin-English was a never-failing source of amusement to us, and was our only means of communication with our Chinese servants. I remember the astonishment of our genial chaplain, the Rev. J. C. Cox-Edwards, afterwards chaplain of the fleet, at being designated by a boatman as 'that chin-chin joss man.'

I am, however, forgetting that I was recording my recollections of Shanghai.

VIII.

At the time of our visit the Taotai (chief civil officials) of the native city had conceded to the British the right to make a 'road' from Shanghai to Woosung. What was the Taotai's astonishment and indignation at finding that a railroad was contemplated, and that the materials for constructing it had been ordered from England! The line, some eight or ten miles, was laid, and duly opened. Several passenger-trains were run daily, always packed with Chinamen, many of whom came from long distances to see this novelty of the 'foreign devils.' The concession stipulated that at the end of a year the 'road' should become the property of the Chinese authorities; it had been assumed that long before the expiration of that period its value would

have been realised by the Chinese, and that it would lead to a general concession to build railways. Such expectations were doomed to be disappointed; the railroad was handed over, and the Chinese at once proceeded to pull up the rails, and to send them and the rolling-stock across to Formosa, under the pretence of using them for the coal-mines. However, on a subsequent visit to Sao Bay we found them lying on the beach.

Whether the objection to railroads arose from a jealous fear on the part of the mandarin class that railways would have a levelling influence, and would in some way undermine their position, or whether it was that the national spirit of Fung-shui would be offended, is a question; but the sharp practice which obtained the concession appears to have justified the Taotai's indignation, and to have delayed for many years the development of the country.

Fung-shui, the spirit of earth, air, and water, was at this time inimical to all progress. Under it, the surface of the ground must not be defaced by modern inventions—railways, telegraph-posts, and such like. Hong-kong harbour was restricted by two shallow patches running out from the shore; Fung-shui said they were two arms stretched out to protect the harbour, which ought not to be touched, lest its spirit should be offended. I do not know how the spirit has regarded the extension seaward of the naval yard, the work of recent years.

The European and American concessions at Shanghai were full of signs of the great prosperity of the merchants: a beautiful church, designed by Sir Gilbert Scott, who was given *carte blanche*, and built regardless of cost; library, public halls, theatre—every kind of outdoor and indoor amusement on a very generous scale. The race-course, the cricket-ground, tennis-courts, and bowling alleys were well calculated to keep in health a lot of young men who worked hard in a climate very trying for several months of the year.

Once a week in winter there was a mounted paper-chase; all the members of the hunt turned out in pink, and were well mounted. A cup for heavy and another for light weights were run for weekly. Three 'foxes'—one the best rider mounted on one of the best ponies—started, each carrying a big bag of paper. They picked out all the widest ditches, ugliest fences, and broken paths, strewing their paper freely. The starting-place and winning-post was the grand-stand of the race-course, and the chase was over eight or ten miles, ending with three huge water-jumps. The field, some forty in number, had to follow the paper strictly, and a pretty dance the foxes led them. Fifty minutes brought in the first horse, a crowd of some hundreds being gathered about the three final water-jumps. Such fun for the lookers-on—horses and riders floundering in together, the ponies which couldn't take the

jumps quietly rolling into the water, or climbing like rats down one side and up the other. The last man in on one occasion claimed that he was the true sportsman; he was waving round his head a pheasant, upon which his pony had landed when taking a jump!

Shooting-parties were organised at Shanghai on luxurious lines. The house-boats were fitted with every comfort—beds, tables, baths, cooking arrangements complete. Our first party returned from a ten days' trip to the Grand Canal, bringing 160 pheasants, five deer, and many duck and teal. Until my visit to China I never sympathised with the Children of Israel in their sufferings from a surfeit of quail; but before we left the Shanghai River the odour of cooking a pheasant was absolutely obnoxious, and the prospect of eating one unthinkable.

IX.

Whilst lying at Shanghai late one Saturday night in June 1873, news was brought on board us that the steamer *Drummond Castle*, which had started in the race to England with two and a quarter million pounds of the new season's tea on board, had run on the rocks one hundred miles from the port. The report said that the ship, with all hands except two boats' crews, had gone to the bottom. At daylight on Sunday we proceeded to the spot indicated, and found her sunk in fifteen fathoms of water, her top-masts just visible, and Chinamen busily employed in stealing anything which they could rip or saw off. All our boats were manned and the many islets searched, the captain and crew being eventually found in a temple. Our boats came back laden with fish, which had been picked up floating helplessly on the surface. Whilst the men were discussing whether they were fit for food, a Cornish fisherman, one of our crew, settled the matter by saying that they were all right, 'only puff-blaved.' This, he explained, was the result of fresh-water fish having been brought down by the river-current to the sea-water; the density of which had affected them. It certainly was the case that they were all found in blue seawater, close to the sharp line of demarcation between it and the yellow water of the Yangtze. As may be supposed, there were many suggestions that the fish had found the tea too strong for them.

To return to Shanghai, where the autumn races, the great event of the year, were coming on. A shipload of Manchurian ponies arrived from the north, and the animals were put up to auction on the following lines. Prospective purchasers drew lots for precedence in buying a pony at the highest price bid, and when each had in this way secured one beast, the first man on the list was given precedence in buying a second pony, and so on until all were sold. There was a compulsory selling lottery for every race. The commander of a gun-

vessel stationed at Shanghai had, in partnership with a well-known local gentleman-jockey, purchased two wonderful little gallopers, Ko-pu-chu and Snowdrift, but unfortunately orders came for his ship's company to leave Hong-kong for England two days before the date fixed for the races. The Commander-in-Chief was adamant; the troopship to be escorted could not be detained, and the gun-vessel had to go. The two ponies carried off everything they were entered for; and the lucky homeward-bound naval officer pocketed some thousands of dollars. 'Owners up' was the order of the day. The cynics remarked that the admiral was not so verdant in racing matters as some imagined, and that the fact that the civilian was a better jockey than the sailor may have had something to do with his stern decision!

All this time our messmates in the *Iron Duke* were lying at dreary Woosung. Our Fleet Paymaster, Alexander Thompson, made the discovery that there were ducks to be shot near by, and in proof produced three which he had bagged. Alas! next day the owner of a duck-boat, a great breeding and fattening establishment, came on board, and claimed compensation, an officer having blazed into his preserves. This reminds me that whilst at Nambu, in Japan, our commander, John Way, in firing at a pheasant, unfortunately peppered with shot the face of a small boy from the neighbouring village. He found the parents, bowed profoundly, apologised for his clumsiness, and gave them two dollars as compensation. From that day onwards every child in Nambu was posted in some likely spot to be hit by our sportsmen! There were, however, no further casualties.

X.

Bidding farewell to China and Japan was a long and trying ordeal, drawn out from August 1874 to February 1875. At every port which we had visited during our three years' commission our friends came on board to say good-bye, and we steamed out of harbour, the band playing 'Home, Sweet Home.' We reached Plymouth in May 1875, having spent a long and happy commission in the Far East.

These lengthy commissions were, no doubt, trying to the temper of officers and men, cooped up in a ship, and, chiefly for this reason, they were reduced to about two years.

In the *Iron Duke* we wardroom officers were remarkably, perhaps unusually, harmonious. I attribute this in part to our having kept up throughout the commission a system of birthday celebrations. Our custom was for the member whose birthday it was to inform the messman, who then told the president. After dinner the president, rising, would invite his messmates to drink the health of Mr So-and-so, who wished them to take wine with him.

Well on in the commission we found that

one member had not had a birthday. Possibly he was born on the 29th February, but, as he was a very close-fisted man, we ascribed the worst of motives to him, and decided to try to get a bottle of wine out of him. He was specially fond of blood oranges, and was skilful in selecting them. We picked out a light-yellow-skinned orange, and painted the peel to resemble that of a blood orange. Then it was taken to him, and one of the conspirators asked him if he thought it a blood orange. 'Of course it is,' said he. 'I'll bet you a bottle of port it is not,' said the bringer. 'Done!' said the man without a birthday. We collected round to see the joke carried out; the camouflaged fruit was cut in half—and, lo and behold, it was a blood orange!

A dignitary of the Church once asked me how we amused ourselves at sea. I said that on piping-hot days in the tropics we played fly-loo—not the game of our boyhood, but one more suitable to tropical heat. We sat round the tea-table, each put ten cents into a pool, and a lump of sugar in front of himself, and—the owner of the lump upon which a fly first perched won the pool.

Lest my friend should think we were entirely frivolous, I told him that at times we played chess, ship against ship, signalling a move or two at meal-times, or in the evening after work was over.

Then we had a geographical game. One gave out the approximate latitude and longitude of certain places, and the rest had to name them. Thus:

36 N. and 6 W. A celebrated cape. (Trafalgar.)

51.30 N. and 0 W. A great city. (London.)

56 S. and 67 W. A celebrated cape. (Cape Horn.)

38 N. and 122 W. A great city. (San Francisco.)

We soon grew skilful at the game.

On one of our cruises to the north we took a guest with us, a Cambridge M.A., and a fine whist-player. Arrived at Yokohama, he landed to visit a friend, with whom he stayed a fortnight. On coming off again he brought a bag of dollars, which he had won at whist. He must have scorned our modest threepenny points.

One day at sea the president announced that there would be a spelling-bee after tea. Our Cambridge M.A. rather scorned the idea, but was told it was compulsory for every member of the mess to join. One of our number had made up a story embodying every hard word he had been able to collect. When our M.A. friend's paper was examined, it was found that he had written in the margin the Greek derivation of several of the words; but, alas! he had made twenty-six mistakes, notwithstanding!*

* The above story I recorded nearly fifty years ago. I see that Lord Fisher in his *Reminiscences* has a similar tale.—C. E. G.

I must wind up my story with a testimonial in our favour from the chaplain of the United States flagship. While at dinner with the chaplain of the hospital-ship *Melville* he said, 'I was dining

last night in the wardroom of the *Iron Duke*, and I want to say that I never met such a gentlemanly lot of officers. Why, sir, I didn't hear a single damn from soup to pea-nuts!'

HOW POISONS ARE DETECTED.

NOT only in this country, but throughout the world, cases of murder by poisoning pass undetected every year owing to the absence of the least breath of suspicion. To commit his foul crime without attracting the least attention must of necessity be the aim of the modern monster. There was, indeed, a time when he might reasonably hope to defy detection even in the midst of a whole host of accusers, but that day is done. To-day, once a case has gone to the point at which the aid of chemical analysis is invoked, there is very little chance of escape. For there is now probably no known poison which, if administered in a sufficient dose, cannot be detected after death—a striking tribute to the efficiency of modern science.

But, all the same, the methods adopted by our scientists are both difficult, lengthy, and complicated.

If a penny and a sixpence were placed in a glass jar and a quantity of nitric acid poured upon them, both coins would disappear, leaving nothing but a bluish-looking liquid in the jar. But by adding a little salt a deposit of silver-chloride would at once become apparent, and this, filtered out, could be changed back into a tiny piece of silver. To find and recover the copper, a little ammonia would be added to the remaining liquid, which would immediately turn a brilliant blue colour, and eventually the penny would be returned in the shape of a tiny piece of metal.

It is thus the chemist works when seeking for poison; but instead of seeking copper and silver, he is seeking some unknown death-dealer, and has to try the whole range of his tests and experiments until he finds one that produces some response, as did the acid containing the coins when salt or ammonia was added.

But the poison-seeker has other and more peculiar difficulties to encounter. Since the poison may come from the whole domain of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, it is quite likely that the samples sent him may be exhausted long before all his tests are through. Then, again, there may be more than one poison present; whilst, to complicate the matter still further, he knows that it is not sufficient merely to prove that such-and-such a poison was present—he must also prove its presence in sufficient quantity to cause death.

All these difficulties are exemplified very clearly in what is perhaps the first of all classical poisoning-cases. Malcolm John, a schoolboy, not feeling very well, accepted and consumed

'medicine' given him by his brother-in-law, who was a doctor. Half-an-hour afterwards he became unwell, and complained of heartburn, sickness, difficulty in swallowing. Presently he became delirious, and in less than four hours he died.

A post-mortem examination proved that death had taken place either from hydrophobia or paralysis of the heart; but some relatives were not satisfied, and they insisted on the chemical-analysts being called in.

Acting on the assumption that poison had, in fact, been administered, the chief chemist soon decided that nothing but a vegetable poison could have been used, as animal or mineral poison would have produced greater internal changes than the post-mortem had proved to be the case. Again, in view of the rapidity of its action, an alkaloid poison was the probability. But of the alkaloids, strychnine, atropine, and morphia could be at once counted out, because they would have produced other symptoms, such as sleepiness, spasms, dilation of the eye-pupils.

So, with these useful preliminaries settled, the analysts set to work. They took the boy's stomach and plunged it into a vessel of alcohol, where it remained undisturbed for forty-eight hours. Then the alcohol was poured off and filtered. The residue left by the filtering process was to supply the evidence of poisoning or non-poisoning. To remove from the residue everything other than alkaloids, it was treated successively with warm alcohol, tartaric acid, ether, and chloroform. Afterwards it only remained to find out what this alkaloid was. The first test was to try an infinitesimal quantity on the tongue, and when this was done the peculiar tingling sensation led the analysts at once to suspect aconite. But there remained one more decisive test—the action on animals. A tiny portion injected under the skin of a mouse provided the necessary symptoms within two minutes. A few weeks later the dead boy's brother-in-law was hanged on the evidence thus obtained, for it was shown that the aconite was contained in the 'medicine' he had administered.

Another very virulent vegetable poison that has proved a common weapon of murderers is atropine, obtained from a plant known as the nightshade, or, alternatively, belladonna. In India, particularly, thousands of deaths are caused by it. By centuries of practice Hindoo poisoners have gained deadly precision in the use of it. Personal enemies, political rivals, and others

whose power is deemed too great are frequently 'removed' by its aid; not always killed, but, far worse, rendered imbecile by the frequent application of small doses. It is its deadly efficiency in softening the brain that makes atropine distinct from every other poison of its class. In England atropine-poisoning is mostly accidental, arising from chemists' mistakes in dispensing, and from the ignorance of children in chewing the bright-red berries and the leaves of the belladonna-plant. The symptoms are very similar to those of rabies or of delirium tremens. Curiously enough, the only effective antidote in such cases is pilocarpine, which is itself a poisonous alkaloid.

In searching for atropine the analyst has to-day the choice of several chemical tests, but he usually ignores all of them in favour of the infinitely more delicate and more modern physiological test. Some animal—usually a rat—is taken, and a tiny portion of the mysterious residue, dissolved in water, is applied to its eyelid. If in the water there is only one part in every 130,000 atropine, the rat's eyes will commence to dilate in a most remarkable manner. Indeed, poisoning by atropine can usually be identified by the same sign in the eyes of the victim, for the dilation will continue long after death, and cannot be effectively interfered with by any other drug known.

The search for every other kind of vegetable alkaloid poison is prosecuted in the same way—that is, by soaking the stomach and its contents in alcohol, and afterwards obtaining a residue. This residue, steeped in ether or chloroform, yields into the liquid any alkaloid poison it contains, and the ether or the chloroform, being mixed with a solution of gold or platinum salt, gives up the alkaloid in a solid form. Then there remains a particular test for each possible poison. To find strychnine, for instance, a small part of the residue would be placed on a porcelain plate along with an equal quantity of chromate of potash. A drop of strong sulphuric acid is added, and then, if strychnine is really present, the whole mixture at once turns a rich blue, changing rapidly to purple, and then to red. The chief difficulty in proving strychnine-poisoning lies in the minute quantity that suffices to cause death. Half-a-grain has proved a fatal dose, and this quantity would spread to every organ and tissue in the body.

Another well-known vegetable poison is morphia, but here the difficulties of the chemists are decidedly less. For without great difficulty they can detect the presence of even one-twenty-thousandth part of a grain! The usual residue having been obtained, an addition of iodic acid is made, and then, should morphia be present, the whole at once turns blue when a little starch-paste is added. Alternatively, chloride of zinc may be added, and the mixture, when heated, produces a beautiful and lasting green colour.

Apart from vegetable poisons, acids cause the next largest number of deaths. But such poisons are not favoured except by suicides, for they invariably leave easily distinguished traces, and, because of this, trouble chemical-analysts but little.

But on the Continent metallic poisons are greatly used, and arsenic is the favourite. The peculiarity of this substance is that if it is taken in gradually increasing doses the consumer often becomes immune from its ill effects. Another remarkable point is its preservative effect on the human body. A woman poisoned by arsenic, when exhumed after eleven months, was found quite unchanged, and her case was the rule rather than the exception.

In Great Britain a common use for arsenic is in poisonous fly-papers, and this has led to many accidents and to at least one murder. A brief *résumé* of the scientific evidence well illustrates our modern methods of detecting arsenic-poisoning.

The victim died after thirteen days, apparently from a severe attack of stomach derangement. For this trouble his doctor had treated him, with every appearance of success, and death was quite unexpected. But it afterwards transpired that his wife had been soaking 'fly-papers' in water, and then mixing the water with her husband's food and medicine.

So the analysts were asked to find out definitely whether or not there was sufficient arsenic in the man's body to have caused death. This they attempted by soaking small portions of the body in acid, and afterwards adding to the solution hydrogen sulphate. This yielded a yellow substance which, when heated, partly disappeared, leaving behind only a few bright metallic beads. But three metals in the world would have given such a result—cadmium, antimony, and arsenic. The next step, therefore, was to prove that cadmium and antimony did *not* cause the phenomenon. Cadmium was eliminated first. A quantity of the acid in which pieces of the dead body had been soaked was poured into a receptacle, and boiled. In it was placed a piece of copper, and the copper immediately became covered with a gray film. It was dried, placed in a glass tube, and heated, when a ring of crystals appeared. Cadmium could not have produced such a result, so it was eliminated.

The final test was now approached. A few pieces of zinc were placed in a flask, and vitriol was added. This gave off hydrogen gas, which was tested and proved pure. Then a portion of the body-soaked acid was added to the zinc-and-vitriol flask, and the hydrogen-gas was lit. Over the flame a fragment of porcelain was held, and a black spot of arsenic soot was quickly deposited. Since antimony could not have given such a result, arsenic was proved beyond all possible doubt.

Such, then, are the modern methods of detect-

ing poison and poisoners. Successful as they are, science will yet improve upon them. For even to-day we have very, very few men thoroughly competent to conduct such investigations.

And, again, the method of deciding what constitutes a fatal dose of any given poison is more than a little crude whenever a difficult

case, or one for which there is no precedent, arises.

The general principle is this: if a cat weighing ten pounds just recovers from the injection of one-fifth of a grain of arsenic, a man weighing ten stones should just recover from a dose fourteen times as large.

SHELVERDENE'S PLOT.

CHAPTER I.—*continued.*

v.

SPANTON laid down the mallet and the wedges, and came and took the child by her arm. She leaned from him, setting her lips; at which he swept her from the floor and carried her, hard put to, I would vow, not to whisper a word of comfort to her. But the stake was too grave for that.

He bore her to the Boot, thrusting the chair aside; and then there was a pause, he and the two troopers looking from one another to me—the reason being that they knew no more surely than I the proper manner of putting to the Boot.

'Haste—doff her shoe, and in,' I urged them.

Purtlin, the elder trooper, took the shoe from her left foot, slipping off the hose also, and lifting the skirt of her gown beyond her knee and tucking it beneath Spanton's arm. She tried no struggle, and for the moment that she was held poised thus seemed not even to stir, her arms hanging, her head against Spanton's breast-plate, her bared leg straight down by his riding-boot, and so white and slender, with a little slim foot very pretty, and all so babyish, that to see it nauseated me with myself; and had it not been that I was imagining the voice of Louis's mother imploring me, and that I was certain I should not go too far, I should have given up the scheme there and then.

Spanton lowered the child, and her leg was in the Boot, Purtlin stooping and holding the limb by the knee, that she could not withdraw it. Stretching his free hand to the wedges, he slid one to him and slipped it in by the side of her leg, which, however, was so slight as to let the wedge drop a long way down. Whereat he took another, and placed that between her leg and the first; yet this, too, fitted but loosely.

Something which I believed to have been told me occurred to me.

'The wedges are wrong. They should be more at the back of the leg,' I said.

'Nay, under your Honour's favour,' replied Hodgett, the second trooper, who now was holding the mallet. 'For how, then, can I strike?'

Well, since he would not strike, what matter? So I let it be.

'Where is Kyle Cleod?' I said to the maid.

'Now, mark thee, child—Hodgett, lift the hammer—now, mark thee, child, an thou sayest not this instant, thy leg shall be broke to pieces.'

She gave no answer, but set her teeth and shut her eyes; and her hand nearer me held a corner of Spanton's coat, to help her to endure.

Averting my gaze in blank hopelessness, I allowed it to rove to the window; and the murk of the outside night wrought upon me. Somewhere therein was Louis, dead by now. And yet, it might be, not dead—able to be brought to me scanty harmed, to greet me with his quick, fond smile, if this child would but speak, this child who was striving for his death. I stood. Scarce could I keep my feet, the beating of my armpit was so poignant and so dazing. But a demon had me.

'Strike,' I said to Hodgett, and my tone told him this was no play.

He looked at me, astonished; and I was aware of Spanton's face turned my way in protest.

'Strike, Hodgett,' I said.

He raised the hammer higher—and hesitated. Then his arms stiffened; he held it motionless. I felt my fury blaze. Yet some fleeting vestige of self-control enabled me to speak not to him, but to the child, giving each of them a last chance.

'Tell me,' I cried to her, 'or instantly shall this man strike with the hammer! Tell me!'

Taking no heed of my demand, she opened her eyes, trying to look up into Spanton's face. She dragged at his sleeve.

'He doth intend it,' I heard her whisper. 'Kill me, pray, pray! Get me so from Shelverdene.'

Then, despite those piteous words, my remnant of control was gone. I thrust forth a finger menacingly at Hodgett. 'One blow. . . . Deal it!' I ordered.

'Sir—your Honour!' cried Spanton. 'Nay, nay!'

And Hodgett, lowering the hammer and scowling upon me, muttered he would not.

'You mutinous dogs!' I said chokingly. I went with a lurch to the chest whereon lay my pistols, and, holding one, swung round upon Hodgett. 'Strike, you traitor cur,' I called, 'or I shoot you for mutiny.'

For a space, giving me a look of sudden, bold hatred, the like of which I had never dreamed to see from one of my own troopers, he plainly weighed his life against other things. Then, 'Tis your Honour shall answer to Heaven for this, not I,' he said, and whipped aloft the hammer and smote savagely upon the inner wedge.

There was a shriek from the child, the piercingest, most echoing, most awful sound possible to hear, and her head fell on her shoulder, her senses gone.

I laid the pistol on the table, and walked to, and leaned against, the window-sill, my face to the night.

'Spanton,' I said, 'if I am shot in the back, I deserve it, and care not, and will forgive any that does it.'

'Your Honour!' cried the voices of the three honest fellows behind me. And Hodgett added, 'I bore it ill, your Honour, yet I am your Honour's faithful man.'

'When she is free of the Boot,' I said, 'place her on my bed, Spanton, and strive to win her round with brandy, for she may die. And, Spanton—send straightway for Dr Travers, and for her father, Mr Denis Irby, at the house where Ensign Latour is. . . . Bid Mr Irby bring his rapier or duello-pistols and a friend. . . . He will not want to wait for morning,' I ended bitterly.

'Ay, sir—a wedge fell to the floor—'there, she is free now, and,'—He broke off with an exclamation. 'Your Honour, the wedge was on her ankle, and a splinter has drove right in. Look, your Honour.'

'No, take her!' I said, staring into the darkness.

VI.

They went away, and I endeavoured to force my mind from what I had done, and to mourn undistracted for Louis. Presently I caught the drumming of hoofs—the first of the search-parties returning. For a while it sounded no nearer; then of a sudden it was very close. I was descried against the light of the room, and from the midst of the advance there rang out the voice of Louis, excited, gay, and eager to reassure me: 'Sir! Sir! Ho, sir!'

I bent forward; and into the illumined space beneath the window rode the band, and drew rein—half-a-dozen troopers, and, sitting behind one of them, Louis, hatless, and clad, above the belt, only in his coat, as I perceived from its gaping open and showing his bare body. None the less he waved his hand in bright-spirited salutation, with just that fond smile which I had recalled, believing 'twould never again greet me.

With devout thankfulness I cried his name, repeating it two or three times. Then, to screen my emotion, I said abruptly to the men, 'This rescue was well done by you boys.' For, from

the prompt advantage which several took of the light to examine themselves and their mounts for trivial wounds, I could tell it had been a rescue with plying sword.

'Ay, sir, indeed 'twas well done,' said Louis. 'There shall be a purse of guineas for these lads and for Spanton, who sent them scouring; and the best corn we have for two other of my helpers, that I think will trot hither presently—Raylish's horse and mine.' He laughed merrily. 'Sir, in truth the discovery of me was strange. And none too soon,' he added, suddenly graver.

'What befell?'

He took a deep breath, and poured forth the tale. 'Kyle Cleod brought me to a hollow by the river. He muffled my mouth, stripped my shoulders, and tied me to a tree to beat me ere he hanged me—all this without a spark of light, for fear that should betray him. He gave me one lash'—Louis grimaced—'and then was there a galloping on the turf. I knew 'twas my gray following me, with Raylish's horse. They were smarted by pistol-balls in the attack, and broke away when we were forced from the saddle.

'Kyle guessed the beasts were ours, and spoke a quick order to his fellows—not to shoot, I deem. But one on the edge of the dell loosed his pistol. These fine lads saw the flash, and were upon us like the very wind. They cut down four of the enemy—though Kyle slipped them again. . . . Four, sir, of those pests.' Louis's voice became wheedling, in anticipation of the talk I should have with him when we were alone. 'So there is nothing to regret, eh, sir!'

'Dismount. Come hither,' I said harshly.

I faced round to the empty room, and moved a few steps. *Nothing to regret!* The little maid seemed yet to stand before me, so pretty, so intrepid, so hopelessly in my power.

I caught at my lips, but a sob broke from them before I contrived to steady myself to receive Louis.

(Continued on page 667.)

DAWN.

(Suggested by Farquharson's picture of that name.)

As if across the waters of a lake,
Kissed into ripples by a gentle wind,
A sleeping bird had started into flight,
And, driven by an unknown strong desire,
Had pilgrimed forth, upon a vague command,
To seek some dim, unapprehended good,
Half-seen, half-felt, inadequately known,
And found a glorious God, a mighty sun,
Lighting its world into new loveliness—

So went my soul forth from the mists of youth,
From doubts and darkness, questionings and fears,
And found its God, and with Him peace at last—
Peace, and a faith that quieted my heart,
And, to complete and perfect everything,
His kingliest gift, the fire and gold of love.

ALINE BLAKE.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THOMAS WARD, THE VALET PRIME MINISTER.

By ARTHUR L. HAYWARD.

I.

SOME seventy years ago a small, shrewd figure passed across the stage of European politics. It was Thomas Ward, Prime Minister of the Duchy of Parma, Ambassador to the Court of Vienna, and son of a Yorkshire labourer. In that age of romance and revolution there were few figures more romantic or less revolutionary. Unmoved by ambition, or, indeed, by any other emotion than that loyalty which a good servant should show towards his master, Ward rose from the stable to the Council Boards of Europe, indifferent to his personal success or failure, ready and willing to return, when the play of politics was over, to that condition of life from which he had started. English to the backbone, with the typical Englishman's half-humorous contempt for all that is foreign, he fought for his master's interests in the diplomatic world with the unmoved, inscrutable face of a well-trained lackey. 'A heaven-born diplomatist,' said Metternich; 'one of the most remarkable men of the age,' commented Palmerston; but 'it is not for the likes of me to be meddling in the affairs of princes,' was Ward's opinion about himself. Exercising the same scrupulous attention to his master's politics as to his master's wardrobe, this extraordinary man helped him through untold difficulties, only to receive in the end the usual reward of the Bourbons for loyalty and courage—ingratitude.

Thomas Ward was born at York, 9th October 1810. His father was stud-groom to a trainer in that city, but showed so little affection for his family that Tom ran away at the age of seven, and spent the next five years with his grandfather at the quiet little town of Howden, in the same county. After a couple of years' experience as a stable-lad, being then fourteen, he was sent with a horse to Vienna, where he entered the service of Prince Aloys von Lichtenstein. He had been in this nobleman's employment a year or two when fate placed the first trump card in his hand, and transferred him to the service of Charles Louis, Duke of Lucca, brother-in-law of the Emperor of Austria, and a prince of the House of Bourbon.

There was nothing meteoric about Ward's

early career in the service of his new master. He was a smart lad, invariably clean and tidy, and diligent in his work. In a year or two he attracted the attention of the duke, who took him from the stable and made him his under-valet. Recommended by his sterling honesty and reliability, he steadily rose in his place until, in 1836, he became Charles Louis's confidential attendant, and, as such, an impartial and impassive spectator of the remarkable world of European society.

II.

At that time Lucca was the most fashionable resort in Europe. The Riviera and other modern centres were then unexploited, and it was in the little duchy of Lucca that the galaxy of society assembled. Princes and beauties, soldiers and statesmen, flocked to the brilliant Bourbon Court; and Ward, who was host to the princely servants, just as his master was host to his princely guests, acquired a unique insight into the private as well as the public doings of every one of fame and fashion. He had learned Italian in his intercourse with the highest circles, and spoke it fluently with a cultured accent, in strange contrast to the Yorkshire dialect which was his only mode of expression in English. He spoke German and French too, but not with the same correctness.

The very existence of the duchy of Lucca is now barely remembered. A mere enumeration of the remarkable political relationships succeeding the Great Peace of 1815 is confusing. The situation was, however, briefly this: In his infancy Charles Louis had been given by Napoleon the kingdom of Etruria—a phantom realm which soon dissolved. When a fresh shuffle of kingdoms, dukedoms, and royal wives took place, he was dealt the duchy of Lucca, together with Maria Theresa, the beautiful princess of the House of Savoy. But this was not all. Napoleon's widow, the Empress Marie Louise, had been granted the duchy of Parma, and at her death this was to pass to Charles Louis, who would then hand over his duchy of Lucca to the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

It was this supreme indifference to the populace of these unfortunate principalities, who were

thus bandied about from one ruler to another, which helped the cause of Italian unity, espoused, as it was later, by men of such different calibre as Cavour and Mazzini.

For six or seven years Thomas Ward occupied his confidential post near the duke's person, seeing and hearing everybody who was anybody in Europe, and gleaning a fund of private and confidential information which was terrible in its exhaustiveness. His knowledge of the world and its doings was further increased by several visits he paid with his master to the crowned heads of Europe, one of these being to Windsor Castle, where he saw the young Queen to whom he ever in his heart owned allegiance as the sovereign of his native land. It was on this occasion that the duke felt aggrieved because, on his being invited to dine with the Queen, the invitation came by card instead of by letter, as was the etiquette towards reigning princes. Lord Palmerston summed the matter up concisely in a note to the Queen, in which he explained the duke's grievance. 'Your Majesty may think this a small matter, but the duke is a small sovereign.'

Ward was also sent on yearly trips to England in order to buy horses for the ducal stables, and perform such errands as might occur to his master. On these occasions he never failed to visit his old grandfather at Howden, and dazzle the simple Yorkshire folk with stories of the great doings of great personages.

III.

A grave crisis occurred in the affairs of Charles Louis in 1843. Although the duke was amply provided for by the various treaties which guaranteed his throne, his unbounded extravagance and hospitality proved too heavy a burden on the revenues, and he found himself embarrassed to an appalling degree. He was obliged to sell the magnificent collection of Old Masters which adorned his palace walls to pay for one of his visits to England. Yet even such expedients were of little avail. Lacking the courage and ability to retrench his expenses or extricate himself from his difficulties, he was soon plunged in a gloomy despair which bordered upon madness, and helped but little to ease the desperate situation.

It was nothing short of a stroke of genius which led the duchess to confide in Ward. His unswerving loyalty, his unblemished integrity and imperturbable demeanour, pointed him out as the one man in that Court of unscrupulous time-servers who could be relied upon in an emergency. Maria Theresa told him everything, though it was no news. There were none of the great folk who had thronged the palace and partaken of their lavish hospitality who would help the royal pair in their hour of need—none whom she could trust as she trusted this foreign valet.

Ward knew the people of Lucca well. 'They are a horrid lot,' he remarked. As for the great men of Europe, to her amazement the duchess heard from her servant such an astounding revelation of the inner lives and the political obligations of all who had crowded her *salons* that she was dumbfounded at the omniscience of her humbly born adviser.

According to Ward, the only person who could come to Charles Louis's aid was the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, but to approach him was a matter requiring the utmost delicacy. There was no one save Ward to undertake the task. No written instructions could be given, and, furnished with a mere letter of introduction, Ward set out on his first diplomatic mission. He was successful. He described his master's difficulties in so lucid a manner and with such honest deference that he overcame the archduke's natural repugnance to dealing with a domestic in matters so important. The necessary help was given, and Ward returned triumphantly to Lucca. This was the beginning of his diplomatic career. He had earned the duke's confidence, and continued to serve him as an intimate counsellor. Much against Ward's will, in 1847 the duke insisted upon making him a baron, and gave him a portfolio as Minister of Finance.

Titles and honours meant nothing to Thomas Ward. He made no attempt to enjoy any of the privileges to which his rank entitled him. His official position gave him almost plenary power in the little dukedom; but every day, so soon as his office-work was done, he retired to his own modest house, and spent his leisure hours in the company of his wife, a Viennese girl, Louisa Genthner, of as humble station and quiet tastes as himself. He was much too shrewd a man to find entertainment in the Court of Lucca. The ignorance of even the highest classes was colossal; indeed, for those who claimed to have any part in the government of a people it was criminal. The most elementary facts of contemporary history, geography, and science were unknown.

IV.

In 1847 the ex-Empress Marie Louise died, and, under the arrangement already described, the duchy of Parma reverted to Charles Louis, whilst that of Lucca passed to Tuscany. Ward was sent to Florence to arrange the transfer, with strict injunctions to make as satisfactory financial conditions for his master as lay in his power.

Whilst he was on this mission the great revolutionary tempest of 1848 swept across Europe. When such men as Metternich fell, there is little wonder that the princelets of Italy trembled. Charles Louis of Parma, as he had now become, was ill-fitted to face the storm. Ward, who hastened to his aid, found him terrified and

impotent, threatened by his subjects and abandoned by his counsellors. But the mere presence of his ex-servant restored the confidence of the duke. Ward knew the people with whom he had to deal. Judicious threats, and still more judicious scattering of gold from the palace windows, soon changed a howling mob into an enthusiastic crowd.

But the crisis was only delayed. The spirit of 1848 was something better and nobler than the ignorant spite of an ignorant mob. The ideals of Cavour, of Mazzini, of Garibaldi, of the countless martyrs like the Bandieras, were stirring the peninsula from Sicily to the Alps. The cause of Absolutism was dying, and, labour as he would, the faithful servant of that cause could do but little against the new-born spirit of liberty. The end was not yet, however. Ward, who had hitherto been only squabbling in the little arena of petty Italian politics, now entered a larger ring, and against no less an antagonist than Cavour. He knew that the welfare of the dukedom depended on something more than the plaudits of a piazza crowd; he was acute enough to perceive that his master's real enemy was Sardinia, and that nothing but the boldest of measures would avail.

With consummate bluff Ward threatened Cavour with British intervention if Parma's independence were not recognised. Needless to say, he had no authority whatever for saying this, and Cavour knew he had no authority. Ward was in Piedmontese territory when he made this threat, and Cavour retaliated by sending him his passport. Ward claimed that he was a British subject—an amazing piece of impudence—and was thus immune from Cavour's jurisdiction; but he hastened back to Parma, aroused his master to the danger of the situation, and hurried him away in disguise to France, whence they proceeded to Weistropp, in Saxony.

This change of fortune meant little to a man of Ward's calibre. Whether as a menial or as a Minister, he had always been his master's faithful servant; and now that troublous times had come, he returned once more to the clothes-brush, and tended his old patron as loyally and carefully as ever.

v.

Once again, however, the tide of misfortune was on the turn. Marshal Radetzky, then over eighty years of age, culminated a vigorous campaign against Sardinia with the overwhelming victory of Novara, and for the time being the cause of Italian unity was crushed, and another lease of life secured for the small potentates.

In the reaction from the events of 1848 Ward entered European politics. He was appointed to the Court of Vienna as *chargé-d'affaires* for the duchy of Parma. Grave political events necessitated his recall, however, after a short sojourn in the capital.

Charles Louis had long meant to abdicate, and saw his opportunity in the reconstruction of his principality after Novara. Parma was to be a sovereign state, and Ward determined that no effort of his should be lacking to ensure the prosperity of its ruler. He viewed politics from a unique standpoint. Whatever he did was part of his service. The same loyalty, the same self-denial, the same whole-hearted application that a faithful servant devotes to his master's person were to be given to his master's affairs of State. Of his own sympathies and convictions he took no heed whatever—they were as apart from his duties as a Minister as they had been during his lackey days. It is in no sense derogatory to say that he was a domestic always—gifted and resourceful, it is true; but still a domestic. Indeed, he gloried in the fact!

Ward's first duty on his return to Parma was to arrange for the abdication of his old master, Charles Louis, and prepare for his son, who succeeded under the title of Charles III. This young man at the time was staying with the Marquess of Douglas at Arran, and thither Ward went to hand over the duchy. Passing through Yorkshire on his way, he stopped at Howden, and made his simple relatives breathless at the sight of the crosses and decorations which had been forced upon him at one time or another during his career.

Ward brought Charles III., a handsome young man of twenty-six, back with him to Parma. 'He is a born prince,' wrote Ward; 'one of the best sovereigns in Italy.' Time showed, however, that he was mistaken in this judgment of his new master. They did not stay long in the capital, for Charles went off to win his spurs under old Radetzky, whilst Ward repaired to Vienna, from which city he governed Parma with a strong but just rule. His success at the Court of Vienna was considerable. Honours were showered upon him; he was given the Iron Cross of Austria by Francis Joseph, who had just succeeded to the throne. It was a decoration unique for one so young, and of such origin; but Ward had no use for such gew-gaws. 'As to titles and honours,' he wrote, 'I really do not know what to make of them, as they are of no use but for a show, such as a Court ball, and these come but seldom.'

It was at Vienna that Ward reached the zenith of his diplomatic career. The Austrian Minister Schwarzenberg had conceived the policy of forming a union of the absolute states of Tuscany, Parma, and Modena, under the tutelage of Austria and the patronage of the Pope. The object of this, of course, was to burke the rising spirit of revolt which was already straining to drive out the foreigner, and make Italy free and united. Ward concurred in this scheme, rather because he was the servant of one of the rulers to profit by such a union than because he was indifferent to the wishes of the people concerned. Provided

that Parma were generously treated, Ward would lend his influence in Italy to further the designs of Schwarzenberg. The latter was at first inclined to pay little heed to Ward's demands, but he was too wise a diplomat not to perceive very soon that without the Englishman's help his scheme could never be accomplished. Once again Ward won the day, and by this victory placed himself at the very head of the diplomatists at the Court of Vienna.

VI.

Meanwhile Charles had taken up his residence in Parma, and begun to lead a life of extravagance and dissipation ill-suited to one who held his throne on so precarious a tenure. Indeed, the city of Parma, under his auspices, had more the atmosphere of a comic opera than that of a town on the brink of revolution.

Charles was not bad by nature. In that age of oppression, when the infamous Bourbons of Naples were inflicting physical tortures on their political prisoners—tortures which recalled those of the worst days of the darkest ages—it is remarkable that not a single sentence of death was passed during Charles's reign. But there was a strain of madness in him which led to excesses and ridiculous exhibitions of a most undignified nature. He would stroll about the streets of his capital swishing his cane and striking harmless pedestrians when and where they least expected an assault. Dressed as a postillion, he would dash through the city at full gallop, sounding a discordant horn with all his might. Many a summer night he spent asleep on his palace steps, surrounded by ragamuffins and jeering revellers. Audiences with his Ministers he liked to hold in the dressing-room of his latest favourite of the ballet. For his people he cared nothing. 'They are all right so long as they have a theatre,' he would say.

It can be well imagined how offensive such a state of affairs must have been to a populace who were but waiting the signal to cast him and his from the throne, and proclaim their unity with the great Italian nation.

In the Court itself petty intrigues soon reached such a pitch that Ward was summoned from Vienna to set his master's house in order. He had placed several trusty friends about the duke's person, men whom he had put into responsible positions, much to the disgust of the native place-seekers. These kept him apprised of the state of affairs, and when Ward returned he soon set matters as right as was possible with such a master and in such a period. For the end was at hand; the patience of the people had reached the breaking-point.

On the afternoon of 26th March 1854 Charles III. was strolling down the Via Santa Lucia, when he observed some girls seated in a window. He stopped to smile at them, and was waving

his hand in a gay farewell, when suddenly a man rushed out from a passage and hurled himself against the duke. The next moment, with a cry of 'Sacramento! sacramento!' Charles fell back with a stiletto buried in his body. He was carried fainting to the palace, where, after a night of agony, he expired the next morning, murmuring, as the breath left his body, 'I must make ready for the great journey!' He was but thirty-one years of age.

VII.

With the death of his master the whole edifice of Ward's policy came clattering about his head. The very day the duke died his widow issued a proclamation announcing the succession of their son Robert, and the dismissal of Ward and all his colleagues. The catastrophe was complete, and to a smaller man than Ward would have been overwhelming. But a nature so devoid of any trace of ambition could regard the incident as regrettable only on account of the tragedy involved in his master's death. As a loyal and devoted servant Ward naturally lamented what had occurred, but the loss of his own prestige and influence was merely what one might expect upon the occasion of losing a situation, whether it be that of valet or Prime Minister!

The great days were over. Ward and his wife retired to a farm which he had bought near Vienna, and there he lived for five years in the utmost tranquillity and obscurity. On 5th October 1858 he died at the early age of forty-eight, thus missing by a couple of years the sight of that United Italy which he had striven so hard to prevent. As Minister or servant, diplomatist or exile, he served his masters with a devotion which cannot but call for admiration. In the midst of the subtlest intrigues he maintained the single-minded simplicity of a country schoolboy. He realised to the full the remarkable career which fate had awarded him. 'Think of a boy,' he writes, 'torn from school in the ninth year of his age, placed in a livery-stable without education, and then see him placed amidst the affairs of Europe, concluding treaties!'

Considering the opportunities he had, and the examples of gross speculation and shameless jobbery on all sides of him, it is to his credit that Ward should have made so little of his chances. He obtained several concessions, but he was never a wealthy man. Indeed, the worst his enemies have been able to say against him amounts to little more than that he served his masters, rightly or wrongly, regardless of consequences and heedless of the political aspirations of those whom he was called to govern. Wealth, advancement, honours—all were matters of indifference to him. So long as he felt that he was doing his duty as a good servant, Thomas Ward had no other ambition or ideal in his life.

MIRIAM DECIDES.

PART II.

III.

THERE was an interval of three weeks between the afternoon of Miriam's At Home and the final struggle for victory between the very dissimilar rivals. During those weeks I waited impatiently for some definite movement, but so far as I could follow the game from my very badly placed position nothing happened at all. I met Miriam occasionally, and noted the puzzled uncertainty in her eyes. I made excuses for talking to Cowen in his club, and found him irritable and more than usually disinclined for courtesy and gossip; and, lastly, I questioned Reggie as to his campaign, without much success. I was driven steadily back on the unpalatable conclusion that no one of the principals was interested in my curiosity, and, unflattering though their attitude was, it convinced me that each one of them recognised a coming crisis, and had no time to worry about an amiable nobody. I say amiable in self-defence. Probably their description was less flattering. Certainly I should find it difficult to excuse the shameless eavesdropping which enabled me to witness the closing scenes of the little drama. Difficult, do I say? Impossible would be truer. Having admitted so much, I will abandon the attempt and merely confess the truth. I was far too deeply interested to consider for a moment an honest withdrawal.

We were all at the Brillingford place for the week-end. It was what the newspaper men call a brilliant and select party of beautiful ladies and distinguished men, and, like all other week-end parties, it was very mixed, very boisterous, and very crowded. In such an atmosphere Reggie Santella is at home, and he organises with devastating energy all kinds of high-spirited games, from hunt-the-slipper to amateur theatricals. Miriam, as might be expected of a girl of twenty, finds this kind of thing highly exciting, and is not yet grown-up enough to prefer bridge to dancing. I don't know that I need elaborate the situation. On the one hand you have youth, high spirits, thoughtless gaiety, and Reggie and Miriam; on the other you have Alan Cowen and the hovering menace of his engagement-ring. So much was on the table. The only question remaining to be settled was, which of the two sides could count on love as an ally? I didn't know. I question whether Miriam did. Reggie felt sure he did, and Alan Cowen was beginning to realise that his own definite assumptions were questionable. And there we all were.

On the Sunday evening I was sitting in the summer-house at the edge of the lawn thinking about engagement-rings and broken promises,

when two young people crossed the lawn and sat down on the seat which Providence had placed just within hearing. We will not enter again on the question of my excuses. I stayed where I was, and watched. Reggie was whispering, and from where I sat it was impossible to distinguish words; but neither was it necessary. I understood perfectly what was happening. After two days of brilliant demonstration, Reggie was punctuating his experiment by an impassioned appeal and the old argument. Moreover, Miriam was listening. When a girl as honest as Miriam condescends to listen to such an appeal, it is safe to assume a half-surrender. The first intoxication of romantic devotion to strength as shown by a self-made man was proving unequal to the steady disappointments of ordinary social exchanges. In place of the capable, dominating personality which had captured her emotion, Miriam was directing her attention to the very different spectacle presented by a stolid, imperfectly civilised outsider staggering round in the mazes of a world he is never likely to understand, Reggie Santella always hovering near her in a kind of animated demonstration of what a man can do to make life easy and exciting—underlining by a hundred little courtesies and attentions all the blunders of the other.

IV.

Miriam leaned nearer to Reggie. The two figures blended into one in the half-light, and a coming kiss cast its shadow before. Another moment, and Cowen's fate would have been sealed. Another moment—but the man arrived. 'Miriam,' he said harshly, 'you forgot to bring a wrap.'

The two young people sprang to their feet, betraying, as young people do, their guilty feeling. Miriam shivered a little, and accepted without protest the attentions of her fiancé as he adjusted her cloak. Reggie stood by in angry discomfort. It was an embarrassing situation for him, undoubtedly. Another moment . . . but a miss is sometimes better than a mile. It would have been so simple to explain to Cowen that Miriam desired her freedom, but she had not yet definitely admitted the desire, and Santella's hands were tied.

'If you will excuse me,' he said, 'I'll find some one who'll play billiards. A grand night, isn't it, Cowen?' He turned away.

'One moment, Mr Santella,' said Cowen. Reggie came back willingly. His rival's tone was menacing, and I know what delight the prospect of a quarrel must have given Reggie in his disappointment. 'I am not a patient man,'

continued Cowen grimly, 'and I have had enough of this comedy. More than enough. Miriam has got to decide here and now which of us is to have the right to claim her.'

Reggie laughed lightly. 'Really, Cowen,' he said, 'your methods are delightfully direct and, considering the engagement-ring Miriam wears, rather ridiculous. You'——

'Don't be a liar as well as a fool,' said Cowen roughly.

There was a silence which lasted a very long time after this insulting speech. Reggie could not resent it, for Miriam knew it to be based on truth. He had ignored the engagement-ring when they were alone, and his diplomatic speech was pretence.

'You are a brutal hitter, Cowen,' he said at last. 'I should like to save Miriam all I can, but if you will have it I cannot object. I love her, and I believe she loves me. You can never make her happy. I can. What have you to say about it?'

Cowen turned to Miriam. 'Give me the ring,' he said, then added impatiently as Miriam hesitated, 'Give it to me.' He held it in his hand for a moment, and then threw it from him. No one moved until the last sounds of its fall were lost in silence. 'It is gone,' he said. 'You are free, Miriam. I want no unwilling wife. If you love Santella, go to him.'

In my secure retreat I moved restlessly. What a man! His every action was a mistake, and apparently he was too blind to see.

Miriam, already doubtful between two conflicting appeals, was having the worst side of her first choice thrust roughly under her notice. Unyielding, obstinate, brutally disregarding the natural need of a young girl for sympathetic understanding, Cowen was forcing her away from him. I began to feel sorry for him, standing there in his disastrous independence, disdainful of just the weapons he should have used. I have never liked the man, but I longed to shout a warning to him. If he continued as he had begun, he had not a dog's chance.

'Miriam darling,' said Reggie in an eager voice which was not quite under control, 'I am waiting. Will you come to me? I—I love you.'

v.

I waited, eyes straining against the darkness, to catch the first movement on Miriam's part; but none came. She stood perfectly still, waiting for something more, something which only a woman could understand. The silence became unbearable. I felt it, even I, and I knew what it must be to those others. Strangely enough, it was Cowen who gave the first cry of distress.

'Choose, girl!' he said harshly. 'I cannot bear much more. Don't you see how hard it is

for me to keep my hands off him? Choose quickly, before I shake the life out of the impudent young devil!'

Reggie cried out angrily, and sprang forward, but Miriam moved at last.

'Be quiet, Reggie,' she said, and then ignored him.—'Alan, if you care for me so much, why don't you try to make things easier for me?'

I can understand Reggie's disappointment and his anger at Cowen's insolent contempt, but I cannot excuse his next speech. It was a mistake, and he should have recognised that mistakes at such a time are fatal.

'Don't ask him, Miriam,' he said. 'Don't you realise the fellow hasn't a notion that anybody else exists besides himself? He never had!'

The unconcern of the other two was a crushing comment on this speech. They ignored it.

'I have tried, Miriam,' said Cowen, 'and I have failed. That is why I give you your freedom. Your happiness is my only concern, and I thought that my love would show me how to make you happy. I was wrong, perhaps. I am not equal to the task; but at least I am strong enough to get out of the way.'

When I heard that speech I recognised that the crucial period was past and the climax reached. When a dogmatic man of masterful disposition attains to deep humility before the girl he loves, his battle is ended. So long as Alan Cowen held on to the truth he was grasping he would hold the key to Miriam's heart. Trouble there might be in store for them, and difficulty; but for the first time in my experience of him Cowen was demonstrating a willingness to realise that the method which conquers the world is powerless against a woman's heart; and with such a man to understand is to conquer.

'Reggie,' said Miriam, turning to the boy who had in a brief quarter of an hour passed from conquest to defeat, 'please leave us.'

He went without a word. There was no appeal against so gentle a verdict. I made cautious preparations for departure, too. My curiosity is strong, but my moral code is not lax enough to allow me to disregard the rule which brings the curtain down on the stage at this point in a play. As I edged away in the shadows I heard just a part of Miriam's confession.

'I have not been very fair to you, dear,' she said; 'but I am going to change all that. You'll try to find my ring to-morrow, won't you? And I'll try'——

I made my escape, and heard no more. It was quite a long time before Miriam and her lover returned to the house, so I am glad I managed to get away in time.

Perhaps, after all, romance is personal and not subject to definition.

THE END.

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

VI.—THE GRAY RAT.*

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

IT would seem that the gray rat hailed originally from Persia, and that it first came to England from the Baltic early in the seventeenth century. Since then there has been a free exchange of gray rats all the world over. From every port where ships touch they have spread, steadily increasing in numbers from east to west till in many parts they have exterminated not a few of the native animals, just as, with their introduction to Great Britain, they speedily exterminated the original black rat, which was a far less repulsive creature.

The extraordinary power of survival of these animals is largely due to their ability to colonise, the rat millions of the thickly peopled centres being ever ready to send their pioneers into new country in quest of fortune. Their intelligent distribution follows in the wake of their numbers as a natural course of events, and their seemingly uncanny ability to locate new quarters is probably owing to the fact that the pioneers and forerunners leave a scent-trail behind them, which their fellow-citizens, uninvited, and probably unwished for, readily follow.

When once rats have begun to come to a place, they will continue to do so for so long as food exists there for them—a state of affairs which would seem to prove definitely that they follow in each other's steps, distributing themselves in such numbers as the quantity of available food alone determines.

It may take years for rats to penetrate into a region where food is scarce, whereas they occupy a fruitful territory in a veritable invading army, sweeping over the country in a wave of settlement. This is because any move of individual rats quickly becomes a general move; and the greater the number that settle in one locality, the greater is the number of the scent-trails leading to that locality and the stronger do these scent-trails become, till finally the drift may assume the form of a migration, the rodents moving in shoals from their original feeding-ground to one of greater promise. Many such migrations have been witnessed. The failing of food-supplies, or the superabundance of foes in one locality, quickly decides the rats to move elsewhere, but the rate of their going is governed

by necessity. If the food-supply gradually gives out, the rats gradually dwindle away; but should the famine be sudden, should the assault of their enemies be fierce and effective, should water or fire invade their territory, then they seek strength in their unity of purpose and migrate *en masse*. One can be quite sure, however, that they know where they are going, and the horde will very soon split up into communities distributed with due regard for the necessities of life, just as one can be quite sure that they will drift back into the evacuated territory immediately the conditions which led to their sudden abandonment of it ameliorate.

II.

Such an invasion of rats must, indeed, be a fearsome proposition for the fauna of the territory they invade. A single rat is plucky enough and fierce enough to attack any creature it imagines it can pull down, and rats possess a power of combination which is unparalleled in the animal world. A rat has only to utter a certain squeal in order to bring to the vicinity every one of his fellows within hearing, prepared to unite in a common attack, so that an army of rats sweeping the country leaves behind it an area of death and destruction.

Such rat armies, however, do not remain long united. They may travel together for the distance of a mile or more, but after that every hundred yards sees a considerable reduction in their numbers. The spreading and the redistribution commence immediately, but for several months thereafter every stream and ditch within the vicinity of the migration may harbour more rats than usual.

Many curious stories have been told about the gray rat's powers of prescience or preconception, and it is, of course, commonly believed that rats will leave a doomed ship, just as it is gruesomely said that a shark will follow a ship carrying a corpse. It is a matter of history that when, in 1887, a great fire broke out among some warehouses on the Thames Embankment, the rats were seen to leave the buildings in a closely packed army some hours before the fateful spark began its dread work, and, swimming together, were observed to put the river between themselves and the scene of the coming conflagration.

There is no doubt whatever that rats will leave the banks of a stream subject to sudden spate some time before the water rises to flood them out—even though the storm which causes

* Earlier articles in this series, published in the May, June, July, August, and September parts of *Chambers's Journal*, dealt with the Badger, the Pine-Martens, the Water-Rat, the Hedgehog, and the Brown Hare respectively.

the water to rise may have occurred some miles away, so that they can have had no apparent warning. A house in which I lived in Yorkshire was close to a small stream which came down from the moors, and along the banks of which many gray rats made their summer home. Invariably, an hour or so before this stream rose in flood, the rats could be heard under the floor of the house, having forsaken the banks of the burn for this more secure residence. The phenomenon was of such regular occurrence that it ceased to create any wonder, it merely being observed, on the rats being heard, that the brook was about to rise again.

III.

Gray rats penetrate to the most remote shooting-cabins in the heart of the hills; they are to be found comfortably established by mountain lochs and moorland tarns far distant from agricultural activities; in fact, it would be difficult to find any spot within the British Isles upon which the gray rat has not as yet obtruded its presence. Yet these millions, spread all over the country to the loneliest and wildest corners, are merely the overflow from our cities. Were it not that the great centres of population already harbour all the rats they can feed, there would be no country rats. Were all the urban rats destroyed by plague or by some other means, the country rats would throng back into the cities to take their place. The thought is rather a startling one—Great Britain is to-day so overwhelmed with rats that their teeming millions are crowded into the most remote corners of the island in order that all may find the wherewithal to live!

This fact should be borne in mind when one reads the estimates by authorities of the rat population of Great Britain, for, whereas it may be a comparatively simple matter to arrive at a roughly approximate estimate of the rat population of our cities, he would be a bold man, rather than a wise one, who attempted even to guess at the rat population of country areas. Everywhere where the plough has turned the earth, rats may be seen in scores about every storage building at the fall of dusk, and the scene is repeated even in the lonely glens and corries where the buzzard and the peregrine still hold their own. Can it be doubted for one moment that the gray rat, an alien to our shores, and two centuries ago unknown, is to-day overwhelmingly the most abundant of all our larger mammals?

These facts, together with such data as are forthcoming, serve to show that the rat peril is by no means a journalistic dream—serve further to suggest that the era of nature's unfailing remedy, disease, with all its ghastly possibilities, must be drawing near at hand, unless man steps in and by systematic and widespread destruction diverts the ordinary

course which nature would adopt in reducing the gray rat's numbers.

IV.

A good deal has been written of late setting forth actual figures of the damage done by rats, and of the peril they present in our midst by spreading disease through the medium of their parasites, or even by the contamination and filth of their own persons.

In this connection it may be as well to reiterate the fact that research has resulted in the discovery that the terrible bubonic plague, which at times reaches such horrifying dimensions in India and China, is communicated by rats to human beings by the medium of the rat flea, and it must be borne in mind that so long as rats remain with us in their present numbers we ourselves are assured no immunity. The plague is nature's plan of keeping the rat multitudes in check—otherwise they would overrun the whole earth—and the flea is nature's means of spreading the disease from rat to rat. Incidentally, it is also the instrument by which the infection is spread from rat to man.

Deaths from this plague in India alone reach many millions periodically, and occasional outbreaks of it occur in Britain, generally in our big seaport towns, where rat-infested ships come to harbour. Rats suffering from plague have been caught in England, and if once the epidemic got moving in earnest it would be virtually impossible to check it. Since 1914 rats have increased enormously in numbers, and here and there the rat population must already be so dense that the animals can be regarded as living 'under unclean conditions,' which in the case of the rat means disease.

As regards the material damage actually done by rats—the destruction of valuable materials that is taking place in every village and town of the British Isles—one needs only to picture the loathsome hordes to be seen swarming forth at the fall of dusk from every suitable harbourage where food for them exists. Rick-yards, knackeries, slaughter-houses, warehouses, docks, stores, sewers, shops—everywhere and anywhere that food-stuffs or filth exist—gray rats are to be found in numbers decided only by the shelter obtainable for them and the food-supply at hand.

'In a knackery in the north of England,' writes S. L. Bensusan, 'food was placed in a room to entice the entrance of rats, and at midnight the door of the room was closed. Next day men and terriers entered to destroy the spoilers, and over a quarter of a ton of rats were killed!'

In the first three months of 1919 Leicestershire made a return of sixty-five thousand rats killed, yet there was no appreciable lessening of their numbers in that county.

Dr A. E. Shipley estimates the rat population of Great Britain and Ireland to be equivalent to one rat for every human being; but this would seem to me a very conservative estimate. A large number of dwelling-houses harbour many more rats than they do human beings; farms, especially those having rick-yards attached, retain a rat retinue which outnumbers its human inhabitants by at least ten, and possibly fifty, to one. In our cities the walls of all too many human dwellings, of every factory, storehouse, and warehouse, harbour rats, while the animals congregate in thousands about slaughter-houses, refuse-dumps, and the like, to say nothing of the hordes that dwell in the underground sewers and culverts. It would seem, then, that the rat population of our cities far outnumbers the human population, and I have no doubt whatever that the balance in favour of the rat is even more marked in country areas, agricultural or otherwise. In many cases the rat population of a single barn would exceed the human inhabitants of the whole village; then we have the numerous rats living remote from man's habitations, in stream and hedge banks, together with those that take up their quarters in isolated barns.

V.

Two hundred millions would probably be a more accurate estimate of the rat population of Great Britain and Ireland; but taking it at Dr Shipley's conservative estimate of forty millions, and accepting another authority's pre-war calculation that each rat costs the country 7s. 6d. per annum, we are annually paying this creature the handsome sum of £15,000,000 for living in our midst! Dr Shipley himself reckons the damage done by rats as amounting to £10,000,000 annually, while Sir James Crichton-Brown's calculations agree with the sum of £15,000,000. In all probability only those rats living in granaries, wheat-stacks, and such places do damage averaging out at 7s. 6d. per rat; rats living in book-shops, hotels, furniture-stores, &c. probably do a great deal more, but this is liberally offset by the swarms of country rats that in summer do very little damage at all.

It is estimated that fires in America due to defective insulation of electric cables cost the country £3,000,000 per annum, and it is definitely proved that the majority of these fires are caused by the gnawing propensities of the gray rat. Fires are also produced by rats gnawing lead gas-pipes, and many disasters have occurred through their activities in this line. One American authority estimates that it costs large towns, such as Baltimore and Washington, four millions annually to maintain their rat battalions; and it must be borne in mind that, owing to the construction of American buildings, fires are a far more potent peril there than in this country.

In addition to gnawing cables, gas-pipes, books, and valuable ivories, rats have been known to gnaw the teats of pigs and goats, the feet of small children, and to destroy sucking-pigs and even calves. Nothing, indeed, not even man himself, is secure from them. In the main sewers of London it is customary for men to work in pairs, as owing to the size and numbers of the rats it is deemed unsafe for the workmen to venture singly into these dim corridors. Shelves and runways are provided for the rats, as at one time it was considered that they were of value as scavengers, though now it is generally realised that even amidst the filth of their choice these obnoxious creatures are of little or no service to man.

In ancient villages and old dwelling-houses generally the rats' subterranean tunnels tap the drains and the sewers, and thence passing into the walls of the buildings, allow foul gases to enter the living-rooms—in fact, to permeate the whole of the dwellings—a state of affairs which is doubtless the cause of sickness and disease. No wonder the pressure of public opinion has at last induced one or two of our lethargical health authorities to take steps for the systematic destruction of this enemy in our midst, and the movement is one in which each individual should consider himself or herself bound to be personally active. On no occasion should a gray rat be allowed to live if it is within our power to bring about its destruction.

VI.

It is of no use ridding a building of its rats unless, when this is done, steps are taken to prevent, or at least impede, the return of others. Ferrets and terriers probably afford the best method of getting rid of the rats in the first place, though in some cases they can be dislodged by pouring water into their holes. This method is obviously of no use where the rats are able to escape the water by climbing inside the walls. When it is practised, a piece of wire-netting should be placed over the hole into which the water is poured, to prevent the rats from escaping by that way, the terriers being kept in readiness at the adjoining holes. Immediately the work is completed, all holes in the masonry should be mortared up, slats of tin nailed over gnawed doors and other damaged woodwork, and holes in the ground thoroughly made up; otherwise new rats will immediately take the place of those that have been killed.*

Steel traps are not sufficiently wholesale in their effects to warrant general recommendation, though it is a good plan to keep three or four always set in obscure corners, as their presence tends to make the place unpopular among the rats. They are also useful about chicken-runs,

* Holes filled with broken glass and tar are permanently abandoned.—H. M. B.

&c., and when set should not be baited. Rabbit-traps are far preferable to the small steel rat-traps, as they generally kill the rat outright, and the trap should not be handled before being set. A clean steel trap has practically no scent, but an old one should be smoked or smeared with oil—bacon fat is excellent—before it is set. When it is being set it is best to erect a pen by placing two boards on edge, the trap being laid between them.

A most efficacious plan for wholesale extermination is to select a chamber which can be rendered rat-proof by cementing up all the holes in the walls. Leave the door open two or three nights, and feed the rats in the chamber with some food they cannot carry away and store. When it becomes evident that the rat population has become accustomed to gathering there after nightfall, secure a string to the door in such a way that it can be slammed-to from a suitable distance. The rats having thus been trapped, they can be left imprisoned till daylight, when terriers are introduced to do their work.

Another excellent plan is one which was recently practised in a Liverpool warehouse, and with such effect that the refuse-collectors finally refused to handle any more dead rats from this particular warehouse. An iron tank, containing about eight inches of water and of suitable size, was covered over with a sheet of strong, glazed paper. Immediately above the tank, and about eight inches from it, a dead hen was suspended from a beam along which the rats were in the habit of running. Everything being thus prepared, several long slits were cut in the paper covering of the tank, so that, while appearing solid, it was in reality a pitfall. The rats that attempted to mount to the fowl by the tank inevitably met their fate, while those that climbed down from above naturally dropped rather than attempt the difficult climb back. Hundreds of huge rats were killed in this way, and it would appear to be a thoroughly practical method.

VII.

Figures bearing upon the gray rat's powers of reproduction create a sense of dazed paralysis in the mind, and it need only be said that their rate of multiplication is such that, if none were killed, a pair of rats might at the end of two years have descendants to the tune of ninety thousand!

But, although figures illustrating this point may appeal to some as vaguely amusing, the actual results attained should provoke tears rather than laughter. Though not fully developed till six months old, a gray rat under suitable conditions may begin to breed at the end of five weeks. The first litter, however, is a small one, numbering, probably, not more than three. Thereafter the number of litters per

year, and the number of young per litter, are decided entirely by the circumstances in which the rat lives. If the season is normal, neither too hot nor too cold, and food is plentiful, the gray rat will produce six litters annually, the young numbering from eight to twenty at a birth. Working on a basis of a wide range of statistics, we arrive at the fact that a normal gray rat living under normal rat conditions—in other words, the average rat—successfully brings into the world forty-eight children per year. Accepting the predominance of bucks which seems always to exist, this would give us twenty female children to the year, each of which may begin to produce its equally fertile offspring at the end of five weeks, and thus *ad infinitum*.

The young are blind for fourteen days, and if the male rat plays any part in their existence, it is by bringing that existence to a sudden end, to his own epicurean satisfaction. The young leave the nest at the end of about eighteen days, and at this age are to be seen abroad at all hours, little larger than mice, and readily falling victims to any kind of trap that may be set for them.

If hunger happens to come upon the rat population, the feeblers members of the community fall to the stronger, which means that the very young are killed by the old, and that the very old are killed by the middle-aged. In short, only the fittest, which probably are the middle-aged, escape death at the hands of their own kind.

It would seem that gray rats habitually kill off the old male members of their communities, and it may be observed that when a rat is found living alone, it is invariably an old buck which, having had one attempt made upon his life by his clansmen, has sense enough to avoid further encounters by living a life of isolation and solitude.

The gray rat has probably not reached *le premier Octobre*, as the French call it, by the end of the second year of its existence, and the solitary males, driven out from their colonies, are in all likelihood living in their fourth or fifth summer. At six years a gray rat would have far outlived the majority of its kind, and I doubt whether the females breed after their third year. These statements, however, are based on such scanty observations that they border upon guess-work, and no doubt the whole question is decided by the conditions under which the rat lives, which means the rate at which it lives. A female that begins breeding at five weeks old, and thereafter produces five or six litters annually, naturally does not continue to breed so long as one living at a more moderate rate; and it is probable that the bucks outlive the does, as most of the very old rats caught or observed are bucks.

S H E L V E R D E N E ' S P L O T .

CHAPTER II.—THE SUSSEX SHORE: JUNE 1690.

I.

NIGHT was fallen, and a mist about us, when the schooner dropped a small anchor to hold her from drifting too much in. The last breath of wind and the flow of the tide had brought us to the very place we sought, as we knew from having seen the lights of Hastings ere the mist thickened. We were midway 'twixt there and Beachy Head, a quarter-mile off the lonely coast (the schooner drawing but shallowly), and arrived upon the hour when we were first to be expected. So it was with extreme satisfaction that I prepared to land, although I should do this in the guise of an invader of my country; for which circumstance the usurping Prince of Orange was to blame, he now holding the English throne, and King James, and such true men as could get to him, holding Ireland, where His Majesty was like to have a hard fight, the greater part of the Hollander prince's army being gone thither, and the prince himself just passed over to join it.

A hope that I might give this prince a counter-stroke which would spin the crown from his head had led me here to the Sussex shore. The design was of my own planning, but, of course, entered upon with His Majesty's approval and aid; and I cherished it lovingly, not only for what success would mean to His Majesty, but, since I was no more unselfish than other men, for what it would mean to me—a dukedom and a pension, and my name graven large in history. Sussex was my native part, where I was wont to have uncommon influence, and wherefrom, in the old days, I had raised Shelverdene's Regiment of Horse—merged with the main cavalry on my retirement in '81, and long since lost sight of. I was come now to raise, not a regiment, but the county—ay, and all south England—for the King; which, if my influence still held to give me a nucleus in Sussex, I believed I should verily do.

For this grand enterprise I was accompanied by no force—forty-two soldiers were my strength. Success would depend, under Providence, upon the welcome I received, not upon the numbers I landed with. His Majesty had offered me a full regiment, which he could ill afford to spare, and I had refused it. If my welcome were good I should get recruits by the hundred; if it were bad I and one regiment could accomplish nothing, and, in all likelihood, would die forthwith, every man of us.

But, in troth, I had no foreboding of disaster. I had plotted the affair most subtly, using the discreetest messengers to arrange a tryst with certain reliable Sussex friends, who declared my

reception would be wholly favourable; and I had sailed not from Waterford until the Prince of Orange was sailed to Ireland, when, I presaged, the attention of the English Government would be directed thither.

To-night a score of my friends should be on the shore yonder, with a drove of horses for the forming of our cavalry, and for transporting the armament I had brought—two fine brass field-pieces, a demi-cannon, ten barrels of powder, and above two hundred carbines and muskets. And other trustworthy persons should be for-gathering, with every available weapon and horse, at divers points within a small radius, prepared to join me so soon as they were advertised I was here; so that when morning broke there would be a little army drawn up, for loyal men to haste to.

II.

The cargo of ordnance and munitions was to go ashore after us. Leaving my ensign and two gunners to watch to its careful lowering into the boats, and bidding the shipmaster sound his bell frequently to guide the boats as they returned to him in the mist, I climbed down to one of these, of which there were three now floating on the water, laden with my company. The sea was quite smooth, though there was a gentle wash of it against the beach, which told us how to head; and, despite the momentous hours that lay before me, I discovered enjoyment in being rowed over the placid surface. I drew long breaths of the air of Sussex, and thought on the pleasure it would be to see the green plain of Pevensey marsh and the rampart of South Downs hills in the early, shimmering sunlight of to-morrow.

Because of the mist the schooner's lamps could not be marked from the shore; therefore, when our prows stopped at the shingle (no hail having greeted the noise of our oars), I ordered some one to give a whistle, which he did several times, very loud and clear. But, though we sat still for a space listening, we heard nothing in reply.

There was a touch of ill-omen about the silence, and even a touch of chill at my heart as I wondered whether an incredible thing could occur—my attempt fail weakly in its very beginning, through some strange error. But at once I threw off this humour.

'Out,' I cried to my fellows.

Then I sent back the boats, which, voyaging to and fro for an hour, brought the equipment; and this I had borne to a grass bank by the top of the beach. After which, allowing my men to drop down and rest, I stood with ears astrain, not daring to believe but that soon I should hear

the reinforcements. Two or three times I gave a start of blithe relief, certain that I had distinguished many soft footfalls; yet a second later they were not to be detected.

'You have no doubt this is the place, Sir Edmund?' asked Nayford, the ensign, quitting the demi-cannon, whereon he had long sat alert, to join me.

'None,' I answered. 'Below us is the path by which they were to come, and thirty yards from us the cross-path by which they were to halt. . . . No; 'tis the fog delays them, or another trifling matter.'

'Ay,' said he, and remained with me, breathing a dance-tune; but soon recollected himself and craved pardon for his easiness, saying the sea-murmur had beguiled him.

A further ten minutes were passed, when I threw up my hand and snapped my fingers; he, in the same instant, exclaiming, 'There!'

'Sergeant, order your men,' I said; and when that was done, in two ranks, and the bustle thereof was ceased, very numerous steps were to be heard on the path and on the beach itself.

'Some are on the shingle to our left, sir, also,' said Nayford.

'Yes,' said I merrily. 'They are coming in well.' I raised my voice, speaking to the men. 'Now, ye boys, we shall give a sharp twist to history.'

III.

To my dumbfounding, to the utter bewildering of us all, there ran through the mist a trailing, woman's laugh—sweet beyond telling, mocking beyond description; and anon it changed to words:

'Write it in the History Book,
'Shelverdene and all are took.'"

Once more the voice was laughter—joyous, derisive laughter; and then, again:

'Write it in the History Book,
'Shelverdene and all are took,
Brought to London from the shores,
Hanged and drawn and cut in fours.'"

'Madame,' I said, 'I beseech you, haste into shelter, or you will say no more such pretty poetry; for "Shelverdene and all" are going to shoot.'

Then I spoke towards the chieftest trampling of feet—many scores of them, and almost upon us.

'We are for King James,' I said. 'Are you folk for the Dutch gentleman?'

'Sir Edmund Shelverdene and those with you, put down your arms, and then let no man move from where he stands.'

'Oh, nay,' I said; 'I think we shall fight for it.'

I turned to my troop, whereof the front rank, though not a yard from me, was scarce to be discerned. A device was in my brain to order a retreat at full speed to a distance of fifty paces.

Then should every man face about again and crouch or lie flat, and fire his carbine in the direction of the powder-barrels, which by that time our enemies would have reached. I hoped that a fortunate shot, discharging the powder, would cast a fair part of the foe skyward, and afford me a chance of victory yet, if my men were not too stunned to charge upon the remnant ere they recovered from the shock; and the crushing despair which had fallen on me went, and my spirit surged buoyantly as I imagined this triumph.

But, alas! before I had given two words of command, a quick, dull flicker lit the visages of my soldiers, and the enemy's muskets deafened our ears. A few of our carbines answered, and we were at grips, striking and being stricken blindly, and we driven backward on a run from weight of odds.

The scuffle lasted little above a minute; for, as I learned after, there were two hundred and fifty against us—one hundred regulars of the Royal Fusiliers, and the rest volunteers from traitorous parts of the county.

At the commencement, springing round when the volley sounded, I fired both my pistols and hurled them after the bullets. Then, shouting to my boys to keep close to me, and we would burst a road through to Hastings, I drove into the mist, my sword levelled, so that it would spit anything save armour it came against. I got a fellow who wore no plate, probably a Fusilier, and, whipping the blade forth from him, pierced another while I was being flung back. A third, using a clubbed musket, by the feel of the stroke, knocked the sword from my hand. I hit at him with my fist, giving a shiver as I did so, for a wild bayonet-thrust had grazed my cheek, an inch from the eye. My fist landed, but he who received it caught my arm, and, a side rush sweeping us to the edge of the fight, we grappled closely and fell, and presently were left to battle undisturbed on the grass, I having him by the throat so that he could in no wise summon help. And soon, my knee touching a big flint stone, I slipped down a hand for it, and thus beat him.

IV.

I rose and straightened my peruke, and paused to recover some breath ere rushing back to the *mêlée*; and then I realised it was over. The beach was loud with voices, but they were calm, saying such things as, 'How many prisoners, lieutenant?' 'Here is a wounded one of them, sir.'

I clenched my hands, and in this grievous moment hot tears crept down my cheeks. Here was the end of Shelverdene's Plot, that had promised so much, and the end of the brave boys who had been trusted to me.

At first I was for going forward to surrender myself. If that would have brought me death

swiftly, I would have. But the sombre prospect of cell and trial and scaffold withheld me. For a short time I tarried, hearing the schooner busy with her gear, and surmising whether she could get away with this lack of wind. Then, shrugging my shoulders, I walked inland, wishing I knew how many of my friends were betrayed and whether any could shelter me.

I followed no path, but made for the centre of the marshland. Ever and anon, since I could not see on what I was setting my foot, I tripped over tufts of rushes or sank knee-deep in a bed of swamp; and at length, though advancing so warily that I slid either foot onward, rather than stepped, because I was come to where there were many water-dikes, I dropped clean into one of these, managing to fall erect, but having the water sousing round my neck. A little while later I splashed into a second, in the very same manner. Climbing from this, I threw into it my heavy back-and-breast plates, trusting thus to prolong my strength. But some two hours from leaving the beach, having lost my bearings, and being too shaken by my falls and too hampered by my wet clothes to struggle further, I sank upon the ground.

For a minute thereafter I lay on my elbow thinking of the countless happy hours I had passed on the marsh, in youth, in maturer years, always with the future bright and never hinting that one night I should return, a wrecked, discredited fugitive, in my forty-eighth year.

Then I rolled over on my side, stretched out my legs with a great sigh, and slept.

v.

When I awoke I believed for a space that it was the sound of a cannon which had roused me. For, sitting up and finding the part of the sea in front of me so adance and aglitter with sunlight that my eyes could not endure it, I looked westward, and saw a ball of white smoke rising from a warship, which was heeling off round Beachy Head—in pursuit of the schooner, I did not doubt. But then I heard a human sound, a low, rapturous murmur; and, turning my head another inch and glancing up, I discovered, leaning forward betwixt me and the sky, and framed in a great, broad-leaved, furry black hat, with dewdrops from some shaken bush hanging to the brim, a lady's face—high above me, because she stood on a bank.

The face was, maybe, a shade thin, but gay with the colour of health, and pretty indeed. The hair, blown about and between chestnut and gold, and the big blue eyes, seemed to stir in me a memory of some one I once had seen or dreamed of, but I could not recall whom. The eyes were shining—ay, and the lips were laughing, with such a strange, exultant welcome that I was sadly puzzled. My gaze fell to the lady's throat, finely moulded, and bare, from the flat setting of her lace collar; and then it

fell upon other particulars. Her cloak was cast back, and beneath her left arm was a crutch. In her right hand was a long, polished pistol, hanging apparently in carelessness, yet, it seemed to me, held very ready. I looked down the length of her slender crutch and saw the foot it aided—a narrow foot, comely still, but with the heel clear of the ground and the toe pointing straightly to the turf in a way most pitiful to see. Then I knew her.

I was surprised I had not known her instantly, for, though I had not seen her for eleven years—and she a child then—she had dwelt very constantly in my thoughts until some two years past, when her implacable spirit had caused me to put her from my mind.

Denis Irby's daughter. . . . In the moment of recognition there rose before me, not one, but many remembrances, like clear pictures, of which I seemed to read all details during that brief moment—an inexplicable thing. I recalled the first wretched weeks I passed in London on my return from Scotland, when I had to endure the news that the child I had shamefully Booted was lamed for life; and the staunchness of my friends exasperated rather than comforted me, so that I did fight with Colonel Loomer for his saying I had rightly served the girl. I recalled my frequent entreatings of Denis Irby that he would bring me to her—and his cold denying me. I recalled how, on realising she was growing to womanhood, I sent her year by year on her birthday, which I had learned the date of, a letter, conjuring her to receive me, to offer me some chance of making a little amends; bidding her know that my sword, my influence, my all, save my Faith and my Allegiance, were hers to be done with as she listed. Every of which letters was despatched back to me, with no word, but with the stroke of a pen drawn contemptuously across the page.

And I recalled the spring-time morning in '88 when, Denis Irby being under much suspicion, Louis Stuart (a captain by then) had been sent with others to seize his papers. I was lodged in Whitehall. At the first bruit of what was afoot I went to His Majesty, and craved his sanction to accompany the party. Whereupon King James's worn face had relaxed a jot, and a kindly satire gleamed in his mournful, heavy eyes.

'In the interests of the Crown or of the suspect, Ned?' asked he. Then, seeing me frankly troubled for an answer, he bade me go with Louis, adding graciously that he was assured which person, of those that went to Mr Irby's house, would watch most tenderly over the King's safety.

Denis Irby was from home; and his daughter, on learning of my arrival, had hurriedly withdrawn (so I was told) to some chamber of her own. Feeling her presence in every room we entered, I kept with Louis and Sir F. Pochin,

a magistrate, and scanned such documents as they found—with no intent, of course, to destroy aught, but to prime myself for defending Irby, should that prove necessary.

We discovered no treason. But from a little box in a music-room—a box that had been very carefully locked—Louis took something, which, after a glance, he gave to me, with a whimsical look.

It was an engraving of myself, bought from some print-seller. Below my delineation was the customary jumbled flourish of printed words: '*The Most Honourable Sir Edmund Dene Shelverdene, Bt.; One of His Majesty's Lords-Lieutenant,*' and thus onward. But there was another inscription, done very daintily and womanly with a quill—writ privily to my image; yet I could not resist reading it:

'Able, brave, high-natured—men say thou art; blindly loyal to the King, clement when thy foe is weak, ruthless when strong. QUOTHA! how fair a character! And thy brow doth bear it out!'

'But I know thy clemency, do I not? Was I thy strong foe? thou arch-tormentor, that sent me to limp through life, and smoothly askest my pardon. I know thy clemency. And be thy other virtues true or false, one day, through me, thy mouth shall lie in the dust.'

I noted something, and held the print up to the light; and I could not but smile wearily to observe a group of holes, pierced in my breast by a vengeful needle. I replaced the print in the box, which held nothing more save silks and sewing-work. Anon, hearing Louis ask Pochin whether he would have the chamber searched wherein the lady was, I bade them pass a message to her by one of her own servants, inquiring if she had any of her father's papers there—saying I would vouch for the honour of her reply. Which being done, and the servant carrying more than the message, she returned answer that she had no writing in the room, yet would wish the gentlemen below to come and prove that for themselves, if they brought not with them the fellow who had so insolently presumed to vouch for her honour.

VI.

Such were the remembrances that had me spell-bound, until the lady softly spoke, bringing me to realise that she and I, with the fragrant marshland around us and the azure sky overhead, were come together in no vision of the past, but in a present circumstance which was evidently as diverting to her as 'twas like to prove ill for me.

'Shelverdene!' she whispered in delight. 'It is you, as I thought from my telescope.'

'Denis Irby's daughter,' I said, shifting a trifle, to face her squarely, and clasping my hands about one knee. 'Why would you never meet me?' I asked.

Her head drooped teasingly to one side. She

smiled on, but her eyes had a deadly fierceness which she made no endeavour to hide. 'What meeting could compare with this?' she asked. 'Behold the great captain, fallen and a runaway. King James's Hope, set on the ground, with muddled peruke and lost cravat—and—blood on his cheek.' There was a hint of faltering in her voice, of waning smile, when she japed at my blood. But, 'Great captain,' she taunted, her smile back again, 'may I have the aid of your sword, of your mighty influence?'

Then, indeed, her smile faded; and, turning her face from me, she laid the wrist of her hand, which held the pistol, athwart her forehead, as though disquieted. And I heard her murmur, 'Am I cruel as he?'

Recollecting she was off her guard, she turned again, veering the pistol towards me as she lowered it; yet, most strangely, something of gentleness was about her.

'I will not be paltry with the truth,' she said. 'Thou wert a captain, and a power, and a sure blade, that wished to serve me.' Therewith, however, she raised her chin suddenly, with a motion of impatience, of stress. 'Oh, what things do I speak! I think I am all bewildered with gladness, to see thee stricken utterly, and the headsman waiting for thee. . . . You planned to serve me, to soften me!' Had she deliberately lashed it, her temper could not have leapt more hotly. 'Me!' she cried. 'That you tortured and maimed, you very fiend. . . . It was my part, not yours, to say how you should pay for your black villainy.'

And then in a breath, as a short while before, she was teasing, smiling, deadly withal.

'You have paid somewhat already, Shelverdene?'

'Two duellos with your father, and a fine of two thousand pounds in the King's courts.'

'Two more duellos in Dublin,' said she.

'So!' I cried; 'were you responsible for those?'

She nodded. 'I ever intended to take the matter in my own hands. I was in no haste; but when you quitted England I deemed I were best begin. I sent two of my friends to kill you, but your sword was overmasterly. Last month I sent another.'

'He sought me not.'

'Nay, he did far better. He chanced upon, and discovered to me, Shelverdene's most wicked design against England.'

'You!' I gasped. 'You!'

'I am to be thanked for the foiling of it. I bade my friend no more think to fight you, but to cozen you and your brother-plotters; and so we learnt all, which my father disclosed to the Government. Thus was I privileged to be with them that awaited you last night. . . . Are you not sorry you adjured me to shelter from the bullets, Shelverdene?'

(Continued on page 676.)

A GOSSIP ABOUT NOVELISTS' NAMES.

By Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS.

IN choosing names for the children of their fancy, novelists, generally speaking, would appear to be guided by one of three aims—namely, beauty of sound, verisimilitude, and the desire to mark or indicate the general lines of a character by his or her name. And to these three aims, though rarer, may perhaps be added the striving after local or territorial correctness or conformity. For example, when, forty years ago, Mr Baring-Gould produced his magnificent *Tale of the Salt Marshes*, baptising his protagonist by the magnificent name of Elijah Rebow, I remember hearing that certain members of a fine old Essex family were not best pleased at the use to which their patronymic had been put, the more so seeing that the said Elijah was alleged to have consorted with smugglers, to have put in practice the theory that all's fair in love, and in the course of so doing to have perpetrated sundry very questionable acts. But supposing that my old friend Mr Baring-Gould really did give offence in this respect, and that what I heard was not mere unfounded local tattle, then he was certainly gloriously impenitent. For in his very next novel, of which the scene was round about Launceston, he introduced the beautiful local surname of Trecarrel, and made the hearer of it odious and contemptible. He was quite right! For there is surely no reasonable ground of offence in the use of local names in local novels.

Still less justified, if possible, was the objection of an obscure Parisian named Vabre to Zola's use of that name in his novel of *Pot-Bouille*. I know not whether he obtained an injunction or threatened proceedings; but I do know that the use of the name was suspended, the truth being, as I suspect, that Zola had scented a rare opportunity for *réclame*. For, by substituting the phrase *Sans-Nom* for the forbidden name, he set all Paris talking and exercising its wit about the incident. This continued so long as the story was appearing serially; but when it came out as a book the name Vabre was reinserted, and then there was nothing left for the wits but to allege collusion!

I am glad to say that I know of but one instance in which the name chosen by an author for one of his fictitious characters actually led to tragic consequences. It was when Sir Arthur Pinero entitled one of his plays *The Notorious Mrs Ebb-smith*, and a weak-minded lady who bore the same name was thereby driven to destroy herself, under the delusion that her sad history had become public property. Needless to say that Sir Arthur had never heard of her existence. Innocent as he was, I hope he realised that this poor lady would almost certainly have

taken her life in any case, and that, if one pretext had failed, she would have found another.

To go back now to my classification of novelists' names, Captain Marryat must be awarded high praise for his success with the names which help out character. His *Peter Simple*, it is true, was not quite original, but who now remembers *David Simple* or its authoress, Sarah Fielding? And what other name could so well befit the delightfully ingenuous young sailor, whose history has captivated successive generations of right-thinking young Englishmen from the 'forties on to to-day? *Mr Midshipman Easy* is scarce less happy, whilst *Jacob Faithful* and *Masterman Ready* are quite worthy of their distinguished relatives. In the same style Becky Sharp seems the one and inevitable name for Thackeray's typical designing minx—a name, too, which seems to postulate immortality for her who bears it. And, in this connection, is it allowable to draw attention to the astonishing report, current among aged Anglo-Indians less than ten years ago, that the lady from whom this portrait was drawn was at that time still alive? I cannot vouch for its truth, but as *Vanity Fair* was completed in 1848, the lady referred to must certainly have reached a very venerable age. In names of the kind now under consideration Disraeli was conspicuous for failures. His art took long to clear itself of balderdash and acquire certainty of touch, and most of us will be ready to echo the inquiry of Mr Gosse, 'Who can believe in the existence of persons whose titles are the Earl of Fitz-Pompey and Baron Deprivyseal, or Sir Carte Blanche and Lady Aphrodite?' The happiest find in nomenclature of this kind is, however, Oliver Goldsmith's Dr Primrose. Who can imagine the beloved vicar or his family under any other patronymic?

I must confess that, as an anti-realist, the names which are life-like and nothing else interest me scarcely at all. Jane Austen, with her Elizabeth Bennet and her Henry Tilney, her Henry Crawford and her Fanny Price, gives us little but such as these. And in their own place they are right. Nothing more can be said about them. Only, I do not think that the name Marianne (so spelt) is ever met with now. It must have passed into disuse since 1817. Trollope, Meredith, and Henry James are also strongly inclined to realism in their choice of names, though certainly less exclusively so than the authoress of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Other things being equal, I freely own that I prefer a heroine named Cytherea Graye, as in Mr

Hardy's *Desperate Remedies*, or a hero named Valmajour, as in Daudet's *Numa Roumestan*, to all the Elizabeth Bennets and Henry Tilneys in the world. For I presume that the refinements of hearing were not bestowed upon us for nothing. Bathsheba Everdene, the heroine of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, bears a name almost as rhythmical as Cytherea Graye's; whilst Fancy Day, Eustacia Vye, and Thomasine Yeobright all appear to me to rejoice in names which unite intrinsic beauty with suitability to the character of the bearer.

Mr Hardy, who has never been an out-and-out realist, and who, in the classification of the latest edition of his novels, himself acknowledges as much, inherited his refinement in the choice of names from the romantic novelists, and this carries us back to Walter Scott. Scott's ear for the music of vocables, though not uniformly faultless, had been early trained and educated by the practice of writing verse. No one had been before him, and to a man of his vast historical and territorial knowledge, the entire treasury of nomenclature lay open and ready to be laid under contribution. The grand names of Waverley, Peveril, Ivanhoe, are his by right of appropriation. He has made them his own, and, in so doing, has endowed them with a significance more than worthy of their native beauty. Who now thinks of Waverley as an abbey in Hampshire? It is the name of a principal province in the Country of Romance. It is become the private property of the man who, from the beginning, could design such captivating titles for his works as *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* or *The Lady of the Lake*. And his inventions were as good as his finds, if I may assume that the name of Redgauntlet was his own creation. And where in the whole directory of names is there any lovelier combination than Minna Troil? I solemnly declare that, were I asked to meet a lady so baptised, I should be more than half in love with her upon the strength of her name alone! Of course, one ought to be on one's guard against confounding romance of sound with romance of character; but, where Scott is concerned, I doubt if at this time of day it is altogether possible to do that. Another proof of the delicacy of Scott's sense for names is that, when history happened to make a mistake in this respect, he did not scruple to correct history. For example, the real name of the sequestered beauty of Cumnor Hall was not Amy, but Ann. Froude's *History of England* is my authority for this minute correction, and I have little doubt that Samuel Pepys, who tells the story, bears me out. But Ann in conjunction with Robsart is, perhaps, a little hard. Amy is softer, more sympathetic, one might almost add more clinging. So by a beneficent decree, retrospective in its action, the hapless lady turns in Scott's hands into Amy. Victor Hugo, following Scott, calls

her Amy too, and so assurance is made doubly sure, and Amy for all time she will remain.

Did space suffice, I should like to say, not merely a word or two, but a great deal, about those names of Scott's which are characterised by raciness in the first instance, and beauty only in the second. Meg Merrilees and Dandy Dinmont are examples of what I have in mind. These names, again, are simply right, inevitable. Those particular roses could not possibly smell half so sweet by any others. And there would fall a word to be said about Scott's nicknames, of which Madge Wildfire is a brilliant example. But I must pass on.

The later romantic novelists, such as Bulwer Lytton, Ainsworth, Disraeli, the author of *Guy Livingstone*, and Ouida necessarily labour under the disadvantage of gleaning after Scott. But they make, on the whole, a brave show with their Devereux, Maltravers, Tancred, St Aldegonde, Ercildoune; their Idalia, Venetia, Flora Bellasia, and Lady Corisande. In this respect Disraeli soon redeemed the errors of *Vivian Grey*, and the name *Lothair* is of itself enough to excite interest, even though the book had been anonymous. Next to the grandiose, the aristocratic, the high-sounding, or the simply beautiful, the fantastic or extravagant in names provokes curiosity. And here, of course, Dickens, with his native tendency to caricature and to high colouring, is the master without rival. His Chuzzlewits, Pardiggles, Pumblechooks, Turveydrops, and a host of others are his, and his alone. That these ever had originals in the flesh I would not take it on me to say. But truth is proverbially stranger than fiction, and I know as a fact that Edwin Drood was the name of a publican carrying on business close to Gad's Hill, whilst probably all the world knows that Pickwick is a village in Wiltshire.

A daily study of the births, deaths, and marriages in a newspaper will reveal some curiosities of nomenclature, and it is no secret that the late Sir William Gilbert, who at that time lived in Kensington, found a name for the sentimental sailor in his most successful opera above a shop in the Brompton Road. Dickens's disciple, Wilkie Collins, would seem to have given nice attention to the selection of names, though wisely making no attempt to rival the extravagance of his master. Count Fosco, the subtle villain of his *Woman in White*, bears a name as well calculated to strike the imagination and to dwell in the memory as Dumas' Count of Monte Cristo. And, again, what could be better adapted to the positive and loquacious little soldier of *No Name* than Captain Wragge? The tang of his wearisome self-assertion seems embodied in the sound. Finally, George Eliot composed her names with no less care. Nor would it be easy to find a hero and a heroine more beautifully named than the Daniel Deronda and the Guendoline Harleth of her last great book.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday*.

PEOPLE have begun to move again. Travelling has recommenced. Europe and lands beyond Europe acquire a new interest for us once more; they are not merely spheres of war, areas of battle-grounds. The old traveller's spirit returns, and facilities are slowly being restored. There are announcements of tours that may be performed within a certain time and at a definite cost. It is more expensive than it used to be, but still it seems wonderful, so magnificent in opportunity. England, Scotland, and Wales are good to look upon and wander in; during the war we learned much of them we knew not before; but these islands, after all, are but a very little of the world. Now travelling is a thing that will never be the same again. And it is better so. With the tornado that has swept over the world, the transformation that has been effected, the tremendous problems still before us—problems that will remain for long—and the close front we have had to make with elemental facts of living and of death, this is a world in which to think, and not to pass through in the dallying, careless way again. Hardly a man or a woman, scarce a child, but is impressed with some aspect of elementary and social economics as not before. For years the peoples have been as hungry wolves; they have needed to grapple with realities as animals do. In the old days of peace pleasant persons of accepted intelligence, and of a taste that was proved by their voyage into Switzerland or Italy, would return to their native Britain with nice descriptions of mountains and lakes, assisted, as was evident, by guide-books and sundry photographs. They would also be in a position to make descriptions of certain pieces of architecture they had inspected. By this they essayed to show they had the traveller's way, had witnessed wonders and could take advantage of them in the true spirit, making of themselves persons to be envied among the others who merely stayed at home to wander through summer lanes, admiring the miracles of creation everywhere and making new discoveries among them.

* * *

The new travellers will be less concerned with the emptiness of the old system and manner. Their travelling from the beginning to the end

will be a more serious and more difficult undertaking, and at every step they will have new points suggested to them of the grimness, the bitterness, and the hardship of life, and the compromises for varying degrees of happiness and satisfaction that it affords. It is, to take the simplest case, inevitable that when a stranger arrives in a foreign city and walks about therein, he should become interested in the cost and price of things, especially food and clothing. It is inevitable, unless he is very stupid, that he should make more or less diligent inquiries into this matter, institute comparisons with his home quotations, and drawing conclusions, seek for further explanation. No special intelligence or tendency to investigation is needed in such a case; this is a process which, we say, is certain, and is conducted by nearly all men and women who now wander abroad. It takes the place of much of the meretricious inspection of and reporting upon things not understood or appreciated, that occurred in the case of continental trippers in the other time. And so here is the beginning; and once the active mind makes such a start it leads on to more and more investigation on this economic side, and strangers are brought to an understanding of and sympathy with the ways of life of different peoples in their many aspects. As an abstract study of a few phases of the evolution of the human race, it is interesting enough; but, better, it yields first-hand knowledge for use at home in political and semi-political argument and for application to the needs and necessities we ourselves experience. It affords us knowledge above that of newspapers, and enables us to correct the politicians in their misstatements and omissions. For near as are France and Italy, Spain and Germany to us now—never nearer—the ignorance of our own people concerning the ways and conditions of life, the thoughts, feelings, and tendencies in those adjacent places, which can be reached in a few hours by the air, is amazing; and the traveller in his new mood will come back to Britain enlightened (but humiliated) upon the want of knowledge of our people born of their insularity, which seems—and perhaps naturally enough—to have become intensified during the past six years, though some publicists blandly assure us that the reverse is the case. Never did we

know so little, never were we so misinformed, about the lives of other peoples. And a minor point is that, granting that there is much jealousy of us, that we do not receive fair credit for the good we have done, as men and nations rarely do, it is good as a tonic or a corrective for the British subject that he should know the arguments used against him, especially in the matter of the war. Foreign races do not regard Great Britain as having been an instrument of heaven for the salvation of the world; they are more inclined to mention Machiavellian politics and capitalist greed, and it will be found that such affairs as Amritsar are mighty hard for an Englishman to explain away in a foreign land.

* * *

In the spirit of the new travelling, then, the one who wanders will fortify himself with facts, so that he may apply and test and use them for the gain of others from the foreign lands, to bring them home for application here. Most persons in the old travelling way took a guide-book with them, and generally glanced upon it at the moment of inspection, and perhaps a little more carefully afterwards. Clearly wrong and ineffective. The mind should advance prepared, else the eyes do not see, and nine-tenths of observation is wasted. One must be able to look and search, and for that there must be instruments of knowledge in hand. Bear in mind the truth that is carved in stone over the entrance to the great railway station at Washington, U.S.A.—‘He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry the wealth of the Indies with him; so it is in travelling, a man must carry knowledge with him if he would bring home knowledge.’ So before the advance on a foreign state, there should be much priming upon it from reliable sources. It should be studied and considered from every aspect; brief notes or reminders of special points should be compiled; newspaper cuttings (with the dates and the sources marked upon them) should be collected. By such means will observation be assisted and the value and interest of the enterprise be increased a hundredfold. This is no counsel of perfection, nor is such preliminary study, in view of the oncoming realisations, dreary. One who travels much and seeks the utmost gain made such a careful study of seventeen different volumes in various languages before approaching certain foreign lands a few months ago. Here it may be said that great as is the British Empire, far as our people have wandered, our books of travel, brilliant on the side of adventure and special individual statement, are scarcely so good as the French in the plain and semi-statistical presentment of basic and economic facts about life and work in certain foreign countries, particularly such as are within easy distance of Paris, like Spain and Portugal, North Africa, and some places away in the East. There is another matter, Baedeker, which is at the same

time a commercial enterprise—as to which we are not concerned—and a traveller's public institution. During the war it was said that we had done for ever with Baedeker, as with other German things. In the excess of feeling it was insisted that all German writers told deliberate lies, and that Wagner knew nothing of music but only made an ugly rag-time noise. Such judgments are not flattering to our perceptions now; they only show the devastating effect of war upon the intellect and the judgment as upon the land. At the same time it was urged that Baedeker, besides being poor and unsatisfactory, represented things from the German point of view, and was partly, if not mainly, a political compilation. The fact remains that it is a marvel of thoroughness, and what we may for convenience call the general facts of the case are set forth in this guide-book as not elsewhere. And in this general consideration there is one other point that comes to mind, and it is this, that there is a way of saying that now, as the result of the war, the world is full of seasoned travellers—the soldiers in the war—who have seen things, as to which the most splendid efforts in foreign investigation by private persons at the present time are pale and insipid. There could be no greater mistake. The soldiers saw nearly nothing. They came to understand hardly a single fact or truth of the most insignificant character about the peoples among whom they marched and camped. For one thing, their business was death, not life; and for another, they saw these peoples under the most abnormal conditions possible, artificially organised for a special purpose, and dissembling all the time. They did not see them at their work, which is almost the only thing that matters in the world; and they did not see them enjoying the love of their home lives, which is most of the rest. They could know nothing whatever of their struggle for existence then, and still less of the tremendous problems that face them now. And besides all this, the military spirit naturally was in possession of the soldiers, and they saw not the truth or the plain facts as they were to be seen. Their own movements were severely restricted; military discipline and routine ruled over all. And the result is that whether it were France or Belgium, Turkey or Egypt or India, these soldiers came back with less knowledge of the lands they had laboured in than might be acquired in an evening with a good book and a following night at a cinema that pictured the place in question. So let not the new travellers feel that they have been overshadowed. They have great work to do now, and it has been neglected for many years. Never was there such need, never such opportunity.

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On what we may call the material side of the travelling question, those who go far (and especially if they deviate a little from the few

main streams of continental tourist traffic that have already been established) will encounter strange and uncomfortable conditions. They will realise, perhaps better than they have ever done since the armistice was first declared, what a dark mark the war has left upon the manners and customs of foreign peoples in regard to the traveller; and even of our own people who are officially engaged in the conduct of the travelling business towards their brethren, hoping for a little guidance and assistance perhaps, remembering pleasantly the days before 1914, when it was so kindly proffered and the way of the traveller was one of happiness and soft cushions. No more of those flowery and cushioned ways, for a time at least. And seeing with what amazing tenacity when convinced (as they assuredly are) that it is contrary to their own material interests, the nations adhere to the passport system, and trap it elaborately with a grand system of visas, one is a little inclined to despair of any improvement until—as some would say—there has been an even more terrible war, and it has taught the few remaining people a little common-sense, a little appreciation of the fact of mutual dependability, and a little faith in the principle of good and its practical utility in the promotion of happiness. Even during the war the passport system was of very doubtful advantage and effectiveness. It certainly prevented timid and resourceless people from leaving one country for another—but those people were largely harmless anyhow; it never prevented any real desperado from moving as he listed. And if that were so in the war, what of now, when means of vigilance are inevitably much relaxed, when the war strain and the war manner and the war service are relieved? It is not only that passports and visas are in every country at the present time recognised as completely and utterly ineffective, but after the issuing of them and the employment of officials in the process and the collection of the fees, no steps are taken to make them effective. They are abandoned; and one is justified in calling this process the passport swindle, one of the worst inflicted upon peoples that have lost much of their liberty. The governments do not attempt to justify it; they remain silent under the charge that it is maintained in almost its full war strength merely for the employment of large armies of officials, the underlings of the bureaucracies, who retain in full measure their war-time arrogance and bad manners. But what remedy? There is only one. People—those middle-classes, for the most part, who suffer anything and everything because they are prepared to suffer—should themselves study the art and science of striking as the working-man has studied it, much to his advantage. They should have the courage of their feelings, as they so rarely have. And they should boycott strictly and absolutely a country like Switzerland, that

impudently and with less excuse than any has played the robber in this way. They should not only demand the removal of every vestige of restriction, but should, in the manner of strikers and victors with just and honest grievances, demand reparation in some form. There should be a Travellers' League, and the members should by general agreement refuse to travel in such countries as abuse this system of restriction of movement and the setting-up of inconvenience until, the offence being removed and in some way expiated, the league withdraws the ban; and the members should at the same time strive their best to prevent others from doing what they themselves for the good principle will not do. In the matter of the French it is remarkable with what official punctiliousness, the signing of forms and the payment of fees, they force their victims through the ritual of the passports before the travelling begins, and also at other stages, as when from a country on the far side of the journey the wanderer would move back again through France. In such a case there may be half a day spent in finding the local consul, to whom considerable fees are again to be paid. He may not be in his bureau, being long delayed at lunch, and his absence may lead to the postponement of the traveller's journey. But the visa once made, the money collected, the bureaucrat having by a few moments' labour justified to his own conscience his existence, nothing matters. The passport is given scant attention at the later stages, where it should really serve if it ever served at all. I have watched closely the methods of the investigators at the frontiers in different countries, especially in France, and never once in hundreds of cases have I observed the official lift up his head to see if the person before him was the same as the one represented in the photograph on the passport. It may be that there is some diminution in this passport nuisance, but nothing but an overwhelming protest by travellers will ever dispose of it altogether, and that protest must needs take the practical form of the strike or boycott. We should have the Travellers' League. The times in travelling are changed. They are difficult now. Travellers have common interests, and they need to co-operate. A league, international in character and strong, could make a government or two here and there realise that there are limits to post-war antics of the kind that are being practised. But perhaps, as it depends on middle-class effort, there never will be such a league.

* * *

There are some other points for mention in the matter of the discomforts and difficulties of travelling in these new times. It is often a hard affair; its inconveniences are enormous. Military arrogance—sometimes brutality—is encountered constantly. Travelling is far more expensive than it used to be, in every respect.

Countries that need not have raised their prices high have done so in the profiteering vein, feeling that they, too, might take advantage of the helplessness of payers. There is Spain, for example, now being filled with strangers from Britain, America, and other parts of the world, and without proper hotel accommodation for all of them. These strangers go to Spain because it is a deeply interesting country, and because, Spain having held out of the war, it is felt that here the conditions of living must be less harsh than in the war-stricken, even though victorious, countries. The latter consideration is true; but Spain, knowing that she is thus in demand, and having limited accommodation, and having, moreover, certainly found her costs mount much higher through the European reaction upon herself, charges far more than before. Thus a stranger should consider himself fortunate if he obtains a fair room in a first-class hotel in Madrid for thirty pesetas a night—and I have paid more—the equivalent, with the exchange as it was a few months ago, of nearly two pounds a night in English money. The exchanges must be considered carefully. They make things in France and Italy cheap to us when they would be otherwise dear, and this is especially the case in Portugal, where the money is at this time of writing worth only a quarter its normal value. Since placing in these pages some notes upon

travel in Portugal, I have received many inquiries from readers for further details, requests of a kind that it is difficult or impossible to comply with. The facts are as stated, and the chief thing for possible visitors to Portugal to bear in mind is that just as there is rarely even the smallest paragraph in the newspapers concerning affairs and events in Portugal, so there is as much happening there as in any other country, and it is very fateful. The politics of the country are torn to tatters; she is bordering on revolution, is in a shocking state financially and economically, and there are openly expressed fears of a collapse and foreign intervention. Meanwhile soldiers are everywhere; there is rifle-firing and occasional bombing at night. While things remain as they are, the country is possible for strangers, but they might become suddenly worse, as they did once when I was there, causing me to leave the place by the last train that went from Lisbon to Madrid for some time. A final word of valuable suggestion is this: do not conduct the luggage business on the pre-war scale. Cut it down to the lowest possible point. Strive to the utmost to take with you only that which can be carried in the carriage. The dangers of delay, loss, and theft are far greater now than ever before. And harden your heart towards the servants, for their demands for tips are far more impudent and exorbitant than ever before. This nuisance has increased enormously.

SHELVERDENE'S PLOT.

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

VII.

IN her mien now were the completest mockery and triumph; and, her hat being high-crowned, so that it reminded me of a witch's hat, she made, to my thinking, a picture of a beautiful, cruel witch. Yet, because she moved slightly, showing me how her foot dragged, I had no wish to upbraid her save on one point.

'Madame,' I said, 'I am glad you escaped harm, for there is great justice in all you have done to me. But I blame you for the slaying of the poor lads that were with me.'

'You slew them. You would not suffer them to yield. Also, came they not hither to slay others?' Her eyes flashed indignantly.

I answered no word, having scant inclination to argue. For a space I stared down at my clasped hands. Yet I could perceive a movement she made, a gesturing outward of her pistol-hand from her side, and its sinking back; the movement (no threat to me) so telling of troubled thoughts that I looked up astonished—to find that trouble was in her face, though forthwith it was changed to composure.

'All I have done to you, Shelverdene?' she

said, taking up the phrase I had used. 'That were stingy payment to me. What I shall do will be better.' With a sudden action she aimed the pistol at my head. 'Have you any arm?'

I raised my eyebrows. I think I smiled at this menace. 'Not a penknife,' I replied.

She let the pistol hang by her side again. 'Then my purpose is very easy to carry out. I am lodged at a farmhouse, a mile from here, where are stout herdsman that will bind you in readiness for the soldiers. I bade not any come with me when I spied you, for I desired that we should speak privily.' She gave a gentle sigh of contentment, her head falling anew to one side. 'Shelverdene, I shall feel paid in a week or two, when you are on the scaffold-boards; nothing can save you from them.'

'Nothing in the world, madame, except your foolishness to bring no men. I shall not go to the farm.'

'Then I will shoot you.'

'I trust you will, for you have so ruined me, I shall be grateful for a pistol ball.' I held my eyes on hers to let her read from them I was not fibbing; and in an instant her prettiness and her lamed condition stirred me most deeply, and

I was forced to add, 'Verily, child, I think I want to die by your hand, if that will end the debt between us. This sight of you hath made me more than ever wish to end it. And to be shot by you, out here in the country sunshine, will be a sweeter way to die than I had hoped for.'

She searched my eyes intently, deeming, I imagine, that I had descended to craven flattery on the chance of coaxing mercy from her. Finding that I was calmly in earnest, she could not keep a flicker of surprise from her own eyes. I saw them soften eloquently for a bare second, and a darker colour in her cheeks. But then she gibed, as though she had fathomed me wrongly.

'Nay, Shelverdene; thou wilt not cajole me at last with sneakish words and a good-looking face.' She bent more towards me, and her lips actually quivered fast from an access of anger. 'Ay, of a surety, thou art good-looking, though older than my father. . . . Good-looking!' Her voice rose vibrantly, and she held her maimed foot forth an inch for me to note. 'Good-looking—limber. And see what thou hast made of me, that was but a child in thy power, and, for love of Holy Gospel, should have been spared. . . . Dost thou dream I shall have pity? Nay, Shelverdene, nor pity enough to kill thee. I shall shoot through thy knee or hip; and thou wilt not crawl far while I am gone for the herdsmen—I warrant me thou wilt not.'

She rested with greater dependence on her crutch, breathing quickly from her speech. Lifting her pistol, she surveyed carefully the priming and the cocked hammer, yet with the corner of an eye on me. Anon: 'I must be closer for delicate shooting,' she said; and, moving a few yards, to where the bank sloped gradually to my level, but having always that corner of an eye on me, she picked her way down in a mode both graceful and sad to watch, and came right to me.

'It is true you have no weapon?' she asked.

'What odds if I had?' I said sullenly. 'I put you to the question that I might save a lad's life. I would not hurt your finger-tip to save my life.'

'More cunning words.' Her mouth rippled tauntingly. 'You hope still I may prove a fool—eh, Shelverdene? Well, I think you have no weapon; and so'—she looked longingly at the side of the bank just opposite to us, which was wellnigh perpendicular to the flat turf—'and so I am very safe to sit.—A crutch is a weary thing in marshland. . . . No!' she cried, as I would have risen to aid her. 'I will not take courtesy from you, that I mean shall perish like a dog.'

VIII.

Skilfully she lowered herself, and sat with her back against the bank, laying the crutch to one side of her, and resting the long, polished pistol on the other, but never ceasing to hold this. The sun had begun to pour hotly on the

bank. She took off her great, heavy witch's hat, shook out the curls she had freed, and leaned her head lazily amid the grass.

I had a queer thrill of pleasure at perceiving how fair was her brow, and how enhanced her hair when uncovered. She discerned my thoughts.

'Yes,' she said derisively, 'despite my foot I lack not wooers, for all that you spoiled twain in Dublin. . . . I am told you are not wed, wondrous, quick-handed swordsman.'

'Tis so,' I answered.

'I am pleased. I had liefer not bring sorrow to a woman—or a child. . . . *Holà!* How cometh Master Swift-hand by an old rapier scar on the throat!'

'By the finest blade that was in Britain—one Colonel Loomer,' said I thoughtlessly.

Her eyelashes fell. She gave an uneasy sigh. 'I know why you fought. Lackaday! that I do know. . . . Yet, not that—nothing—shall put me from my purpose.'

'Regarding this purpose, madame,' I said; 'I will not suffer to be carried to prison. Be resigned to that. You say you will but wound me.' I smiled tauntingly in my turn. 'I shall find means to be dead ere you come back.'

She lifted her lashes, meeting smile with smile.

'Very brave. But I deem you will do as I bid when I point my pistol at your knee, which shall be in a minute, when I am rested.'

Her tone rang with confidence. Well I knew, though, that my will would be stronger than hers in this matter; and, perchance with some disdain, I diverted my gaze from her, and contemplated steadily the grass beside her cheek.

The bank was parched, and the long grass, in contrast to the herbage round about, already much browned. I was conscious of a half-hid hole a yard to the right of her; and presently my attention was caught by an unaccountable pattern showing through the grass between the hole and her. It was a dark, zigzag ribbon, edged with a length of dark blotches. Of a sudden all moved undulatingly, with a gloss as of oil now visible around them; and I saw rise, within a hand's-breadth of the white throat before me, the head of a snake.

I swayed forward on to my toes. 'Do not shoot!' I whispered; and, leaping with my whole strength, I fell across my captor. My knee snapped the crutch; the long pistol, jabbed like lightning against my midriff, slid as it was fired, and, I was sure, blew a hole to put one's head through in the back of my coat; but the only happening which interested me was, that I had the serpent's head safe in my palm, and was crushing it finely, the beast squirming and like a steel spring to feel.

Denis Irby's daughter, her face close to mine and her rage frenzied, wrenched the pistol from between us and struck my cheek-bone savagely with it, holding me with her left hand. She

swung the pistol to let me have a rare buffet—and the lashing body of the snake touched her wrist. She looked, screamed in horror, and released me.

Whereat I jumped up, set one boot on the snake, freed his head, and stamped the life out of him. Then, turning to the girl, I saw her sitting with the whitest face, watching the still-moving snake.

IX.

'Madame,' I said, 'will you not let me charge the pistol, for fear I shall escape?'

'The poison-adder,' she muttered quaveringly, 'such as killed the ploughman last Tuesday.' And then she looked at me. 'Your hand? You held it!'

I had been groping round my back for powder-sparks. Now I glanced at my palm. There was a hurt spot, pinched and nicked, which reminded me of a squeeze from a gun-hammer.

She saw. 'And you have no knife,' she cried. 'Nor I!' She stooped and ripped a silver buckle from her shoe, and held it forth. 'It is sharp. Slash, tear, make the blood pour.'

I moved a few paces from her, to where a pool was, and—though only to soothe her, since a dose of snake-venom offered an excellent escape out of my troubles—tore and gashed my palm deeply, bathing it also.

'Suck, suck,' she cried. 'Oh, harder! Come hither, that I may try.'

'Nay, indeed,' I answered—several times, for she persisted.

But anon, turning to her after I had rinsed my mouth, I found her coming towards me on her hands and knees. For a second I was amazed. Then I understood—her crutch was broke.

'Madame,' I said, 'will you be pitiful in one thing, and let me not see this? . . . Madame!' I pleaded, and stopped, too disordered to say more.

'I think you are bled enough,' she said, kneeling and then sitting back on her heels in a fashion which told me that the maimed foot had no suffering in it. She took a handkerchief from her breast. 'Have you one?' she asked.

I shook my head, having lost mine on the beach, where, together with my neck-bands, my ruffles had been torn off.

She looked down at her collar, doubling her chin into her throat in an attitude that was most alluring. Then she untied the cord of the collar and drew it off.

'Suck again,' she said; 'give the wounds another wash, then come hither to me.'

And I stood by her, perceiving with content that her colour was all returned, while she bound my hand with the collar and the kerchief. That done, with no hurry, even pensively, I thought, she glanced up at me with a glorious smile, her eyes bereft of any shadow of dislike.

'Sir Edmund Shelverdene, this makes a great difference.'

'You have forgiven me a little of my wrong, madame?' I asked, my voice trembling with eagerness.

'A serpent would have bit me in the throat, she said—'me, that meant to have you die. You saw. You knew it must rescue you. You knew I should shoot. But, to save me, you risked my pistol and put your bare hand on the snake. Verily, Sir Edmund'—with a reviving of mockery, but this very sweet now—'verily, it were unthinkable I should forgive.'

She lifted her hands to me, and swift was I to clasp them and to rest my lips on one. Then quietly she said, 'Your left hand was the nigher to the snake; but wise were you, and 'twas your sword hand, your fast hand, you drove athwart me with such speed I could not see it. Your sword hand, that did reproach and wring me in my—my dreams to slay you, so that I jeered it viciously to-day.'

'Reproach—wring?' I asked, raising my eyes to look at her.

'My father—dear, gallant man—is yet no Shelverdene or Loomer with the sword. Did not your hand twice spare him?'

'If so, child'—for I would not lie to her—'methinks his death is the only suffering in all the world I have not given you.'

And picturing the long, piteous contest in her soul which her words had told of, I kept her hands, watching her eyes grow ever sweeter as they widened slowly, bidding me perceive how fully I was pardoned. Ay, I kept her hands for a minute. Then, when they were leaving me, I asked with a sigh: 'Have you a charge for your pistol? 'Twould be of use to me.'

'No.' She regarded me questioningly, uneasily, her fingers stayed by my words.

'Little matter,' I said, and kissed her hand again. 'Since you forgive, I am happy, and the scaffold will not force me to be otherwise.'

She shook my hands reprovingly. 'Why talk of scaffold? Is not that forgot between us?'

'I saw soldiers searching for me, as I washed my hand,' I replied. 'Perchance, they heard not the pistol; yet I can in no wise escape.'

Her fingers tightened sharply round mine. 'Aid me to rise,' she said; and when she was risen she added: 'Will you hold me? I cannot stand very surely alone.'

I gently steadied her by her arms, and strange it was to be holding her thus, near to me—strange, delightful; but the remorse of it! 'Oh, child,' I said. 'If I could have lived! If you would have let me woo you!—for in this half-hour I have come to love you madly and for ever! . . . Child, if I could have been your husband, to pass my life in serving you tenderly, in striving to make amends!' I laughed sadly. 'Faith! the power that would have been yours! For did ever we differ on a question, you should need but to bid me hold you, but to point to your crutch, and straightway I should think as you.'

'Come,' she said, 'you are very careless of your peril. Now is not to woo, but to do.' And yet, with a soft, caressing gesture, she raised her hand and touched the bruise which the pistol had left on my cheek. 'You must carry me to the farm,' she said. 'Have you strength? You look so weary.'

'Strength to carry you anywhere,' I answered, lifting her in my arms, 'if the soldiers hinder me not. But assuredly they will.'

I moved a pace, and stopped, observing her hat and pistol lying on the grass.

'Leave them,' she said; 'I want to bring you quick to Elphick's farm.'

'Simon Elphick's?' I asked, walking forth past the bank with her; and, on her nodding, I said, 'I think he would be friendly to me.'

'I know,' she replied, 'from his bearing when I spoke ill of you. And my father will be your friend when he learns of this morning. I must instantly send to London for him.' She shifted, and slipped her arm over my shoulder, saying that thus would she less burthen me; and continued, 'No soldiers are at the farm. 'Twill be a marvel if Elphick, and my father and I—your known enemies—cannot hide you securely there and put you over the sea.'

Her face lit with confidence; and my arms tightened about her as I looked on it, telling her of my gratitude. But I was sure she would have no chance to help me.

X

Our straight path to the farm lay clear, but on starting I had noted, a half-mile to one side of it, the heads of soldiers, in the midst of some bushes they were beating for me. For a while, however, I gazed on her, unheeding the fellows. I should see enough of them anon, but never more in life see these lips and eyes.

When I looked up, the soldiers were withdrawn from the bushes, their faces being towards us, so far as I could discover, for they were a good distance off. Then suddenly they hurried to intercept us. By their scarlet-and-yellow 'night-caps' and the form of their like-coloured coats, I could tell they were Fusiliers, whom the government, perhaps for money-saving, had kept in their uniforms of King James.

I bent again over her I bore.

'I shall not get to the farm,' I said. 'There are soldiers running to cut me off.'

She turned her head quickly to see.

'I believe you will get to the farm,' she replied quietly. 'Wait, I will stand for a little, that you may take ease; for you must not put me down when they are near. . . . Nay, face not to them, though they be so far.' She stood between my hands, fingering a loose button of my sleeve. 'I suppose,' she said, with a touch of pride that I durst not deem I was the reason of, 'I suppose that most soldiers know Colonel Shelverdene's face!'

'I can vouch for those Fusiliers,' I answered. 'I saw much of them two years ago, when I took a command again on troubles threatening the King. Ay, since they seek me, they will recall my face.'

'Tis well I have a plan,' she said. She began to pull off her cloak. 'You must wear this, to cover the hole I have shot through your coat; else will the soldiers think it was done last night on the beach.'

Together we got the cloak about me, and then she fell silent, leaning once or twice to peer past me to find how near were the soldiers.

'Lift me,' she bade at length, with a tiny gasp and a hot flushing of her cheeks that I could not account for.

'Sir Edmund,' she said, as I obeyed—and her arm closed round my neck; 'to hide your face, yet give them no suspicion, I—I shall play your lover—your bold, horrid lover.' She met my eyes imploringly, rapid, nervous twitchings at her nostrils. 'Sir Edmund, you will know it is all make-believe!' She glanced towards the Fusiliers, and threw her other arm round my neck. 'Sink your head,' she whispered. 'Do all I say; and when you cannot see I will guide you.'

She had contrived to press my peruke partly across my face, which, moreover, was now in her hair, so that I could use but one eye. That showed me the soldiers standing prepared for our coming, their officer taking a pace in our direction.

He was some hundred yards away, when the arms about me drew my head right down. The cheek of Denis Irby's daughter lay against my peruke, and my face was held hard upon her bare neck.

'Make-believe,' she reminded me tremulously; 'for who shall look for Shelverdene's face on my breast?'

And then, her arm and shoulder rising to guard me more, she began to carol and to laugh, and to direct me by calling, 'Straight forward—to the right—to the right,' her tones thrilling against my mouth, of which the lips were folded, and clenched by my teeth, for I must have kissed the place whereon it was pressed, had I not fought my hardest to be guiltless of such dishonour.

I felt the racing beat of her heart, yet her voice had only cool laughter in it when presently she cried: 'Captain Grey, I broke my crutch; but he who is to wed me came and found me.'

I heard a man reply, saying envious things of me.

'To the left—straight, my blind horse,' she cried; and we were through.

I had a week for wooing her, but, in some marvellous wise, she was back in my arms as my promised wife ere half that time was passed;

and on the night that Denis Irby was to lead me to the fishing-galliot which would sail me over to France, I kept him many minutes waiting for me at the gate of the farm. His daughter's voice and mine had bidden him believe the delay was for stuffing my pockets with food and a brandy-flask. Doubtless he believed no such tale, and, maybe, he smiled,

little guessing what relentless importuning of him was being hatched in the porch of the house. For there, the dear lips which spoke against mine were urging, 'Beg him let me follow thee soon. Beg him! beg him!' And mine were replying, 'Three miles to the galliot, sweetheart! And I will din his ears at every step.'

THE END.

INCONVERTIBLE PAPER MONEY AND CURRENCY PROBLEMS.

By JOHN D. LECKIE.

NEARLY all the late belligerent Powers, except the United States and Japan, are now contending with the problem of an inconvertible and depreciated paper currency. By 'inconvertible' is meant paper money which has nominally a certain gold value, but which, not being readily convertible into gold, is really worth much less.

The experience of practically every country that has issued inconvertible paper money has been an immediate depreciation in its value or purchasing power—in other words, an increase in the cost of living. The recent war was not the first occasion on which the British Government authorised the suspension of gold payment of currency notes. This was done in 1797, during the Napoleonic wars, and the complete resumption of gold payments was not effected till 1821, after a lapse of twenty-four years. The gold value of the paper £1 fell to about sixteen shillings; but the total expense of those wars, though spread over a period of more than twenty years, was small in comparison with the expenditure in the recent World War. The immediate result of the financial measure of 1797 was a decided increase in the cost of living. The mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, which broke out in the same year, can be traced in part to the same cause, the seamen complaining that, notwithstanding the augmented cost of living, their pay remained unaltered, and was wholly inadequate. The demands of the sailors were ultimately conceded—though some of the mutineers were executed.

Seven years previous to this (in 1790, soon after the outbreak of the French Revolution) a great part of the lands of the French clergy had been confiscated, and on the security of these lands the Government issued notes called 'assignats,' which were supposed to have a gold value, but were not really payable in gold. Subsequently these assignats were issued to such an enormous extent (45,578 million francs) that they rapidly depreciated in value. The effect was to increase the cost of living enormously, to disorganise business, and to cause a general demoralisation. How far the excesses of the revolution may have been thus produced it is hard to say. In March 1796 a golden 'louis'

was worth 7200 francs in assignats. The assignats were redeemed at a thirtieth of their nominal value by 'territorial mandates,' which again, in their turn, fell to a seventieth of their nominal value. The mandates were called in, in the year 1797. Thus ended this miserable system of finance which brought untold disasters on the country.

The Bolshevik revolution in Russia is said to have originated in a somewhat similar way, the first step being an overwhelming issue of inconvertible paper money, resulting in a great increase in the cost of living, general strikes, and a revolution.

The case of the United States offers another example. During the Civil War in that country the Government had recourse to the issue of inconvertible paper money. These notes, known as 'greenbacks,' from the colour of the ink with which they were printed, soon fell in value; in 1864 the paper dollar was worth only thirty-eight cents in gold. On the conclusion of the war, by a steady process of redemption, the value of the paper dollar was gradually raised, and the cost of living proportionally reduced; but the redemption was not completed till 1879, when the paper dollar was once more at par. Thus it took the United States Government fourteen years to redeem its depreciated paper, though the expenses of the Civil War were small in comparison with those caused to Great Britain by the great World War. It may be added that the years which followed the close of the Civil War were, on the whole, prosperous ones for the United States. It was during this period that the first transcontinental railway and the first permanent transatlantic cable were inaugurated. The fertile plains of the West were opened up, and a great rush of immigration ensued. The rapid increase of wealth and population thus greatly facilitated the financial problem which beset the United States Government. These remarks apply only to the paper money issued by the Northern States. In the Southern States the position was much worse. The paper notes issued by the Southern Confederacy fell in value till they were worth only a few cents to the dollar; after the collapse of the confederacy they were only worth the paper on

which they were printed. These notes, known as 'bluebacks,' bore on their face a promise to pay in gold 'two years after the conclusion of a treaty of peace with the United States.' Needless to say, that treaty was never concluded.

Recourse to an inconvertible paper currency has been in some South American countries a favourite mode of solving (or rather evading) financial problems. In Colombia the dollar fell to less than a halfpenny in value; in Paraguay, when the writer lived there, it was worth a little over twopence, and it afterwards fell lower. In Argentina, also, the paper dollar was at one time much depreciated, but some years ago, during the presidency of Pellegrini, the Government took the step of reconverting the paper to a gold basis 'at the rate of exchange of the day,' which was forty-four cents gold to the paper dollar. This measure, though denounced by outsiders as a partial repudiation, gave general satisfaction to those on the spot, who were most affected by it. It was accepted as the only practical mode of a prompt return to a gold basis. It must be remembered that the paper notes were not all issued when exchange was at or near par; most of them were issued when the paper dollar had already a greatly depreciated value. The operation practically amounted to this: that the Argentine Government bought in its own notes in the open market and at current market prices—just as the British Government, on more than one occasion, has bought in consols in the open market at much less than the price of either issue or redemption—their value having fallen in the meantime.

In Brazil, owing to the excessive issue of paper money, the value of the milreis (worth at par two shillings and threepence) fell at one time to below sixpence; but owing to a process of gradual redemption and other sound financial measures, the quotation gradually rose, and has recently stood at fourteen to sixteen pence—the cost of living being correspondingly reduced.

The confusion and demoralisation caused by a prolonged or excessive issue of inconvertible paper money can scarcely be over-estimated. Among other disadvantages, it places a great impediment

in the way of foreign trade. We have seen this in the case of trade with the United States; the continually fluctuating value of the dollar as compared with the pound has led to serious complications and losses. Yet in the case of countries like France or Germany, the evil is greater still; for in the United States the currency is still on a gold basis, whereas in the case of international trade between Great Britain and Germany or France, each separate country has a depreciated and fluctuating currency, even measured on a gold basis. The confusion, in fact, is so great that commercial transactions are almost impossible except by barter. But barter can seldom be effected at a distance; in most instances it requires the presence of both buyer and seller. In fact, it brings us back to the conditions of a remote antiquity, as in the time of Sindbad the sailor, when the merchant made a voyage on his own account, took his goods with him, sold them personally on the spot, or exchanged them on the spot for other goods, which he took with him and sold on his return home. Only in this way could the complications of exchange be avoided. And this has actually happened of late in the case of continental merchants, who have been compelled to make their purchases and sales on the spot, this rendering frequent trips necessary to the great trading centres.

In the Argentine Republic, before the reconversion to a gold basis, all imported goods were paid for (and also sold) in gold, while articles of local production were sold in local (paper) currency. The consequence was that every merchant and shopkeeper had to keep a double set of books, one in gold and another in paper, with constant conversions from the one into the other at a rate which fluctuated from day to day. For although imported goods were sold in gold, there was no actual exchange of gold coin, which was often unprocurable; the payment was really made in paper money 'at the exchange of the day' when the payment was made. Hence the necessity for these constant conversions, and of a system of accountancy which more than doubled the task of book-keeping. But to enumerate all the defects of an inconvertible currency would require a volume in itself.

OCTOBER STONES.

By G. TREVOR ROLLER.

I.

DOMINGO sat smoking in the straight-backed, uncomfortable American rocker that he had trained his body to appreciate. He had paid ten pesos for the thing, so surely it should be the fulfilment of comfort; anyway, it wouldn't be for the want of trying if it wasn't. Domingo was surrounded, in his two-roomed adobe house,

with uncomfortable bachelor things. The room he sat in now was his front parlour, dining-room, office (not that he ever had to do much official work), reception-room, everything. In Mexico many houses have the same type of room. The other compartment, opening from it, was the bedroom; in this case it contained nothing but an old stock saddle. No bed, only four walls, a window—unglazed—and a door; in solitary state

sat the saddle. Domingo's bed consisted of a *patate*, or straw mat, on the floor of his *multum in parvo* front room.

But Domingo was not thinking as yet about his bed. A book lay beside him on the unplanned pine table, and he was thinking of it, for he had just finished it after some days of careful reading. Oh yes, he could read, truly an accomplishment in one like himself, a *vaquero*,* for in Mexico many a man who works with cattle cannot read a word. But he was a lonely fellow, lucky enough to have a house left him by an uncle who had cut off his son from the property because that son had joined the wrong faction in the last revolution—or was it the last but one? The uncle wasn't sure, while he was dying from a surfeit of *agua vida* taken on a hot day. And Domingo did not care the price of ten cigarettes, as he got the adobe house and all that therein was—not much certainly.

Being lonely at night, not caring for promenading after ladies round the Plaza, and loathing drink because of the terrible example of his uncle, who died prematurely and not quite sound in his brain, Domingo took up education.

Having learnt to read, he bought numerous paper-backed atrocities (all generated in the United States) of the 'Bloodstained Putty Knife' type, translated by educated—heaven save the word!—Mexicans.

So there he sat digesting his last meal of 'Iron Claws,' 'Masked Criminal Catchers,' and what not, in his American rocker, smoking a cheap but excellent Mexican cigarette, and looking out through the open door on to the finest thing in the world, virgin ground as God made it, unspoiled by the wrecking hand of man, who cares naught for beauty—only for stomach-filling efforts. He looked out and saw nothing; he missed that great expanse of moonlit plain dotted with sage brush and rank cattle grass, the ridges of alkali that silvered as they caught the moonbeams; discerned nothing of the dark-blue mountains that rose and blotted out the things beyond, calling for the searcher, the one who would have Romance.

It all went unseen by this child of nature who had got 'education' and had lost his natural soul.

Domingo spat on the mud floor and lit another cigarette. Leaning back, he ruminated on how he could thwart the police, supposing he stole the hair-and-hemp lariat belonging to Ignacio Larrelde, the boss of his outfit. As he rocked and thought and smoked, to his ear came a distant sound, the thud of a horse galloping over the alkali.

He sat up listening.

'Why should a horse gallop over the plain to-night? None of his lot—he knew what each was doing. A loose horse frightened? No! going too steady for that.' So flew his thoughts.

'A man in a hurry,' he went on thinking, 'with death or *Rurales*† behind.' His distorted imagination, plus 'penny-dreadful' literature, made him relish that thought.

'Riding for a doctor? No doctor hereabouts. For the *Rurales* themselves? What?'

He rose, shut the door, and looked from behind the candle through the window. Then he saw them, horse and rider swinging along in the moonlight, dodging the sage brush, but holding a straight line for his house. With a slithering sound they pulled up at the door. Domingo reached back to the wall, took down his revolver and belt, fastened the belt round him so that the butt of the gun was easy to his right hand, and advanced to the door.

II.

'Good-evening, cousin,' said the rather out-of-breath man holding the very out-of-breath horse.

Domingo gulped. Mother of Saints! this was the cousin who joined the wrong faction in the last (or the second-last) revolution—who might have owned this very house.

'Why, Don Pedro, cousin, you are welcome. Everything in my house is yours;' politely said Domingo, sliding his hand on to his gun. 'But the horse, let us take it to the corral; there is plenty of *paha*‡ for it,' he went on.

'He is nearly a dead horse,' said Pedro, undoing the cinch. 'To-morrow I must borrow one off you.'

'Everything that I have is at your disposal. But why this great hurry? Is it for a wager?' Domingo queried. Pedro swung the saddle off the pony's back and in through the door.

'Yes,' he said, still rather breathless, 'a wager with—*ah cielo!* let me put the pony away and I will tell you. Then, after a rest—only an hour or two—I must be away again.'

'You have the manner of a frightened deer,' sighed Domingo, as he removed his hand from his gun.

They put the pony into the corral, and returned to the house.

Once the door was shut Domingo—a bully at heart—faced his cousin. He, the cousin, had shown he was, to say the least, a bit upset.

'What have you stolen?' asked Domingo.

Pedro looked him up and down, not missing the large forty-five Colt hanging below his hip. Then he smiled.

'I have not stolen, but have taken something that a certain Señor Don Gonzales Reyes claims as his.'

'Opals!' gasped Domingo, his eyes nearly bursting themselves to find where Pedro had them secreted.

'Yes,' went on Pedro; 'uncut opals from the ground he claims as his—but 'tis not. It is open country, and always was. But now this over-fat Reyes—may the good saints forget him!

* Cowboy.

† Civil guards.

‡ Straw chaff.

—claims the place as *his* opal-field, and has it guarded at night by his own men—what he pays them to be honest the Virgin knows. By day the *Rurales*, who don't belong to the present government, patrol it and escort you across, as is usual on every opal-field, and if you attempt to pick anything from the ground you are shot. But I—well, I camped near and searched in the moonlight. Cousin, I believe that by the light of the moon one can find the best stones—they wink at you with all their colours. Also, the *peones* who are hired to guard at night can be circumvented by one who crawls on his stomach warily. But those *Rurales*! God helped me, for they do not work at night.'

'But why,' asked Domingo, 'did you leave so hurriedly? Had you as much as you could carry?' And again he surveyed the slim figure before him. Uncut opals are bulky.

'No, because I was seen last night. I ran, jumping sideways and sideways, for they shot. I reached my horse. It was a moment to fling on a saddle and ride for my life. I accomplished it, señor.'

'Your life!' gasped Domingo; 'but what of the stones?'

'I had them ready packed here.' Pedro took a stride to his saddle and patted the saddle-bags.

Domingo, overwhelmed with excitement, implored to be shown this wealth that Pedro had accumulated. Out came two gunny sacks, one from each side of the saddle; the sacks were opened, the treasure displayed.

Uncut opals are worth very little, so much depends on the cutting and the polishing—a huge percentage powder to worthless stuff in the process.

Probably the value of Pedro's theft was about fifty pesos (five pounds). Pedro—knowing nothing about it—imagined he had a small fortune.

Domingo thought the same, and they fingered the uncut stones lovingly.

'Come,' said Pedro reluctantly, 'I must rest, if only for two hours. Can you awaken me in two hours' time?'

Domingo glanced at the stones, then his eye fell on the penny-dreadful. 'Yes! yes!' he said hurriedly. 'But are you followed, er—closely?'

'No,' said Pedro considering, 'not closely followed, but for some days they will search. They may come asking to this house, asking questions.' His eyes closed for a second or two, and he swayed against the table. 'I must sleep, just a short while. Here, take these.' He dived his hand into the nearest bag and put on the table a quantity of the uncut stones. 'They will repay you for harbouring me, for the loan of a horse. I leave my pinto pony with you as *conflancia* (surety); he is better than any two you have.'

'But the law; I do not wish to come under the law,' murmured the educated Domingo, fingering the stones.

'Oh, to the devil with the law!' cried Pedro; 'it cannot touch you. You will know nothing of me, if questioned, only of a man who craved a meal from you and rode on to the West—the West, mark you.' Again he leant against the table, dead-beat. Then, noticing Domingo's attitude of still-not-persuadedness, he went on hurriedly, 'After all, Domingo, you owe me something. My father left you all this, when I was the natural one to have it. I have never grumbled.' (No! because he had been too busy with his revolutionary efforts to worry.) 'You have lived here in peace, lain in the house that was rightly mine. Here, take these also.' He dived again into the sack, and produced more stones.

'Bueno,' sighed Domingo, 'you can rest and welcome for two hours. Here is food—and also, though I never touch it, *tecela* the best. Drink of it; it will make you wake refreshed.'

Pedro ate hurriedly and gulped down a large *copet* of *tecela*, which is a potent liquor almost pure alcohol. Domingo filled his glass again, and, breaking his rule for once, drank himself—as he said—to the speed of the good horse he would lend Pedro to reach the state border on, where he would be more or less safe.

Pedro entered the small back room unsteadily, fatigue and *tecela* having made him not a little drunk; but he did not forget his two bags. He rolled his blanket round him, lay down with the bags cuddled to him, his head on the old saddle. Domingo closed the door, took another pull at the *tecela*, then plumped himself into his rocker.

III.

'Certainly,' thought Domingo to himself, 'in a moment or two I could enter that room and take the treasure. The drink was strong; he drank as if 'twas water. He will sleep like a log. But he would awake, and then I should have a bad enemy on my heels, or he would take over this house and I should lose it, and my two ponies—also his pinto. Certain, I should be rich with all those stones, but I know little of Mexico, and I would rather be rich here with people I know. No, I cannot appropriate the stones, unless'—

Here Domingo derived much benefit from his extensive study of crime in his lurid books, and he constructed a nice little crime all on his own account, something after this fashion. First, he must shoot Pedro. Unfortunate for poor Pedro, but entirely necessary—besides, would not Pedro do exactly the same by him if the positions were reversed? Then he must bring the body into the front room and place it as naturally as possible, lying face down on the table. Next he must fire two shots out of Pedro's revolver and put it back in Pedro's hand. Then he must empty the opal rubble into his mud stove, and fill the sacks with waste from outside, with a few opals on the top of each, laying them again by

the dead man. After that he would ride off, find the searchers, and tell his alarmed story of a man who came to his door demanding food, saying he was being pursued, even boasting of his stolen opals. He, Domingo, like a good and stubborn citizen, refused succour to a *ladrone*, a common thief, and reached to the wall for his gun. The man fired twice, but Domingo's saints were with him. He seized his own revolver and fired, meaning to wound. Alas! he killed the man. He left him in his house and rode forth to acquaint the thief's pursuers and lead them to their quarry. Certainly a good story. He probed it for a possible flaw. Perhaps a shot through his hat where it hung on the wall near his revolver? Yes, certainly, that should be arranged.

Then he had another *copeta*, strapped on his belt, and proceeded to enact the part he had planned to play. He went round the house to the unglazed window. The moon shone white on Pedro's forehead. Domingo rested the barrel of the revolver on the window-sill.

Domingo took the sacks, emptied them in the mud stove, filled them as planned, tied them up and placed them on the table.

He carried the body—not noticing that it was bootless, for Pedro had kicked off his boots before going to sleep—and laid it, face down, over the bags, right arm outstretched. He pulled the automatic out of the holster—a smaller bore than his own—and fired two shots, one through the hat on the wall; then placed the weapon in the dead man's hand. He picked up Pedro's saddle, and without a look behind went out into the night.

The moonlight shone through the still open door on poor unlucky Pedro, whose birthday was in July.

IV.

Domingo entered the corral and caught the nearest pony. He did not have to rope it—simply walked up and put on the bridle, never giving a thought to the fact that it was Pedro's pony. Then he saddled it and rode off.

His search for the pursuers did not take him far. Over the next ridge he found them—all *Rurales*, with a sergeant (or the equivalent) in charge; they had just made camp. He told his story to the sergeant. Immediately they saddled up and rode to the house, turned their horses loose in the corral, and inspected the damage. There were six of them who trooped into the house after Domingo, who showed them how the robber entered, from where he shot, the bullet holes—one through his hat—the bags, and how he had fallen on top of them. Then, quite overcome, he sank in his rocker, and offered them the hospitality of his house. He was so upset by the events of the evening, he explained, that he could not play properly the part of host.

The sergeant quite understood.

'You have shot this man,' he said, 'and

naturally you now regret it. But it is as well. He would have lived to be a bad man; I am certain of that. He got away with only a few dollars' worth of opals, and we wished to make an example of him as a reminder to him another time. But what matter? He tried to take your life—you took his—it is just as well.'

Domingo offered them *tecela* from his big jar. They accepted it, and conversation became general, the corpse having been laid decently in a corner.

'When the *ladrone* made his escape from the opal-field,' ruminated one, 'it was reported that he was clothed in dark clothes.'

Pedro in his run for liberty had thrown his dark blanket over himself, so as to make less of a target.

'Well?' questioned the sergeant.

'Oh, nothing,' went on the inquisitive one; 'but the poor dead one wears a white linen coat.'

All eyes seemed to turn on Domingo for the answer. He was clad in leather *chaps*, with a dark-blue waistcoat and a brown shirt.

'Possibly the guard was deceived,' he said; 'perhaps—a lucky shot—he covered his back with his blanket.'

The talk went on as the *tecela* went round. Some one suggested hot water. Domingo did not hear the suggestion, so behind him one of the men began to make a fire on the mud stove.

Presently the fire-maker had a complaint.

'The draught,' he grumbled, 'will not draw.'

Domingo leapt up, realising what was happening.

'No,' he cried, 'that stove will never draw a good fire. Come; I have a spirit stove to heat water.'

Then suddenly the sergeant rose and pulled the blanket off the feet of the dead body.

'He wears no boots, does this miserable one,' he announced. And again the six looked at Domingo, not for an answer this time, but with suspicion.

Then one man rose, an elderly man with gray hair and a keen eye.

'Sergeant,' he said, 'while you were making camp, I rode on to the ridge before us, hoping to see some ranch. I saw no lights, but I heard a shot. I listened; after some time I heard two more. This man says that the man there—may the saints take his soul to heaven!—fired twice at him, then he killed him at his first shot. I heard differently.'

Domingo, feeling that things were now getting really awkward, rose to explain, but unfortunately the man with the culinary bent had been grubbing down the flue. Suddenly he came to the candle on the table.

'Cielo!' he cried, 'these are uncut opals. Look!' and he spread them on the table.

Some one seized the yet unopened bags and poured out the contents, some opal native stuff and the rest rubble.

Without any order being given, Domingo was seized and held.

Then the sergeant put in a bit of thinking, and for one who had not studied the same literature as Domingo, reconstructed the crime quite nicely. He was a lot out, but the end justified the means.

'You,' he said, addressing Domingo, 'are the man who stole the stuff from the Reyes opal-field. I know this, because you are dressed darkly; the dead man there has a white coat. You rode a pinto pony away from the field; you met us on a pinto pony. What you did was this: you came to this house and killed the poor one there—look, he has no boots. He was sitting in here, and you shot him as he sat, then secreted your gains, arranged the picture for us—a pretty picture, but not clever enough. You are the thief, also the murderer of the poor man sitting here in his house. You come with us.'

'But I am the owner of this house,' shrieked Domingo. 'I can prove it to-morrow.'

A man entered from the room behind with a candle.

'He shot him sleeping, señor,' he said to the sergeant. 'I have been in there. Blood on the floor tells of it, and a hole through an old saddle

made by a bullet; also a pair of boots. The poor fellow must have laid his head on the saddle. Ah! heaven, what a villain!'

The sergeant motioned for silence. Domingo, knowing the game was up, wilted into his expensive rocker. Then the sergeant spoke.

'In Mexico we have a law; it is called "*El ley fugal*." What it means is this—to my mind: Should a prisoner attempt to escape, shoot him. It saves much litigation at times.'

Then he turned to his men.

'Take the prisoner to the camp,' he said quietly.

They shoved Domingo out of his own cottage into the dark, and the door shut.

The sergeant sat in the American rocker, helped himself to another *copeta*, lit a cigarette, and waited. Presently he heard four or five shots. He puffed away at his *Buen Tono*—and waited. The sound of footsteps came to the door, and one of his men entered.

'The prisoner,' he panted, 'attempted to escape. We shot him.'

The sergeant smiled. '*Bueno*,' he said. 'I do not believe that that man's birthday was in October.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PRODUCER-GAS FOR CARS AND BOATS.

THE prices of petrol and paraffin having reached such high figures, with little hope of any fall in the near future, other sources of power for road-vehicles, aeroplanes, and boats are attracting an unusual amount of attention. Although unsuitable for aircraft on account of the weight of the apparatus involved, producer-gas has proved a practicable proposition for cars and boats. Until the advent of the producer patented by Lieutenant-Colonel D. J. Smith, however, the apparatus was also too heavy for road-vehicles. Most of our readers will know that the ordinary petrol-engine can be run on coal-gas practically without alteration. It is likewise possible to use what is known as producer-gas, but at some loss of power, this averaging about 20 per cent.; while the consumption is greater than that in an engine specially designed for the purpose. At the same time the results are remarkably good, as will be shown later. Gas suitable for engines can be generated very simply from coal or coke. The producer devised by Lieutenant-Colonel Smith takes the form of a cylinder having a refractory lining and a fire-grate at the bottom. A fire of anthracite or coke is lit, the fuel chosen being supplied by a special device, and air and steam are admitted under the grate in controlled quantities. The top of the producer is connected to a tubular cleaner, which extracts the dust from the gas

on its way to the engine. Once the engine is started the suction of the pistons draws in the requisite quantities of air and steam, which, combining with the carbon in the fuel, produce the necessary gas. The steam is generated in a simple manner by the heat of the fire-grate from water introduced by a pump. For a 50 horse-power motor the weight of the apparatus is about two hundredweights. When tested on a motor-lorry recently, the original petrol-motor being used, the cost per vehicle-mile came to 566d., against 85d. for petrol, these figures being based upon anthracite at 40s. a ton and petrol at 3s. 4d. a gallon. Trials of the apparatus in a 35-foot boat with a 75 horse-power petrol motor, carried out under the supervision of the Admiralty, resulted in a cost per sea-mile of 125d. for anthracite and 2075d. for petrol, anthracite being taken at 55s. a ton and petrol at 3s. 8d. a gallon.

AN ELECTRIC HOT BOTTLE.

A hot-water bottle in the bed during the winter is now looked upon by a vast number of people as an absolute necessity. The very small amount of heat required to keep a person's feet warm in bed favours the use of electricity for this purpose, and a simple bed foot-warmer utilising electricity as a heating agent has recently been placed on the market. The device consists of a cylinder of sheet metal in which is a smaller cylinder, the annular space

between the two being filled with specially prepared cork. The inner cylinder is open at each end. Carried on a sliding bracket in the middle of the cylinder is a small carbon electric lamp, which can be attached by a flexible cord to the nearest electric-lamp socket. A flannel coat completes the appliance, which gives a steady heat so long as the current is turned on. A lamp of this size consumes about one-hundredth of a unit an hour, so that even with current at 10d. a unit the appliance will keep hot all night for a penny. When compared with the hot-water bottle this foot-warmer has the advantage of giving the correct amount of heat continuously, instead of being too hot to begin with and practically cold in the morning. Moreover, assuming the switch to be within reach of the bed, the lamp can be turned on or off as required. In considering the question of cost, it must be remembered that the water for a hot-water bottle is not heated up for nothing, especially if the operation is performed over a gas-ring at existing prices for gas. This device can also be utilised in other ways. With the flannel coat removed, it can be stood up on its end and used to warm up foods or drinks. For this purpose lamps up to eight candle-power can be used, and the bracket carrying them is slid up until the lamp nearly touches the cooking utensil. The bottom edge of the warmer is cut in four positions to allow the flexible cord to pass when the apparatus is used in this way. The warmer may also be employed for the vaporisation of scents and disinfectants, the warming of plates, as a reading-lamp with the addition of a shade, and, with ice substituted for the lamp, for cooling drinks. It is made in tin, nickel, copper, or brass, as desired, and is supplied complete with lamp, flexible cord, adapter, and flannel coat.

PNEUMERCATOR GAUGES.

Last month, in a note describing the oil-fuel installation for the *Aquitania*, reference was made to the 'Pneumercator Gauges' which were fitted to the bunker-tanks to show the level of the oil therein. These instruments really indicate the pressure due to the depth of the oil, this being obtained in a small bell-shaped balance-chamber at the bottom of each tank. If a chamber with an open bottom and a closed top be placed in an empty tank, and the tank be gradually filled, air will be imprisoned in the top of the chamber and compressed to an extent corresponding with the depth of the liquid in which it is immersed. The pressure of this compressed air could be ascertained by fitting a small pipe between the top of the chamber and a pressure-gauge, but the results would not be quite accurate, because the liquid would rise in the chamber to a height which would vary with the temperature of the air, and would be seriously affected by the slightest leakage. A hole with a lip at a

definite height is cut, therefore, in the side of the chamber, near the bottom, and a hand air-pump is added to the equipment. When the pressure is to be taken, a few strokes of the air-pump force down the level of the liquid in the balance-chamber until air bubbles out through the hole at the bottom, the pressure being read on a mercury gauge. It will be noted that whether the air be hot or cold is immaterial, the pressure due to the depth of the liquid in the tank above the lip being accurately shown. The pressure per square inch is really the weight of a column of liquid one inch square and equal in height to the depth of the lip in the chamber. For a tank, therefore, of which the surface area in square inches is known, the weight of the contents is shown by the pressure, whether the liquid be water or oil, and regardless of differences of temperature. This is a great advantage in dealing with large quantities of oil, such as are required in big ships, as purchases are always made by the ton, and the gauges for the various tanks can be marked in tons. Another advantage of the system is that the gauges can be located at any reasonable distance from the tanks, in offices or in cabins, while electric contacts can be arranged so that the mercury will make connection and ring alarm-bells at any desired level.

A SMALL AEROPLANE.

One of the most interesting aeroplanes to be seen at the recent Aero Show at Olympia was that known as the 'B.A.T. Crow.' The design of this machine forms quite a new departure, in that the airman is accommodated under the plane in a little body, between the wheels of the big central skid. In fact, there is no fuselage as ordinarily understood, the tail being supported by two beams under the single plane, which are extended to the rear for this purpose. The engine, which develops 40 horse-power, is mounted at the front of the plane, and drives a 63-inch propeller having two blades. With a range of 150 miles, this machine is capable of doing 65 miles an hour at the ground-level, while it has the low landing speed of 30 miles an hour. Its length over all is 14 feet, and the span of the plane 19 feet. The weights when empty and loaded are 220 and 450 pounds respectively. The engine runs at 1200 revolutions a minute, and the tank capacity of five gallons is enough for two hours. If the machine cannot be housed complete, the plane can be taken off by removing sixteen nuts. In fact, the whole machine can be dismantled in a few minutes with one small spanner and a pair of pliers. There are no bracing wires, consequently no tuning is necessary when the machine is put together again. This aeroplane is even smaller than the 'Austin Whippet,' which was described in these notes for March.

ALCOHOL *versus* PETROL.

To those constantly urging the production of alcohol in this country and in other portions of the British Empire as an antidote to the high price of petrol, a memorandum issued recently by the Fuel Research Board should prove interesting and instructive. According to this document the chances are but slender of producing in the United Kingdom on a commercial basis alcohol for motor-transport. The utilisation of wood waste is ruled out owing to the small quantity available, while the synthetic production of alcohol from calcium carbide is impossible without cheap power for the manufacture of the basic product. A third method, consisting of the recovery of ethylene from coke-oven and coal gas, and its conversion into alcohol, is considered to be still in the experimental stage. The manufacture of alcohol from barley, potatoes, and mangolds is next discussed, the figures being based upon the estimated consumption of petrol for this year, which is put at 250 million gallons. More than four million tons of barley, requiring $5\frac{1}{2}$ million acres of land, would be needed to produce a similar yield of alcohol, these figures being increased to $12\frac{1}{2}$ million tons (requiring two million acres) and 25 million tons (needing $1\frac{1}{4}$ million acres) for potatoes and mangolds respectively. The quantities of these three crops raised last year in the British Isles were 1,288,035 tons of barley, 6,312,000 tons of potatoes, and 7,769,000 tons of mangolds, the acreages being 1,870,087, 1,218,774, and 471,759 respectively. In view of the shortage for food-production the Board consider it unthinkable that land could be used for growing even a fraction of the quantities required. But apart from this aspect of the question, the cost for the raw materials only of producing alcohol from the crops specified, at average figures for last year, would be 7s. a gallon from barley, 8s. 6d. from potatoes, and 3s. from mangolds. Outside the United Kingdom molasses form a possible source of alcohol, but even if the total quantity available in the British Empire were treated, only 17 to 18 million gallons of 95 per cent. alcohol would result. It is admitted that large tracts of uncultivated and suitable land for the cultivation of plants containing starch or sugar exist within the Empire where labour is less costly than in this country, but it is thought that the provision of transport, fuel, and water might be more difficult and perhaps more costly; while anything in the nature of a foodstuff, wherever produced, is likely to command a price, as such, sufficiently high to make its use for the manufacture of power-alcohol prohibitive unless grown in quantities far in excess of any food requirements. The vast quantities of rapidly growing vegetation in tropical portions of the Empire would afford a practically inexhaustible reservoir of power-alcohol if a cheap and simple

chemical or bacteriological process for producing it were available and could be applied commercially on a very large scale, and research work in this direction has been initiated. The conclusion arrived at is that coal is the largest as well as the cheapest source of fuel for transport purposes, and it is suggested that by carbonising it at a temperature of about 600 degrees C., gas of twice the calorific value of town-gas would be available for the propulsion of omnibuses and passenger-cars for quick traffic if light yet safe containers could be constructed. The residual coke could be utilised in suction-gas producers and engines, the cost on a thermal unit basis being only one-seventh that of petrol at 3s. a gallon. Benzol and light naphtha would be available for air transport or light road-vehicles.

A SAFETY PETROL FILLER.

When the tank of a car, boat, or aeroplane is filled, the usual procedure is to empty into it through a funnel the requisite number of tins of petrol. If the tank be large, the process is tedious, while spirit is often wasted by splashing or overfilling. As every motorist knows, the outlet in the petrol tin is always turned uppermost when pouring, as this plan allows air to enter steadily instead of in gulps, as happens when the outlet is at the bottom. Petrol, or, for that matter, any other liquid, can only be poured slowly in this way, owing to the difficulty of getting air into the tin. Various 'fillers,' as they are called, have been devised to expedite the emptying of petrol tins into tanks, and to render the operation safe. One of the most effective is that described in this paragraph. This device consists of a curved spout made of brass, about six inches in length, which is attached to the petrol tin by a screwed collar. A small air-pipe is fastened to the outer end of the spout, and runs parallel with it for about half its length, when it passes through to the inside, and is continued to the inner end of the spout. Here is screwed on an extension which curves upwards to the top of the tin when in the pouring position, thus admitting a steady supply of air where it is wanted. No funnel is required with this device, as the end of the spout enters the filling-hole in the tank, and is provided with a fine gauze strainer. During the act of pouring, the outlet of the tin is at the bottom, and the contents run out very quickly. At a test made by the Royal Automobile Club the times taken to empty petrol tins with large and small orifices were $20\frac{3}{4}$ and $23\frac{3}{4}$ seconds respectively, to which must be added the times taken to attach and remove the filler, making the totals $28\frac{1}{2}$ seconds and $35\frac{3}{4}$ seconds. These compare favourably with $42\frac{3}{4}$ seconds and 1 minute 10 seconds for emptying the tins in the ordinary way. Another feature of the filler is that the moment the level in the tank reaches the end of the spout the

air-tube is sealed and the petrol automatically ceases to flow. With this device, therefore, it is impossible to overfill a tank. The spout is fitted with an adjustable clip which rests on the edge of the tank-inlet fitting, whereby the height to which the tank shall be filled can be predetermined.

'BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW.'

One of the earliest of recorded strikes was that of the Chosen People during the Captivity, when they were compelled to make 'bricks without straw.' The phrase has sorely puzzled Biblical commentators, and till quite recent years no adequate explanation of the importance of the use of straw in brickmaking was forthcoming. That the effect of the straw so used was considerable cannot be doubted, in view of the outcry the stoppage of its supply occasioned; yet how the straw came to be used, and in what manner its presence was essential to the success of the operation, yet remains to be proved. One of the most obvious suggestions, and one which (for lack of a better) has been generally accepted, is that the straw was used as a mechanical binding agent to hold the bricks together. (It must, of course, be remembered that these bricks were only sun-dried, and were not burned or 'fired' in the way our modern bricks are.) To the present day hair is sometimes used in making plaster; by its fibre it toughens the mass and holds it together. And so this explanation gained credit, notwithstanding that there is no direct evidence of the use of straw in this manner. Nor does any trace of the ancient use survive in Egypt, a country where many of the native customs are the same to-day as they were some three thousand years ago. Bricks from Pithom, one of the cities of the Captivity, have of late been subjected to a searching analysis. That the specimens are authentically bricks made by hand and sun-dried three thousand years ago, there is no doubt. But analytical and other investigations indicate no trace of straw in their composition. In fact, the only striking point about these bricks is that their analysis is almost identical with that of mud taken from the Nile quite recently—a remarkable comment upon the slowness with which nature makes her changes. Nile mud to-day is the same as Nile mud three thousand years ago; notwithstanding the great changes that period has seen in the history of mankind, in the history of the earth it is but as a day. The work of the American scientist Dr Acheson may, it is suggested, throw some new light on this puzzle. In the course of a research dealing with soluble lubricants, this chemist had occasion to examine some specimens of German and American clays, identical in chemical composition, but of quite different practical qualities. He found that the difference in their plasticity resulted from a difference in their preliminary

treatment. The more plastic clay, he discovered, contained a greater proportion of particles so fine that they cannot be settled from solution, or even filtered by ordinary methods—'colloidal' particles, as they are called by chemists. Treatment of raw clay by water containing an abundance of colloidal matter results in a greatly improved plasticity of the clay, for it is found that the colloidal matter acts protectively upon the finest clay particles, preventing them from aggregating into larger particles, as they naturally tend to do. So that if any method of preparation of the clay be adopted which will increase this action, the clay will gain in tenacity and strength. One such method, long adopted in some clay processes, is to treat the clay with water containing tannin. Dr Acheson, however, discovered that an infusion of straw also possessed this same property as tannin; indeed, straw itself contains nearly 50 per cent. of a water-soluble colloid. It is therefore suggested that the old brickmakers of the Captivity did not actually incorporate straw in their bricks, but that they treated their clayey Nile mud with an infusion of straw. Experiments have so far confirmed this theory that a treated sun-burned brick is said to be superior in strength and tenacity to a fully burned brick of untreated clay.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

SUNSET.

THE dusky garments of the Night
Are starred with jewels so dazzling bright
That as she lets her mantle fall,
Poor banished Day is held in thrall,
And, disobeying God's command
That darkness shall possess the land,
She hesitates, with finger-tips
In wonder on her parted lips;
Then, filled with feverish unrest
For fear that Earth should love Night best,
Shakes out her skirts of glowing dyes
And for an instant fills the skies
With hues of rainbow brilliance—bright
As birds of paradise in flight.
Thus, having satisfied her whim,
Smiling she sinks below the rim,
And leaves the peaceful Night to close
Earth's burning eyes in soft repose.

D. PARRY THOMAS.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address* written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE BLAIRS ROPE.

A TALE OF THE 'I' DETECTIVE FORCE.

By R. S. WARREN BELL.

PART I.

I.

IN the ear of Roger Ross, barrister-at-law, sitting in his chambers in the Temple one night, following a ring-up on the 'phone, sounded the silky, incisive, very-clearly-uttered consonant, 'S.'

Ross was a member of the recently established arm of Scotland Yard called 'The Intellectuals.' The formation of this force had been rendered necessary by the great increase of crime, especially among the upper classes. For, after the world conflict, a new type of criminal had emerged from the queerly-shaken-up and adulterated community known as Society—a criminal as innocent-looking as he was depraved, as smooth and retiring in manner as he was bold—nay, audacious—in action. To cope with him it had been found necessary to employ men of the social stratum he had wormed his way into, and a Home Secretary of enlightened views, broad outlook, and original methods had enrolled a band of men who for shrewdness and capability, for combining mental alertness with bodily activity and great courage, soon made themselves felt and feared.

Primarily, they were thinkers. They were educated men of a good social position. In their ranks were included doctors, lawyers, Civil servants, engineers, writers, and artists. One of them was a fashionable dancing-master, another a West-End estate agent. Of sure discretion and unimpeachable character, they were paid, some few a salary, the majority by results—sometimes (and inevitably) nothing; on occasion with a generosity that was a little overwhelming. For they were all workers, men who worked for their bread with their brains. A fee of five thousand pounds, for instance, proved a windfall indeed to a parliamentary reporter; but as he unmasked a gang of the cleverest rogues in Europe, who very nearly annexed a million of money, he cannot be said to have been over-rewarded.

The 'I's' did not attend at the 'Yard.' They never met in conclave, and did not know each other, but at times they worked in couples.

No. 514.—VOL. X.

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OCTOBER 2, 1920.

(I may one day tell the strange tale of how one 'I' tracked another 'I'.) The head and director of them was a permanent official at the Home Office called Scathways. He was known to the Intellectuals as 'S.'

II.

Ross, a clean-shaven, personable, collected-looking man of thirty-five (and a bachelor withal), was immediately attentive.

'Oh, you, sir—yes!'

'Busy, Ross!'

'Not so busy as I'd like to be, sir.'

'I mean, you are not so busy but you can spare the time to go into a little matter! Our rule, you know, is never to interfere with a man's normal occupation.'

'Anything I have to do can wait.'

'Good! Now, do you know Sir Hugh Blairs, of Blairs Court, Shropshire?'

'I have only heard of him.'

'Oh! I rather wanted a man who had, if possible, the *entrée* to his house. However, you may be able to handle the thing, especially as you like to work everything out at your own table.'

'I prefer that way, sir—the mathematical.'

'Though generally physical co-operation is necessary. Well, Blairs, as you probably know, recently came in for the property. He succeeded his uncle, who went the pace rather, and left him a somewhat impoverished estate. His aunt, Lady Blairs, was also the antithesis of what you would call *saving*. She, by the way, when her tears for the late baronet were hardly dried, married Cryer, the Tea King'—

'He cries at you from every little grocer's window,' observed Ross.

'But the people who shed the tears are those who inadvertently find themselves drinking his tea. However, to be done with these pleasant-ries, Hugh Blairs has now taken up his residence at the old family barn in Shropshire. He is, in fact, entertaining his first house-party—a rather mixed lot, I believe—so mixed, apparently, that the celebrated Blairs Rope—the family diamonds—has already disappeared'—

'If they have started like this, how *will* they end?' mused Ross.

A gentle laugh greeted the remark. 'It may take the shape of a wholesome homœopathic dose for Sir Hugh!' observed Mr Scathways. 'Well, to proceed. It was taken from the safe. Blairs was proposing to give his guests a sight of it, and opening the safe with that purpose in view, found the rope *gone*. There had been no violence, you will observe—no blowing or drilling open or anything of that sort. But the Yard man concluded that an impression had been taken of the key—that Blairs' own key had not been used. It was a great shock to Blairs.'

'Had he shown the rope,' queried Ross, 'to any single member of the party before?'

'Why do you ask that?'

'Well, it is rather important one should know.'

'He had previously shown it to one guest only—a dear old lady named Mrs Jacobs, aunt to the girl he is going to marry.'

'Oh, is *she* there?'

'Yes. Her name is Elfin Serge. She is a very attractive girl of twenty-two, a little foreign in appearance, but not otherwise. There is no actual engagement yet, but everything points'—

'I see. You say the Court is a barn, and that the estate is impoverished. Would he give the old lady a sight of the jewels with the idea of impressing the girl—to whom she would, of course, enlarge on their splendour?'

'It is possible. This Mrs Jacobs, by the way, knows Lady Blairs, and through their acquaintance Sir Hugh came to meet the girl.'

'The old lady had probably seen the jewels before, then?'

'Possibly—if she had stayed at the Court.'

'And would have told the girl about them?'

'I see you are already forming a theory. It may interest you to know, then, that the Yard man—Evans—who has been down, includes the girl in his list of possible—suspects.'

'Indeed! He fancies the thief is a member of the house-party?'

The chief's smooth laugh sounded again. 'He said there were two or three people there who looked quite capable of committing the theft.'

'The fatal "mixture"! Does he suggest it might have been the work of a syndicate—people who have cultivated Blairs for some time with this object in view?'

'That probably crossed his mind. He put some tactful inquiries to Blairs about the guests, and, leaving out the worthy married couples who wouldn't steal a hair-pin and odd girls who *would*—but nothing else—he sorted them down to these:

'Miss Elfin Serge, whose movements before and after the theft he regards as suspicious.

'Mrs Jacobs, who, if her niece were impli-

cated, would be, he considers, a party to the deal, though he admits the old lady is nearly always asleep—waking, of course, for meals.

'Darius Hauptmann, a financier of sorts—the kind of fellow Blairs would borrow money from and employ to procure money.

'Edmund Cooper—Blairs' valet—an absolutely trustworthy fellow, Blairs says; never been known to help himself to a sixpence.

'These four. Evans—an excellent chap—is sure there is no other possible; and even at that the Serge aunt may be ruled out, he thinks'—

'And surely the niece?'

'There is not the slightest reason why the whole four shouldn't be ruled out, my friend, but if a person in the house is the guilty one, he is certain it is one of those I have tabulated.'

'What makes him think the girl might have taken it?' asked Ross.

'He doesn't think she did. He says these four are the only possible suspects, and he is certain somebody in the house took the necklace.'

'Why?'

'Owing to the time, the position of the room, the absence of any sign of breaking in, the stealth and cleanliness with which the whole affair was managed, and the fact that he found on Blairs' key a vestige of bread—bread-paste, as you are aware, being suitable for taking an impression.'

'By the way, there really is something "between" the girl and Blairs?' asked Ross.

'He pays her a great deal of attention.'

'She likes him?'

'Let us hope so, if it is her intention to marry him.'

Ross laughed over the dry answer. Then, 'Who is this Yard man?' he asked.

'Inspector Evans. Hardly a brilliant man, but competent. He will be with you in half-an-hour, and if you can let me have your solution by to-morrow night I shall be obliged. I have never yet taken you out of your chambers, you know, and after you have seen Evans the usual half-sheet of note-paper ought to prove large enough for your report. All I want from you is: "Which—and why?" Evans will do the rest. You understand?'

'Perfectly. Everything depends on what Evans tells me. Is he—er—pleasantly disposed to the "I's"?''

'He'd soon find himself enjoying a pension if he wasn't,' was the rather grim answer. 'Expect Evans shortly, then. So long!'

'So long, sir!'

'Oh—er—Ross!'

'Sir?'

'Thought I'd mention it. Blairs is agreeable to one of the "I's" working on this. The necklace is worth, roughly, sixty thousand pounds,

and I think you may look forward to a fee, say, of 5 per cent. of that amount if you are successful in restoring it.'

'I shall give the matter very careful thought, sir,' said Ross. And he put up the receiver.

There was some legal work requiring his attention on the table, but he had forgotten it. He was dreaming. The Bar road is a hard road to travel. At thirty-five he was earning barely four hundred a year, and the girl he wanted to marry—well, her father made every penny of four thousand. Now, *can* you take a girl—?

Ross sat quite still by his table, deep in thought, for half-an-hour. Then a knock sounded on his door.

'I shall give this matter my earnest attention,' he repeated, as he went to admit Evans.

III.

'Good-evening, sir,' said Detective-Inspector Evans.

There was a touch of sharpness about the address, which Ross did not miss. It suggested, 'Why I'm wasting my time calling on a blooming amateur like you I don't know, but orders are orders.'

Ross led the way into his snug sitting-room. 'Sit down, inspector,' he said, pulling a deep saddle-bag arm-chair into position for the caller. 'You'll take something, eh?' And Ross went to the sideboard.

'Thank you, sir; I don't mind if I do.'

Ross poured out two whiskies-and-sodas. He gave the policeman a stiff one; his own was largely soda. For he knew his 'bobby.' Evans had started as a policeman, and, owing to his extra sharpness, had been transferred to the detective department. But once a policeman, always a policeman—and the policeman likes his creature comforts.

'Well, inspector, and what of the diamonds? Are you on their track—really on their track?'

'I can't say I am, Mr Ross.'

'But,' said Ross, giving Evans a cigar, 'you rather think Mr Darius Hauptmann knows something about them?'

'I shouldn't be surprised,' admitted the policeman.

'And he has confederates?'

'That is an impression I, rightly or wrongly, got, sir.'

'Which one took the impression of the key, think you?'

'The valet, sir, I fancy.'

'And what of the old woman?'

'She may know what the young one is up to; she may not. The young lady must have a wing to shelter under, and the old lady may simply be that.'

'Quite so. Now, tell me, inspector, how you managed to arrive at these erroneous conclusions.'

The inspector started slightly.

'Of course,' he said, his heavy moustache

lifting in a slight sneer, 'I am talking to a very clever gentleman, but wouldn't it be as well to make sure they *are* erroneous, sir, before stating the fact?'

'Don't let us fall out, inspector,' said Ross. 'We are engaged in unravelling a mystery. If we succeed, it will be a "bit of good" for you as well as me. You have the handling of the case; I am only an adviser. Nobody will know how much or how little I advised, but when you retire from the force mention will be made in the press of your successful elucidation of "the Blairs Rope mystery"—won't it? Very well, what is the good of beating about the bush? Hauptmann, I repeat, did not take the stones. He is down there for quite another reason. Miss Serge is there to marry Sir Hugh, so why should she rob him of what will come into her possession—or at any rate fall to her use—when she is the mistress of the Court? And would the old lady deprive her niece's fair neck of its lawful adornment? As for the valet, for some years he has been the servant of a rather careless young master whom he could have robbed scores of times, had he liked—and yet there's not a thing against him. Why? Because he is attached to his master. These scapegrace fellows are often very likeable ones—and it's an easy, well-paid post. Why should the man risk years in a prison cell when he's so comfortable?'

'Well, sir, there's reason in what you say,' unwillingly admitted the detective; 'but I go by the evidence I collect. When I examined Sir Hugh's bunch of keys beneath a microscope, I found on more than one a trace of bread. This leads me to think the valet may have done it, and I'll tell you why.'

'Sir Hugh has a private bathing-place in his grounds, provided with dressing-boxes. One day, when Sir Hugh was bathing with Mr Hauptmann and one or two other gentlemen, he noticed his valet enter the dressing-box in which he had deposited his clothes, and at that moment Mr Hauptmann, who appeared to have got out of his depth, clutched hold of him, thus turning his attention from the valet. The two facts came out when I put a number of questions to Sir Hugh. He thought nothing of either circumstance at the time; but when he came to think over things closely, he remembered these incidents, and mentioned them to me.'

'Very well,' continued the inspector, taking a pull at his cigar. 'I had to ruffle his feelings a bit by inquiring about the movements of his lady guests, and I ascertained that the day after the bathing episode, so far as he could remember, Miss Serge and the old lady went to town for a day. And,' added the inspector, carefully touching the ash off his cigar, 'they went to town again the day after the loss of the jewels was discovered.' And the inspector leaned back in his chair with just a touch of triumph in his attitude.

'I see,' said Ross musingly. 'The first time to get the key cut, the second time to dispose of the "swag," eh?'

'It has that look. It may have been just visits to her dressmaker, as Miss Serge said.'

'How long a time,' Ross asked, 'elapsed between the discovery of Sir Hugh's loss and Miss Serge's visit to London?'

'Twenty-four hours exact.'

'And where would the stones be during that time? Had the local police, who, I understand, were at once summoned, insisted on searching every guest's room—or—it would have been awkward, inspector—what?'

'She hid them, I think, pretty safely,' said the inspector.

'Oh! You think Miss Serge did take them?'

The inspector smiled. 'You were very sharp, Mr Ross, with your "erroneous conclusions,"' he said. 'The young lady took the stones, sir.'

'Well,' said Ross, '*you've* been down there; I haven't. But I shall be surprised if what you state proves correct.'

'As you say,' said Evans, 'I've been down there. I've been down there a week. I've been down there in disguise—and I've found out things that way—as we often do.'

(Continued on page 709.)

WOLFE'S LOST HIGHLANDERS.

By VICTOR ROUSSEAU.

I.

IT was the charge of the Highlanders that drove the veterans of Picardy and Guienne across the Plains of Abraham, down the broad road now known as Grande Allée, and helter-skelter into Quebec on that September day of 1759 which decided the possession of Canada. These men, enlisted from among the clans which had been in revolt against the Hanoverian Crown only fourteen years before, then first demonstrated what an acquisition of fighting strength England had obtained when she gave her trust to her former enemies.

Among the Highland officers who participated in this first battle of the Plains were many bearing historic names that still exist in Lower Canada—Captain Nairn, the founder of Murray Bay, then known as the Malbaie Seignior, for which he and his descendants did homage to the governor-general yearly; Colonel Allan MacLean, of Fraser's Highlanders; and Captain Fraser, no doubt of the same regiment, a descendant of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, who laid his head upon the block after the defeat at Culloden.

The dying message of the gallant Montcalm, that he left Quebec to 'the generosity of the victors,' was justified. After the surrender the Highlanders quickly ingratiated themselves into the goodwill of the inhabitants. The winter of 1759-60 was unusually severe, and even the Highlanders suffered acutely in a temperature which ranges as low as thirty degrees below zero at times in winter. It is on record that the nuns of the Ursulines busied themselves knitting stockings for them.

Their ranks, thinned in this battle, were still more depleted in the second battle of the Plains, the following April, when Murray, pent up in turn, issued forth to give battle to De Lévis, but was forced to beat a retreat which almost lost him his stronghold.

What became of these Highlanders? History has little to say. It is only by a diligent research in many books that we can trace their history; and yet it is the blood of these men that flows in the veins of many of the ablest French-Canadians to-day. If they are lost as an entity, they have become veritably the bone and sinew of one of the most virile peoples in the world.

At the time of the conquest of Canada the French population hardly exceeded sixty thousand. The forfeited lands were parcelled out as seigniories. The villein took his corn to his seigneur's mill to be ground, paid tithe in kind, called yearly at the door of the parish church. The feudal system lasted unchanged until the year 1854, when it was abolished by Act of Parliament.

It is extraordinary that until the middle of last century the province of Quebec should have preserved this medieval order unchanged. Yet at the time of the Crimean War seigneurs still did homage *en franc-alleu noble, en censive, or en roture. Lods et ventes*—one-twelfth of the purchase-price of land or cattle—was the seigneur's perquisite, as well as the right of the *banal* mill—one-fourteenth of the villein's grinding; he had oven rights too, levied a *corvée* for public works, and on St Martin's Day waited in ceremony to receive his rent, if only a fat capon. Many of the new seigneurs were Highland officers, as the town and the seignior of Fraserville attest. They settled their own clansmen on their lands, giving them French wives in marriage. It was reasonable to suppose that the next generation would see the establishment of a strong Scottish element in Lower Canada.

II.

The Highlanders next appear upon the stage of history in the year 1775. The American Revolution was in full swing. Chambly and St John had fallen; Montgomery had taken Montreal, whence Carleton had escaped at night

aboard a fishing-smack; Arnold had traversed the forests of Maine and the Chaudière and appeared before the walls of Quebec, from which an enormous concourse watched the New England volunteers. Much badinage was exchanged too, and there was some extraordinary byplay when the Yankees derisively chased the skipping cannon-balls discharged from the parapets. The Continentals seemed irresistible, and there was talk of surrender.

But there was no talk when Sir Guy Carleton appeared to take command. It is to this brave and indomitable soldier, who, even in the darkest hours, refused to 'parley with traitors,' that Britain owes her Canadian Dominion. All Canada had fallen—all but the rock-fortress of Quebec, and that had bidden fair to surrender, like Montreal, without a blow. You will search long among the monuments of nonentities and others that grace Quebec before you find one of this great Englishman, masquerading as Lord Dorchester, among the bas-reliefs of the Provincial Parliament buildings. By some sad freak of history Carleton has been all but forgotten, as have his Highlanders. And yet they saved an empire on the last day of 1775.

The Highlanders, called in from their farms, responded to the number of twenty-one officers and two hundred and seven men—no bad muster after sixteen years of peace, not forgetting French wives of doubtful loyalty. They were formed into the regiment of the Royal Emigrants, commanded by Colonel Allan MacLean, second in charge of Quebec. Captain Malcolm Fraser appears again; and among other names may be mentioned those of Captain Campbell; Sergeant James Thompson, a giant, one of Wolfe's men, who had become Superintendent of Public Works, and later came into possession of Montgomery's sword; Sergeant Hugh M'Quarters of the artillery; and Colonel Hamilton of the Seamen's battalion. The breaches in the walls were closed, cannon mounted, palisades erected, and two handfuls of men prepared to fight for the fate of Canada again.

Now comes the story* of that mad attack, in a blinding snowstorm, on the last night of 1775. There are two approaches to the Upper Town, which stands on an almost vertical precipice at the angle of the St Lawrence and the St Charles. The plan of the besiegers, who were in possession of the Lower Town, was as follows: Arnold and Montgomery were to advance from different directions to the foot of Mountain Hill, one of these two roads, and there, uniting forces, they were to rush the defences and gain access to the Citadel. Montgomery's attempt may be dealt with briefly. Leading his column along the base of the cliffs, at *Prés-de-Ville* he encountered a barricade containing a single cannon, manned

by the redoubtable Sergeant M'Quarters and three or four sailors. At the first blast Montgomery fell dead, his column melted away, and the fight was ended.

Meanwhile, unconscious of Montgomery's fate, Arnold's men, wearing mottoes on their caps and moccasins stuffed with leaves, their matchlocks primed and held beneath their coats to keep the powder dry, were moving in single file beneath the precipice toward Mountain Hill. At the foot of Palace Hill—the second approach to Upper Town—they heard the alarm-bells of the city peal, and the drums beating to quarters. Pushing on to Sault-au-Matelot Street, they encountered a British blockhouse, before which Arnold fell, shot through the leg. Colonel Morgan, whose Virginians, it is curious to note, had rifled fusil-barrels at this date, took command. Planting a scaling-ladder, he leaped from the top of it to the muzzle of a gun, followed by his men. In a few moments the blockhouse was taken.

The American forces, now galled by musketry-fire from the heights above, where sharpshooters in casemates were picking them off by the light of fire-balls thrown up from the ramparts, dashed with fixed bayonets along Sault-au-Matelot. But at the corner of Des Sœurs Street and Mountain Hill they came upon a second blockhouse, of whose existence they had not known. Here Captain MacLeod, with thirty men, gave them a warm welcome. The blockhouse could not be stormed. Its defenders were being reinforced each moment; golden moments were passing while Morgan's men, taking refuge in the houses, waited for the arrival of the sledges which bore their artillery.

III.

It was two o'clock in the morning when Captain Fraser, who was in charge of the guard, saw two rockets go up from Cape Diamond, indicating that Montgomery's movement had been discovered by the picket on that bastion. Captain Fraser at once turned out the guard and hurried along St Louis Street, calling the alarm. Carleton, who slept under arms at the Récollets' Monastery, took command, and the drums beat the assembly. Colonel MacLean at once despatched a strong force to Cape Diamond, but soon came to the opinion that Montgomery's attack was a feint, and recalled a part of them. In the meantime Arnold's movement had been discovered, and MacLean sent a body of Highlanders under Captain Nairn, Seigneur of Malbaie, together with some seamen and English Militia, to issue from Palace Gate and take Arnold in the rear.

By some mistake—one of those omissions that so often decide the fate of battles—Arnold's rearguard, consisting of Dearborn's Company, had not been notified of the attack; consequently his flank was unprotected. Dearborn's men

* The writer is especially indebted for his details to the records of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

first knew of the engagement when they heard the sound of firing, and encountered the wounded streaming back along the slippery banks of the ice-bound St Charles. While wounded and new-comers were hopelessly entangled, Nairn's men fell upon them out of Palace Gate, driving them like sheep, and swiftly recapturing the blockhouse, whereby the Americans, under Morgan, were effectively hemmed into the narrow confines of Sault-au-Matelot Street.

Now the battle approached its end. The British were already driving the Americans out of the houses, companies of French loyalists were firing on them from the wharves, Nairn and his men were coming on behind, while in front a mixed force of Highlanders, bluejackets, and French and English Militia, under Captains Campbell, Hamilton, MacDougall, Alexander, Layard, and Caldwell, came charging down Mountain Hill and sweeping through the blockhouse. The Americans were surrounded. Arms were thrown down. Soldiers rushed up to seize the side-arms of the officers, as prizes of war. A Captain Anderson leaped from the barrier and demanded Morgan's sword. Morgan shot him through the head, and backing against a wall, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, swore that it should not be taken. His own men, prisoners, besought him in vain. By this time the street was crowded with civilians, crawling up through the cellars on Sault-au-Matelot; men and women came clamouring about him, beseeching him to surrender, while the British soldiers waited. At last a priest among the crowd urged him to yield, and, reluctantly, Morgan gave his sword to him.

In this fight the Continental forces lost four hundred men, the British fifteen. It was the decisive battle for empire in Canada, and it was the Highlanders who turned the fortunes of the day. Had the wild assault succeeded, there is no doubt that to-day the 'Stars and Stripes' would float from the Rio Grande to Baffinland.

IV.

That is the last occasion on which Wolfe's Highlanders appear in history. That Scotsmen

continued active in the life of those parts we may glean from contemporary prints. A few years later 'Mr Bennie, the tailor from Edinburgh,' advertises in the *Quebec Chronicle* that 'ladies and gentlemen who will be so good as to favour him with their custom may depend upon being faithfully served on the shortest notice and in the newest fashion on the most reasonable terms.' And this quaint announcement may be culled from an issue of the seventeen-eighties: 'J. M'Aulay, Doctor of Physic, who has been regularly bred and practised several years in one of the principal cities of Europe, is lately arrived here. He is furnished with a compleat assortment of fresh medicines, which he will sell wholesale, at reasonable rates. As a good physician is a great blessing in any country, and much wanted in this, he hopes for that generous encouragement from the public which by the utmost exertion of his abilities and assiduity he will endeavour to merit.'

But Wolfe's Highlanders appear no longer on the screen of history. It is almost a tragedy—for Canada, more than any country abroad, is built upon the achievements of Scotsmen. It was Scots who established the great Hudson's Bay Company, and its founders and factors have been Scotsmen, from Mackenzie to Strathcona. In Parliament, in commerce, banking, shipbuilding, the Scotsman is still to the fore.

The dreams of Nairn and his contemporaries did not materialise. The French swamped the settlers. There are no Highland Scottish settlements in Lower Canada to-day.

And yet this little body, cut off amid an alien race, survives. There are French-speaking Campbells and Frasers in Quebec, and old people whose mother-tongue was Scottish. Or let the traveller take the boat down the St Lawrence, and get off at any of the coastal villages. Here are Maclarens, Harveys, Belleys (Baileys?), Fosters in plenty, though their speech is seventeenth-century Norman, and they have only a legend of their origin. They are French-Canadians—but every trait and gesture shows the inheritance of the men who made and saved Canada for Britain.

RADIUM AND RADIOACTIVITY.

ALTHOUGH amongst the youngest of the sciences, radioactivity has accomplished much during its short period of existence, and can justly claim to hold a great promise for the future. As late as 1896 it was practically unknown, but the discovery, by Röntgen, some little while previous, of the now familiar X-rays, and the recognition of the numerous uses to which they might be put, caused much attention to be directed towards this subject in general.

In the year 1896 M. Becquerel, a French chemist, in searching for further X-ray effects, noted that the rare metal uranium had with its salts a property, peculiar to itself, of emitting rays. This proved to be an epoch-making observation, for radioactivity may almost be said to have been born with it. Scientists were not slow in comprehending its true meaning; the investigations so initiated were actively pursued. First and foremost were M. and Mme. Curie,

who commenced a systematic examination of the uranium compounds in the light of their newly found property. Noticing that many of them had an activity greater than could be attributed to the uranium, they concluded that there must be present a substance whose power was much superior. Every means known to chemistry was employed to prepare it, but without success. The evidence was considered sufficiently strong to warrant a name—polonium—being given to the new metal. Later research has shown the accuracy of this reasoning; to-day impure polonium has been prepared, and, moreover, is known to be intensely radioactive.

Continuing with her experiments, Mme. Curie, in the course of time, detected another of these substances—radium. In comparison with the other radio-elements, radium salts are easy to prepare in a reasonably pure condition. Speaking absolutely, however, the processes are complicated and tedious, due to the fact that the metal is present only in very small quantities. The chief source—pitchblende—is a compound of uranium with oxygen, often admixed with iron, lead, and numerous other impurities. It occurs in Bohemia, America, and England. For experimental purposes, the Austrian Government generously presented Mme. Curie with a ton of residues from the State uranium manufactory at Joachimsthal, Bohemia. The proportion of radium is about 1 part in 600,000; from ten tons of the crude product approximately half an-ounce of the metal may be extracted. In the case of polonium the amount is much more minute. It is possible to recover only a mere fifteen-thousandth part of an ounce from fifteen tons of ore. These figures alone illustrate the obstacles which must be surmounted. Detected in the late 'nineties, pure radium remained unknown till 1910, when it was isolated by the use of electric current. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, many chemists and physicists have entered the field of research, and a large mass of data has accumulated. More than thirty radio-elements have been investigated; the number is constantly on the increase. Their effects have been widespread. They have completely altered much of modern scientific theory, and many practical uses have been found for their emanations or rays.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of this group of metals lies in the strong light they throw on the construction of matter. For the last eight hundred years it has been the custom to regard the 'Transmutation of the Elements' as purely and simply a philosopher's dream. One may well marvel at the prophetic insight of the old alchemists, for radioactivity has shown that many of the so-called elemental substances are nothing but transition products, and that to a large extent the main idea was correct. (If a digression may be allowed, the recent discovery by French surgeons that the substitution of

monkey glands will prolong the span of life has placed another old and much-derided theory—'The Elixir of Life'—on a new footing.) It is now well established that the entire radioactive family is derived from either uranium or thorium. Any member may be looked upon as one of these after passage through several well-defined and successive periods. For the sake of convenience, they are divided into three classes, according to their several peculiarities. Of the three, the first is by far the most instructive. Starting from uranium, we find this metal decays, and in doing so emits rays. A new element is formed, Uranium X, the period of transformation being about eight thousand million years. In a much shorter space of time this changes to ionium, which, in turn, gives rise to radium. These gradual replacements continue through a series of eight similar materials, until polonium is reached. The product of polonium is now being carefully studied; it seems to be a metal having all the indications and appearances of ordinary lead. This is in itself a fundamental change, for if lead can be so formed there is every reason to suppose that all the other elements, such as iron, gold, sulphur, &c., are due to forces of this nature, acting during the past ages, or forces as yet undiscovered. Substantial corroboration of this view is afforded by the observation that, in disintegrating, nearly all radio-metals form, as a secondary product, helium, a gas that has come into prominence as a desirable substitute for hydrogen in the filling of airship and balloon envelopes. It would seem that in these curious, complex reactions scientists have a unique opportunity of seeing, on a small scale, the operation of those agencies responsible for the world's construction.

During the process of transformation large stores of energy are dissipated. In comparison with any known chemical reaction the supply is enormous. Radium gives off many million times the heat that could be obtained from the same weight of coal, oil, gas, or any other combustible used as a power agent. Chemistry supposes all matter as constituted of very small particles called atoms, which are further subdivided into electrons. These electrons form an atom by being held together by large forces, which are set free during disintegration. If matter could be treated to release this energy, there can be no doubt that a supply would be at hand that would absolutely dwarf the modern super-power station, with its expensive plant. Relatively, the beds of coal and the deposits of oil would be quite infinitesimal. Indeed, there are many who are of opinion that the advent of such a thing would be in the nature of a catastrophe, for the existence of this large mass of uncontrolled power might quite conceivably be a menace to the stability of the earth; and, moreover, it is quite impossible to restrain atomic energy. By the complicated system of motors,

switchgear, cables, and the large number of accessories, electricity is efficiently and safely harnessed to do useful work; again, if heat is required, then a fire may be lighted, more combustible be added should further heat be necessary, or the supply completely cut off by extinguishing the fire. There is no such means of harnessing the heat of radioactivity. Under no circumstance—thrown into water, heated, compressed, even immersed in liquid air—does radium's rate of disintegration and heat emission vary; that rate can neither be accelerated nor retarded. It is a very doubtful assertion to suggest that man, had he the key to this storehouse of natural power, could make use of it on any but a limited scale.

At the present time the application of radium as a source of heat is an economic impossibility for two reasons. Primarily, its rate of decay is slow and fixed; it follows that large masses would be necessary to meet the requirements of modern industry. Secondly, the supplies of the metal definitely known to be in existence are very small, a factor which, coupled with the expense of extraction, raises the price to a prohibitive figure. On the question of supply, a decisive answer cannot be given—no systematic search has been carried out, as is the case with coal and oil. In certain parts of the world, Canada particularly, a steady stream of the gas helium is continually escaping from the soil. There is only one cause to which the presence of this gas can be attributed—that is, the decomposition of a radioactive material. It is, therefore, concluded that deposits of one or other of these substances exist in the vicinity of the gas-wells, and if the quantity of the gas may be taken as a criterion, then the beds must be of a very extensive character. The tapping of these sources would in all probability be followed by a sensible reduction in the price of radium salts, allowing of a wider application of the rays. A somewhat similar line of argument has been adopted with reference to the sun, which, until recently, was generally assumed to be a collection of small luminous bodies gradually closing up into a coherent mass. By means of the spectro-scope, it has been ascertained that the sun is enclosed in a gaseous envelope, of which a large proportion is made up of helium. It seems, then, quite rational to assume that the solar heat is partly due to radioactivity, and that the sun is undergoing a transformation, on a parallel to the stages through which the earth has passed in the remote ages. A radioactive action requires a period of many millions of years for completion, and although the sun is, without doubt, cooling, its loss per annum, or even per century, is extremely small, when contrasted with the total heat it gives, on which a rather instructive and illuminating series of experiments has been carried out. It is computed that, if we assume the earth's total population to be fifteen hundred

millions, then each individual receives energy at the rate of eighty thousand horse-power. Surely a splendid example of the power latent in the atom, and, in a sense, a measure of what could be obtained if these sources were open to exploitation.

Radium emanations are divided into three distinct classes. Those of the first class are of absorbing scientific interest, as they consist of particles charged with electricity, which, when they give up their charges, become helium. It is on the properties of this type of ray that much of the theory depends for corroboration. All three classes are used in medicine, being closely allied to X-rays, though capable of greater variation, and possessed of two distinct advantages over them. X-ray plant is cumbersome and scattered, the bulbs are large, whilst big induction coils are essential for the high voltages used in therapeutic work. The radium apparatus is compact; the emanation, as received in a small glass tube, independently emits the rays. It is obvious that this method can be applied in cases where the use of X-rays would be awkward, owing to the large bulk. Further, there are not so many expensive instruments to maintain in a state of efficiency; for each operation a tube of emanation may be obtained from the central institution at which the radium for the area is stored.

The employment of the emanations in medicine has followed generally the lines adopted for X-rays, but the penetrative power is much greater. They may be used in radiography, giving very good results; but this is not common, owing to expense, and X-rays are almost universally employed in this class of work. In the treatment of skin complaints radium has found a notable sphere of activity. For example, under the influence of the rays much of the disfigurement caused by birthmarks will disappear. Unfortunately, the effects are not entirely confined to the skin; they go deeper, to the internal organs. The nerves, however, are not at all susceptible; otherwise treatment would be a more complicated and painful matter. Small sweat-glands and hair-follicles are practically burnt out by radium, thus providing a ready cure for that most contagious of scalp eruptions—ringworm. Great caution is necessary in this instance; over-exposure causes the hair-cells to be destroyed, and baldness results. Although healthy tissue offers a much greater resistance than does diseased, yet both are rapidly attacked, and it is of this valuable asset that such an extensive and successful application has been made in regard to ulcers. These may be quite cured, as also may tumours and cancers, if taken in their initial stages. Once they have obtained a firm footing in the body, radioactivity does not provide a cure, though it may curtail the rapidity of growth. From results it appears that the employment of the emanations has been very effective.

tive in tuberculosis of the bones and the joints, a complaint formerly very difficult to remedy. The action upon the eyes is curious. If the rays be directed upon the eyes of a person who is either blindfolded or suffering from cataract, the sensation of light is formed upon the retina, and the outlines of bodies placed between the eyes and the source of the rays may be readily distinguished.

In all therapeutic work, careful precautions must be observed both for the patients and by the operators themselves. Radium causes, through over-exposure, extremely painful burns, which ultimately develop into chronic skin disease. Many of the earlier demonstrators on X-rays died as a consequence of receiving these burns. It has been discovered that the rays

will not penetrate thicknesses of lead exceeding half-an-inch, and it is consequently the custom nowadays to wear coverings of silk loaded with a lead salt, which provides adequate protection for any but prolonged exposure. The emanations are very destructive of delicate scientific instruments. Apparently the effect is to cover them with an extremely thin film of the metal, which in order to be removed must be dissolved off by an acid. During the investigating of a radioactive material the appliances must be kept as far away as possible from it.

In industry a use has been found for radium in detecting blow-holes and flaws in castings; but here, even more than in medicine, it is only in a tentative stage, and must await the course of time for full development.

BROKEN LINKS.

By F. ST MARS, Author of *Pinion and Paw*, *Snapshots of the Wild*.

I

IN the beginning the trouble arose by Mrs Verclose going out of town temporarily. She went out of town when the moon was up; some people will understand what I mean, but—no matter. What did matter was that, being Mrs Verclose, she could not be bothered with Miss Berlinda. Wherefore Miss Berlinda was sent to board and lodge with the charwoman, she and her big pink bow, her willow-pattern saucer, her padded and hooded basket, and all things that were hers. She travelled—'twas but a tram-ride—in a hamper, without being consulted, and she expressed her feelings by scratching the charwoman's hand when she was let out. For this the charwoman presented her with what she called 'one under the snitch,' and Miss Berlinda never forgot it nor forgave. She was like that. It was the first 'one under the snitch' she had had in her life, you see, which shows the sheltered, artificial nature of that life up to then.

When Miss Berlinda had quite finished sneezing, she came out, glaring unspeakable things, from under the wreck of what had once been a bedstead, and examined the room. It was to be her home. Personally Miss Berlinda would have preferred a coal-cellar. Certainly there were four walls; a ceiling; a floor—if you looked where you trod; a table—bare—whose fourth leg had been part of a hop-pole; and a thing like a chair, whose fourth leg—it lay in a corner—had apparently been used as a weapon of offence and defence by that good lady the charwoman. Of course, there was also the bed; but the less said about the bed the better. And that was all, if you except the gin-bottle with a candle in it, and the gin-bottle with gin in it, in a corner. There was no sign of any milk in that 'home,' and there was no

scent—you know the wonderful scenting-gear of all the cats, and you know Miss Berlinda as a cat by now, of course—of any milk ever having entered said 'home' at any period, dim or remote, or of any milk ever being likely to enter that 'home' at any future date, dim or remote, either. As a matter of fact, Miss Berlinda's 'milk-money,' together with her board-money, was sunk, if I may be excused the expression, in the gin-bottle—not the one with the candle in it—in the corner.

Miss Berlinda smelt that bottle, and promptly got the one chair's detachable leg heaved at her head for her pains. She sneezed all over again at the gin; spat a feline, feminine, and fiery curse at the charwoman; and slid, not slowly, under the only cover in the room, the bedstead, again, where she remained—two flaming onyx orbs—for the best part of an hour, till the charwoman slid, not so gracefully as the cat, on to the floor, and her wig came off.

Miss Berlinda, be it here proclaimed, was the only other 'sandy' lady-cat. She was the one in forty thousand, in fact, and priceless; that is to say, it is against the rule for sandy cats to be of the feminine sex, these being all gentlemen, and the ladies being all tortoise-shells. Miss Berlinda was the exception that proved that rule, and, if the charwoman had only known it, worth enough gold to buy enough gin to kill even the charwoman with. But I don't suppose Miss Berlinda knew she was the one sandy female cat out of forty thousand tortoise-shells, and a rarity beyond gems, even though her opinion of herself was very high indeed.

During the next hour—the charwoman snoring—Miss Berlinda got the hang of that 'home' in the exact, mathematical, and precise way cats do upon first entering a place. It never appears to have been explained why they do so, but perhaps

it is to know to an inch where everything may be expected to be in the dark, and to provide against possible eventualities in the future. Anyway, the information, once gained, sticks.

At the end of that time a large, uncouth, and staggering male person entered that room by the simple process of kicking the door open, and dived straightway and at once for the gin-bottle and the chair-leg in the corner. At the same instant the charwoman, awaking miraculously by some extraordinary process of her own devising, did exactly likewise, and in equal silence. Both arrived, sliding, at exactly the same moment at the same goal, and Miss Berlinda made one dark curve round the door, and one straight streak down the stairs. Seen thus, or, rather, scarcely seen thus, for she moved 'some,' neck stretched, ears wide and turned back, body and tail and legs at greatest length and lowest level, she looked one weird object, and scarcely the complaisant personification of idle cosiness Mrs Verclose remembered her as. But there is a time for everything, and cats are no stoics, anyhow; they know only one law—the law of 'the better 'ole.' And, indeed, you will own that Miss Berlinda had cause for believing that she had reached zero in the matter of 'oles,' anyway, and that any change might be for the better.

II.

Miss Berlinda arrived in one hurried scoot, by way of an open door—all doors seemed to be open in that devil's place—at a backyard of unspeakable, stark filthiness. An intense moon in a dark sky cascaded down light of remarkable brilliancy, which showed Miss Berlinda, with one comprehensive 'cat's glance,' the horrible fact that in all that limelit scene there was neither blade of grass nor trunk of bush or tree—nothing at all that was Nature's—only bricks and mortar covered with an all-pervading, all-smothering grime.

Miss Berlinda took the wall, flying, and stopped—all claws scraping her back—by the skin of the teeth, from springing down upon the back of a lean, yellow beast cracking a bone on the far side below. It was, in local parlance, a 'long dog,' that beast which is a lurcher, which is a dog crossed with anything you like, so long as it is three parts greyhound. The 'long dog' said nothing, but sprang straight at her, and missed cracking her bones also by exactly two inches and three-quarters. That's your 'long dog.' I am not denying that Miss Berlinda was quite a little scared. She shot along the wall-top, and almost fell over at the corner upon two men of hooligan breed crouching in its inky shadow. Both developed belts from nowhere, with the instantaneousness of super-experts in belt production; and Miss Berlinda, as she took the turn, slewing over on one side, at right angles, heard the two belt-buckles strike the wall four inches behind her tucked-up hind-legs.

The end of that wall developed on the far side a male animal, in shadow, neither boy nor man quite, and a girl, also in shadow—they seemed to hug shadow like rats in these parts; and again switching off at right angles along another wall-top, Miss Berlinda had the pleasure of hearing half-a-brick flick the tip of her pink bow, as it spun by barely above her head.

Miss Berlinda continued, at speed—the lightning sprint of all the cat tribe when they are properly 'het up.' And the end of that sprint—it fetched her up all standing, upon her tail—was a head, appearing like a demon from a trap, in front of her over the edge of the wall.

The head was round, and it had two eyes, smouldering and alight with that desperate, hard, wild glitter peculiar to starvation. The head was propped upon four gaunt paws, the whole held together—more or less—by a skin stretched tight to slitting-point over a skeleton. Nature may at some remote period have intended this accident to be a cat, but man, it seemed, had made it a catastrophe.

Miss Berlinda knew, with the extraordinary instinct of her sex, that the head was a male, and she might conceivably, reasoning upon past experiences, have expected or suspected that it would court her. Its, or his, one and instant crazed rush, however, made her realise that he looked more like eating her, and she turned upon him, acting solely upon mother instinct, with that special fiendish fury reserved for the female in the wild. The cat, so called, collapsed under her onslaught like a bundle of sticks, and dropped on the far side of the wall in dead silence, and, oh horror! five more heads, each with the maniacal famine glare in its eyes, slid up to the first on the instant. This last nightmare was too much for the sleek, combed, cosy, lazy, hot-house Miss Berlinda. She fairly picked up her skirts, so to speak, and fled—a flickering, wavy, elusive line in the moonlight—till she fetched up, her heart in her mouth, her courage in her tail-tip, upon the summit of an embankment, clapped down flat, between gleaming chaired metals, her eyes nearly popping like champagne-corks at the sight of a towering, gigantic, roaring, thundering, one-eyed—and that eye green—monster, hurtling down upon her out of nowhere and the night.

There was one cataclysmal thunder, a blast of searing heat, an uproar as of an earthquake trampling past, a sucking, blinding wind, and—she was alone with one whirling newspaper, quakingly watching the red tail-light of the '9.40 down' receding and melting into the night. It was her first experience of a train, and by about half the length of her flattened body and tail it had very nearly been her last.

Miss Berlinda regained life after seconds, and squirmed to the side of the track, only to rebound as if she had touched off a land-mine, as another snorting, roaring mammoth of iron—two eyes

had this one, one green, one white—thundered almost upon her from the opposite direction.

After a time, when it had gone, Miss Berlinda, a flat something crouched on the edge of the embankment all among the signal-wires, came to life once more, in sections, dug her claws out of the ground, and examined herself tentatively from head to heel to see if any parts were broken or missing. None were, of course; and from habit, I suppose, being a cat, she started to clean, but seeming to recollect that, for once in her life, there was an urgency more urgent than cleaning or feeding even, she set off along the embankment with the air of a burglar quitting a police-station. There was nothing fat and 'comfy' about her then. She seemed to have been pulled out to great length, and to have developed extra large ears, cocked always behind. Her pink bow had worked round under her neck, and was getting most infernally in the way, and her rich ginger coat was not so clean as it might have been. But she did not care—not she. Her one urgent desire was to quit that lugubrious vicinity instantly—if not before—and to make good her 'get away,' at least before dawn. Dawn, she felt, in this stark wilderness of bricks and devils, would be too awful even to contemplate. Wherefore she shifted, only not running, because she knew she could not keep it up, and yet not properly walking, but effecting a compromise between the two, as does the hunted tiger from the beaten cover.

Trains passed her—for that was a line upon which they never went to sleep—with excruciating, reverberating uproars and flashings of lights that were almost physical agony to her sensitive, highly strung cat's brain; and once or twice she lost her head, shooting from point to point among the thundering confusion of the wheels, more like some masterless projectile than any live beast. But Fate must have had her in charge during those hours, for she never died quite, though it seemed at some moments that no power on earth could save her. Talk about nine lives! Say, but she must have had forty to draw upon in that night, for there were many lines and many trains, and a young fog came and added itself to the nightmare as the moon went down, and a pitch-darkness added itself to the fog, and fog-signals—which sent Miss Berlinda off in straight paralytic dashes, fifty yards to a dash—went off in all directions, and coke-fires and lanterns came and went in glaring splashes, clapping her to earth, or removing her yards, as if fired from a gun.

III.

Through it all, however, and in spite of all, there can be no doubt that at the back of her inscrutable feline mind was the honest and steady determination to return home—her real home, I mean, not the charwoman's horrible parody of one. How she proposed to find her way across

the uncharted and labyrinthine chaos of the great city any one can explain who cares to. Personally, I cannot; I prefer to fall back upon the word 'orientation' and look wise. Be these things as they may, however, call it orientation, chance, instinct, or what you will, the fact remains that Miss Berlinda did find her way—though her straight-ahead progress was slow and erratic—for some hours, and—up to a certain point.

That point was the junction where two railway systems branched, and where Miss Berlinda, who, with a cat's usual Oriental way of reasoning, had begun to get fairly well used to locomotives by then, was picking her dainty, supercilious way along the branch that led in the right direction for her home—Miss Berlinda, I say, met the night mail. They were proud of their night mail on that line, I think, which is why Miss Berlinda met it at about a mile a minute. Hitherto that night she had done business only with 'locals' and 'goods'—mere crawlers in railway society—and I suppose the night mail was above her calculations. Anyhow, it seems to have upset her sense of tameness, or whatever you like to call it, for she had barely time to throw herself backwards with one desperate, scuttering, twisting leap, as the flange of the ten-wheeled 'Atlantic' engine's off front-bogie wheel, that would have cut her neatly in half, brushed—literally brushed, mark you—her beautiful sandy coat.

The night mail took, perhaps, less time to hurtle past into the night than did Miss Berlinda to roll down the steep embankment, dazed, scared, and not quite certain whether she rolled in two parts or one. But it was the end of that roll, maybe, which really did it, for up to that point—though the thin links that bound her had been snapping, one by one—Miss Berlinda had remained painfully domestic through it all.

Now, however, Fate gave her a jolt. She fetched up at the bottom, and none too softly, against a brick wall. That brick wall enclosed a slaughter-house. Miss Berlinda's nose told her that, of course; but Fate had decreed that she should land up against an inlet—ventilation, drainage hole, or something—in the foot of that wall; and that, just at that precise moment, things of import were happening inside.

Before she could roll over and up instantly almost to her feet, cat fashion, Miss Berlinda was conscious of a terrific scrimmage within that inlet (or outlet, truly) against which her spotty ginger side lay, and more than instantly of a red-hot stab in that same side—a stab that sent her up into the air, spitting like a firework.

All wild creatures will usually fight with sudden fury if suddenly jostled; not because they necessarily want to, but because they are, as a rule, afraid the jostler will. And Miss Berlinda became, with that sudden shock of pain, a wild creature—the last link had snapped, in fact.

She fought. And the great gaunt devil of a brown rat coming out of that hole in the wall fought—indeed, he had to—and another brother devil following behind fought, and a sister devil following behind them fought too. They all had to; a watch-dog was on the far side, driving them.

The rats considered themselves cornered, and you know what a bad accident a cornered rat is. Miss Berlinda seemed to consider herself attacked, and you know the prickly Catherine-wheel an attacked cat can be. And between them they put up as ugly a close-fought, in-and-in, villainously cruel, strenuous 'worry' as ever shocked the night. It did not last long, luckily. It could not last long, flesh and blood being only what they are. No beasts could have stood it longer—and lived. Indeed, one of them—the leading rat—did not live, as it was; he died, bent into a bow, as they die who have a severed spine. And another of them died also, but next day, a ghastly wreck, put out of pain by his pals. And one of them lived. Also Miss Berlinda lived, though red in streaks, and grimy from head to padded toe, her pink bow a scarlet tatter, her eyes like live-coals. But it may have been that same pink bow that had saved her life, none-the-less, for you know how the rat people slash upwards from below with the cold chisel. Miss Berlinda lay down, stretched out beside her stretched-out dead rat, and gasped for breath. It was the first rat she had ever slain. She had never killed a mouse either, for the matter of that. The odds had been three to one, and she had had to rely entirely upon instinct in the fighting. It had cost her something, too, and she would carry the marks of that combat probably to her dying day.

IV.

Meanwhile there was one on the other side of the wall who plainly was not yet satisfied. The watch-dog had gone nearly mad during the fight, for he could see part of it and smell more, yet could no more than get his big nose into the hole through which the rats had gone.

Now that the fight was over, however, a little sense returned to him. He longed horribly to get out and slay impartially, rats or cat, or all four; he was indifferent which. Plainly, he could not get through the wall, or over it, but there might be another way.

The ragings and snuffings of him ceased, and Miss Berlinda continued her exhausted task of licking her wounds—they looked as if they had been gouged out with a sharp chisel—and getting back her breath. And as she did so the midnight main-line long-distance 'goods,' outward bound, pulled up slowly, and with much groaning protest, on the top of the embankment above her. Three sharp whistles from the big-humped locomotive, far up the track, indicated that the signal was against her, and she was saying so with impatient contempt.

Then the fog came down again, welt upon choking welt, and shut out everything—except, possibly, to Miss Berlinda, who may have been able to see what we could not—and all grew quiet again along the track, and the night was white, and shut in, and still.

Into this scene, then, the drumming of the watch-dog's galloping feet intruded, strangely magnified. He must have found a way out somewhere, and come round by the street.

Miss Berlinda heard him one instant, drew herself together like a compressed spring the next, beheld him the next, a smudged darkness darker than the surrounding dark, and heard the sound—it has no name that I know of—part growl, part snarl, entirely horrible—which a dog makes when he hurls himself 'all in' to the attack.

Miss Berlinda was not there when his jaws clashed to, but her talons were, and he acknowledged receipt with a whimpering, choked roar.

Then Miss Berlinda was on the top of the embankment, the watch-dog scattering a miniature avalanche of stones two feet in her rear.

She was under the hooded, sheeted trucks of the waiting long-distance 'goods,' the watch-dog snapping hairs from her tail-tip—he was so close.

She was playing forked lightning in and out under the trucks, the canine's stinking breath hot on her heaving flank.

Death hovered above the pair, waiting to swoop, and Miss Berlinda knew it, and where the swoop would land inside two tail-flicks, if—ah!

Miss Berlinda was on the chain of a coupling. It clanked as she left it, leaping for a buffer, and the dog's jaws hit it in mid-spring.

There was a frantic, furious scratching of claws as Miss Berlinda arrived on the top of the back of one truck, swayed, slipped, and recovered, with a wrenching twist of sheer despair. The locomotive far up the train broke the still night through with one sharp whistle. There was a sudden banging jerk all along the track as the truck-couplings tightened; and Miss Berlinda was shot, head first and spread-eagled, into the bowels of the truck she was on as the goods-train began to move.

Once having begun to move, that goods-train did not stop for hours and hours; and Miss Berlinda, crouched and glaring under the tarpaulin cover, saw no reason at all why she should budge. Moreover, a fine drizzle had begun, almost as soon as the houses were left behind, and the thick night over the dim fields became cold with wet.

Miss Berlinda had heard the ghastly howl of the watch-dog as she sprang into the goods-truck—which announced two facts: firstly, that the train had been started upon its long journey; secondly, that, by the same token, the dog had started upon a longer journey still. He had, in

fact, been cut into two unequal halves under the wheels.

After that, one gathers that pussy thought that she was alone; but she was wrong there, all the same.

Familiarity breeding contempt in cats as much as—if not more than—in most creatures, and hunger adding itself, Miss Berlinda proceeded anon—after the thirtieth mile-post was passed—to size up her ‘chariot of ill-ease.’ Investigation, with legs wide apart, and with rather drunken mien, revealed the goods-truck to be full of sacks of wheat, and—great claws and fangs!—mice! At least, her wonderful whiskers guiding her not too wonderful nose perhaps—but that’s a matter for question—she discovered five mice in four sacks. Apparently they were desirous of remaining in those four sacks, because the rattle, jolt, and roar of the ‘goods’ at her top speed seemed rather like the end of the world to them. Mice, however, are afflicted with a super-thirst—so are rats, and more so—and the rain, collecting in little puddles in the tarpaulin, must, I presume, have drawn them. Anyhow, they came out in time—one by one. They did not go back. Miss Berlinda interviewed them—one by one. Five, in all, she dealt with faithfully; and those she could discover, three in all, who would not come out, voting for a death by thirst rather than a death by accident, she tore out.

v.

This whole affair—and surely never was a hunting so strange—must have taken her some hours, and it was in that grim, raw, ‘down and out’ hour before the dawn, when they say life is at its lowest ebb, and she was just making herself cosy on a well-sheltered sack, after a way-up feed and a cool rain drink, when the main-line long-distance ‘goods’ and the west-bound mineral train, standing in her way—met.

Miss Berlinda arrived, asprawl and sailing,

upon the double thorn hedge, in the middle of sacks of corn, which burst like shrapnel, and in an uproar that was heard for miles. Behind her, over and over down the incline, came the trucks—some of the trucks; and Miss Berlinda, seeing them coming, did not linger in that hedge, though the thorns did their level best. She shot, like some red-hot six-inch shell, straight out of it on the far side, and—whew! W-e-ll, she shot straight into Madame la Fox, and—things happened.

The goods-trucks obliterated the hedge in stretches, and themselves into matchwood; they obliterated also five pairs of nesting birds, one weasel, one rabbit, and a field-mouse. They would have obliterated that feminine Reynard and that female feline if they could have reached them, but it did not matter, because the two were evidently, in the madness of fear, doing their best possible to obliterate one another; and when the lanterns came, and the trucks caught fire, and they ran away, the stark dawn, paling the lights, revealed two red horrors, each on three legs, crawling off through the lonely wood; but—*but*, mark you—it was Miss Berlinda who was dragging, as well as herself, the vixen’s rabbit.

And that is all. Miss Berlinda crawled off into that wood, and—well, she crawled off into that wood—and that’s all about it. No part or portion of her has been seen by mortal eye since; from that day to this—nothing. But there are some mortal eyes that would very much like to see her, for surely it can scarcely be her ghost that is responsible for the remnants of what have been fat bronzed pheasants, and the more or less disfranchised forms of rabbits, the wood-pigeons without stuffing, and the partridges reduced to blood and feathers, which Slaymore, the gamekeeper of that wood, discovers upon his lawful occasions from time to time.

That, however, is another yarn, and a red one.

VEILED KAFIRISTAN.

By IKBAL ALI SHAH, M.R.A.S., F.R.G.S.

i.

AFGHANISTAN has not unjustly been called a land of mystery, for little is known about that country, and whatever accounts do exist are not sufficiently definite to be satisfactory. And yet there is mystery within mystery, as the province of Kafiristan, which lies to the north-east of Khyber Pass, until recently was a completely veiled land—a region unknown to the Afghans as well as to the rest of the world.

This strip of the country (which one is tempted to term the Caucasus of the Middle East) is about one hundred miles long, and half

as much in breadth. Its boundaries are easily located and as easily remembered, for they have often figured before the Western world in connection with political complications. Kafiristan is bounded on the north by the Hindu Kush, a range of mountains closely associated with Alexander’s onset upon India. In the south-west we have the Kohistan of Kabul (highlands of Kabul) and the province of Lughman, where last year the Amir Habibullah Khan was murdered in his camp. Chitral and Swat cantons, familiar to us in connection with the Black Mountain expedition, mark the boundary of the Kafir land in the south-east; while Jellalabad province lies due south of that country.

Nowhere in Asia, probably, have the geographical conditions influenced the mind of the people so profoundly as in Kafiristan. The love of war and night forays, and a general contentment notwithstanding the scarcity of provisions, are singularly manifested in the characters of the Kafirs. Like other mountain races, they are conservative and intensely suspicious—suspicious of all foreigners, no matter in what sacred garb they may visit the country. A traveller in that part of the East is confronted with great difficulties, and runs much risk of losing his life; yet it is possible for one to pass unmolested through the Khyber defiles, or to reach the Ragistan of Bokhara without being unduly interfered with—provided, of course, that one grows a beard, speaks Pushto and Turki-Persian, assumes an Uzbek style, and does not direct a camera indiscreetly at every youth of the village. But the case with Kafiristan is different. You must think twice before you cross the Kafir's path. It is simply not possible to intrude into the country, be you never so venerable in appearance or open-handed in bestowing presents. A priestly cloak may impress the faithful in the tribal country or in Bokhara; but the Kafirs, having no fixed conception of religion and no tolerance for priestcraft, will not let any stranger enter their mountains under any guise.

II.

The physical aspect of Kafiristan is very similar to that of the Caucasus, and consists of a succession of long and narrow valleys, bounded by lofty and snow-covered mountains. These valleys are intersected by countless smaller ones, which open into the main depressions, and these again, in their turn, are connected with innumerable water-courses. Thus the whole area is nothing but a network of valleys and high mountains, ranging from sixteen thousand to twenty thousand feet. The slopes and the ravines are covered over with forests, containing trees of very large size. Oak, hazel, elder, zaitoon (wild olive), shisham (*Sisu dalbergia*) are the chief kinds. Several species of fir and pine also exist.

Within these natural defences the Kafirs of to-day live now as primitively as did their ancestors hundreds of years ago. Pickets composed of the surest *kaman dar* (bowmen) guard the country against every man who is not a Kafir. The life of these Kafir pickets is interesting, inasmuch as they get no pay, but receive as many arrows as they wish from their military headquarters at Kullum, a fort in the heart of Kafiristan. A liberal supply of arrows is considered as pay, for the pickets can kill animals at these outposts, and are allowed to barter skins and wool for goods in kind. By far the most important quarry is the deer called sarjzah, hunted for the sake of musk, which is a very useful article of barter. The appointment of

pickets is for life, and during service no leave is granted to them.

The Kafirs can neither write nor read, and possess no historical records; consequently their origin is still obscure. Some have assigned to them Hellenic ancestry; others take them to belong to the ancient Hindu stock; while they themselves trace their parentage to the Quraish Arabs. From the true Arabian stock of Quraish—the noblest amongst the Arab clans—they are poles apart; there is not the most distant similarity in features or in language. Their connection with the Greeks is equally unfounded, and there is enough anthropological and dialectical evidence to support the view that they are descendants of the early Aryan hordes which swept upon India some centuries ago, and have more in common with the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Persians, and the Tatars than with the Greeks or the Arabs.

The argument that the Kafirs belong to the Hindu cult is based on the superstitions and practices found in Kafiristan. However these ceremonies may have taken on local colour, they are admittedly traceable to the parent Vedic and the Parsee stock. These are not in any sense allied to the Arabs. All their rites and ceremonies are exotic in nature, probably imported from both East and West.

III.

With regard to the mineral production of these parts, the elevated regions of Kafiristan have ever been famous for the prodigious abundance of the precious metals, whether in ancient or in modern times. So it was under the rule of the Medes and the Persians; and Herodotus likewise informs us of this fact. So far as is at present known, the southern slopes of the Hindu Kush possess gold and silver. Fine gold-dust is washed down by rain and melting snow, and is deposited in the sandy beds of the Kashkar, the Alingar, the Nyrao, and the Kao, the principal rivers of Kafiristan. Efforts have been made to collect this gold, but the only method known to the Kafirs is to bury goatskins in the river-beds, allowing the hair free-play. In it the gold particles are entangled. A good quantity is being collected from the river Kashkar near Jellalabad, before it empties itself into the Kabul River. Strangely enough, the gold is much paler than is usual—almost a straw colour. The Kafirs are not very fond of occupying themselves in searching for gold, nor have they any real liking for the metal as a medium of barter; musk and live-stock serve their purpose better. Their self-sufficiency has stifled all efforts towards the prospecting and the working of mines. It is of interest to recall that in the district of Shamu, in the north of Kafiristan, where some gold is extracted, common belief still obtains that it was here in the olden days that the griffins kept watch over the gold-mines; and farther down the

river Alingar gold-making ants are believed to throw out earth amongst which large quantities of gold are found.

In passing from one valley to another the traveller is struck by the zest and the spirit with which the female section of the community takes part in agriculture. If a man is tilling one piece of land, in the next you will notice a woman handling the plough with equal dexterity. As there is no veiling of women in Kafiristan and the dress is almost the same for both sexes, at a distance it is difficult to distinguish which is which. In the valleys and where the land is sufficiently level, oxen are used for ploughing, but on account of the irregularity of the country the Kafirs sow their grain wherever possible. These cultivated parts mostly consist of narrow terraces or plateaus on the sides of the steep hills, sometimes natural, but more often artificial. Should the field be inaccessible to bullocks, the soil is worked by hand. The plough is of the time of Adam, the same wooden structure of triangular shape, with the same crude wooden point to it. The principal crop is wheat, and harvest takes place in the autumn. The grain is separated by oxen treading upon the ears.

Rain falls in copious showers, but never for any lengthy period. In winter snowstorms are very common, sometimes so severe as to block up the passes between valleys and isolate village from village for weeks together. On entering a valley, away up in the distance you notice clumps of stony structure nestling in the green verdure; these are in time recognised as houses, erected anyhow with rude stones. Defence being the object in view, these small colonies are as a rule situated on the slopes of hills, so that invaders may be discovered without difficulty, and the fearful winter blasts, snowstorms, and floods may not harm the villagers. Most of the houses are of one storey; three or four at the most in a village are of two storeys. Caves have also been used for habitation, not only for cattle and poultry, but even for human beings.

It is not always very easy to get up to these villages, for the approach to every one of them is guarded by a deep ravine in which a stream rushes down. The only way of crossing is by a swinging bridge. Inflated oxskins are sewn together and covered with matting. At the ends the bridge is made fast to the trunks of big trees. To an inexperienced person the bridge-crossing is fraught with danger. The structure is constantly kept in motion by the water of the stream; nor can sure-footedness be expected in walking on inflated skins. Fancy walking on huge air-cushions and looking down into a big foaming torrent! The Kafirs can run over such bridges without the least difficulty, but to a stranger a woollen rope is necessary to steady him, and as often as not he crawls on hands and feet.

IV.

There is no fixed law amongst the people of Kafiristan. The oldest man of the clan is elected as the chief, and the elders form his Cabinet of government. No punishment of a severe character is imposed, for the reason that there are no crimes of a grave nature recognised amongst the Kafirs. Theft is unknown. Adultery is not considered a crime. Murder is usually settled by arbitration and payment of a fine. The guilty person is summoned before the clan gathering, publicly asks forgiveness, throws down his weapon, and stamps his foot on it. All is then settled, and the man is acquitted.

The Kafirs are divided into eighteen tribes, and the designation given to them, *Siah Posh*, is derived, as a matter of fact, from their Muslim neighbours. The term is based upon the form of dress which the Kafirs wear. Their attire includes trousers very much like those worn by Turkish ladies; a shirt covers the upper part of the body; and over all is thrown a big coat of black goat's skin. In Persian *Siah* means black, and *Posh* means the wearer; hence the appellation of *Siah Posh* by which the Kafirs are known to this day. Men wear no head-dress. The women have a similar dress, with the addition of a skull-cap, under which the hair is pleated.

In physique the Kafirs are a hardy race, somewhat soft in outward looks, but war-like to the backbone. Their hair is of chestnut colour; they have brown eyes, and a complexion which would be considered fair even in Europe. They are tall and stately. Though great fighters who have defied the legions of Timur, they are yet people with a keen sense of enjoyment. Their large dreamy eyes give away the secret of their living, for the Kafirs are the greatest wine-bibbers in the East. Grapes grow in such abundance in the country that when fodder is scarce the cattle are not infrequently fed upon them. When the crop is gathered tons of grapes are thrown into large earthen tanks, men's feet tread the grapes, and the whole is left for some time, then boiled and left again to ferment. After a time the public supply is taken from these receptacles, as would be done with water in this country. These tanks of wine are public property, and any man may fill as many pitchers as he likes, whenever he likes. He may use the wine himself or give it to his ox. Baber has portrayed well this phase of Kafir life. 'In this sequestered tract of country,' he wrote in his *Memoirs*, 'grapes and fruits are produced in great abundance, and it also produces a large quantity of wine; but in making it they boil it. The people are wine-bibbers—they never pray, neither fear God nor man, and are infidels. So prevalent is the use of wine amongst these people that every Kafir has a *khig* or leathern bottle full of wine hung

round his neck, for they drink wine instead of water.'

Their method of slaughtering cattle is strange. The head of the animal is seized by a man, while a second strikes it a blow on the neck with a sword. If the head is severed—which is generally the case—the flesh is considered fit for consumption; but should the case be otherwise, then the carcass is given to the Baris, a people considered menials, held in the light of pariahs, who seem to be the remnant of the aboriginals of the country—the Paropamisadæ of the classical authors. All broken utensils are kept for Baris, who sometimes come and stand behind a person to eat whatever is left over. But should a Baris come in front of a Kafir while he is eating his food, then it is considered defilement. The Kafirs do not bury their dead, but place the corpse in a box and take it to the top of a hill and leave it there; the custom is not unlike the Parsee practice.

v.

The Kafirs are great enemies of their Muslim neighbours, and there is no greater glory for them than to waylay an Afghan and kill him. Once every year they hold a grand festival lasting for forty days. Great preparations are made for it. Large quantities of wine, clarified butter, and fruit are collected from every house. On the festival-day no one eats food at home, but all visit their relations and friends in rotation, remaining with them four or five days at a time. When the festival-day arrives, a large cauldron of clarified butter is heated, and around it cups are arranged. Every person who enters the house is expected to drink a cupful; otherwise it is accounted an insult. During the festival the villagers assemble and make merry. Men perform sword-dances, and the women fasten tiny bells round their waists and dance together. On the last day of the feast, which is called *Chilum Chaty*, all those who are desirous of making an inroad into the territories of their Muslim neighbours get up and stand on one side. Upon this one of the elders proceeds to harangue the audience on the deeds and prowess of their ancestors, recalling how many Muslims they had killed in their life-time, how many villages they had plundered, and exhorting his hearers to follow their example. When he has finished his address the people disperse to their homes, and the volunteers make preparation for their departure.

When the day comes for the warriors to set out, the villagers give them provisions and wine for their journey, and those requiring arms—chiefly bows and arrows and swords, but no fire-arms—are provided with weapons. Some conspicuous hill is then chosen on which a bonfire is to be lighted on the heroes' return. Fuel is heaped at the place, and no one is allowed to approach it, lest by accident or out of mischief

some one may set it alight without good cause. For twenty days the guerillas are out harassing and killing Afghans ere they return to their village, where the bonfire is duly lit. The whole village gathers to welcome the warriors. Those who have killed any Mussulmans are raised shoulder-high; others who have not been so fortunate are not allowed to sit in the assembly, and are excluded from participation in all public diversions. In their own homes, too, their food is handed to them over their shoulders. When they have succeeded in taking the life of an Afghan, they are again admitted to their rights as free men.

But in spite of this religious feud, if a Kafir says, 'This Muslim is my friend,' or a Muslim says, 'I am a friend of such-and-such a Kafir,' no harm befalls the Muslim, but inquiries are quickly made to determine the truth. If a Kafir and a Mussulman wish to become friends, as is sometimes the case with the people of Chitral and Badakhshan, they exchange weapons, and remain friends till the weapons are returned. Another custom is to kill a goat and draw the heart. Each contracting party then takes a portion, bows to the other, and touches his left breast with the point of his sword. The friendship is thus sealed.

The marriage customs of the Kafirs are also peculiar. The suitor discharges an arrow into the roof of the house of the man whose daughter he wishes to marry, and makes mention of the fact to the elder of the village. If the parties are agreeable, then the clan gathers in a circle. In the centre a goat is made to stand, while the bride takes her place at the head of the animal, and the bridegroom stands at the tail end. The elder addresses them, telling them to keep up the family tradition and behave in the manner of their grandsires towards the Muslims. The marriage is over, and the goat is given to the elder.

There is much to interest us in these Kafirs at Hindu Kush, and the rapid development of Afghanistan will doubtless lead to the unveiling of the country of this most fascinating people.

SHELL SOUNDS.

I HAVE a shell, a lovely shell,
Fished from the silver sea,
And oft within its hollow cell
I, listening, hear the solemn swell
Of ocean's harmony;
Of winds that leap
Wide sands, and sweep
Along green curling seas;
And screaming gulls
About the hulls
Of founder'd argosies.
And I have heard the measured knell
Of beacons tolling dread,
And caught within its sounding cell
Sad echoes of the fear that fell
On voices that are dead.

DOUGLAS CARSWELL.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

FROM THE FO'C'SLE.

By BART KENNEDY.

I.

SAILORS are easy-going men with free, careless manners. They take life and things as they are. They worry not their heads about the ills that may arrive on the morrow. Sufficient for them are the concerns of the day in which they are actually living. They go on their way, minding neither what comes nor goes. They face life even as they face death—bravely. Fine lads are sailors.

And I am glad to see that they are coming in now for a bit of their own, so far as the seeing of the colour of money is concerned. For they are men who are indeed worth more than their salt. They are perhaps the most useful of all workers with the hands. Up and at it in all weathers. They never know what the next hour may bring. Up and at it through the hours of the day and the darkness. Four hours on and four hours off, working to the ring of bells.

In the old days Jack was scandalously treated in the matter of wages. The people who sent him forth on ships acted as though money were less than no object to our good friend Jack. It was as if they thought he was an artist with a soul of the out-size order—one who was above the consideration of mere lucre. His pay on the merry, bounding, flapping 'lime-juicer' was from two pounds ten to three pounds per month, with nice weevilly biscuits thrown in as an appetising and entrancing make-weight. On a Western Ocean steamboat he got four pounds a month, with biscuits in which the enticing little weevil harboured not. The biscuits had not reached the mossy ripe old age that the weevil loved, for the Western Ocean was crossed in from ten to fourteen days.

There were also packets, it may be remarked, where our good old friend John was treated in so interesting a manner that he skipped the ship when he got to the outer port. This was very considerate of him. For he assassinated two birds with one stone. He saved his skin, and at the same time he saved the owners of the ship the modest little bit they had contracted to give him when he got back to the dear old home port.

For his skipping of the ship there was a good,
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healthy, convincing reason. The logic that was applied to him would have appealed even to the most unintellectual person. In a word, the mates and the captains of these packets knocked our dear old pal John about so much that he was only too pleased to wave a fond farewell to the packet on the first opportunity. Punches and belaying-pin soup were the order of the day. The truth was that mates and captains worked in with the owners. They got their whack of the money out of which Jack was cheated. The whole business was what is vulgarly known as a put-up job.

(I should like to say here, parenthetically, that I speak as to the brutality that so often went on at sea, not from hearsay evidence, but from the evidence that is known as first-hand. And very much first-hand at that. And whenever I hear of a mutiny at sea my withers are very much unwrung. For I know what I know. I've had some.)

Things are much better now for Jack, so far as pay is concerned. He gets about eleven pounds where he got three in the days when the belaying-pin soup was ladled out so early and so often. This belaying-pin soup! It isn't ladled out at all in these present halcyon days! Of course not. No; many times no. To ladle it forth now would be rude and vulgar. It would be bad form. Yes, yes, human nature has flopped round. She was going due west. She is now going due east. Brutal captains and mates are as dead as the dear old dodo. White wings sprout now from the shoulders of captains and mates—or, at least, they are beginning to do so. John is invited now to tea-fights in the cabin. Well, well! we live in an age of richly carpeted progress.

The chances to ill-treat men at sea with impunity are now fewer. Perhaps that is a good deal of the reason why the traces of angel-wings are beginning to appear upon the officers' shoulders. It may be; it may not be. I merely put it forward as a suggestion.

One may think that sailors could resent the brutal treatment that was so often meted out to them. But if one thought this, one would think the thing that was very much wrong. If a mate struck a man, and that man struck him back, the mate could construe it into

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mutiny, and could kill him on the spot. Or the man could be put in irons and brought to alleged justice when the ship made the next port. Wearing irons aboard ship is a cross between being in hell and being in jail. It is conducive to the kind of thought that inspires vigorous action when the psychological moment arrives.

II.

When the sailor was brought before the consul! Ah, that was the time! That was the time when that dear dame, Justice, took the bandage from her eyes and got in a little bit of fine artistic work. Our good friend John had as much chance with her as a small dog would have with an alligator if it met it in mid-stream.

The consul! He was the boy. He was the cuckoo, as the sailor puts it. He was the good, white-haired boy with the smooth white brow who saw to it that our good friend John got 'what for' from Dame Justice. In eleven cases out of ten Johnny came out of the small end of the horn. For he (the consul) was more than a man and a brother to the captain. They wined, or they grogged, together, and made it up as to the precise way that John should be put through the hoops. The sailor-man never got a dog's chance. No one ever dreamed of taking his word. For he was a vulgar, dishevelled, tough ruffian who ought to be given a free dance at the end of a rope! He was a bad man right from the drop of the hat.

It was only when there was a case of absolute murder on the high seas by the people aft—murder that could neither be got out of nor ignored—it was only then that the consul could be kicked into the tardy doing of his duty. He was always, as I say, against the sailor-man.

How it is now I know not, for I speak of the days of yore, and I admit also that I speak from the fo'castle standpoint. I hope he is better, though I 'hae ma doots.' He may have turned over a new leaf, or he may have got himself an entirely new book. I know not, so I cannot tell. I only know that in the old days consuls were the worst of all the enemies Jack had to contend with. They always held the candle for the devil. And, mind you, I except no nationality. Absolutely all consuls, of whatever race, breed, or calibre, were tarred with the same brush.

I know what went on at sea, for, as I have said, I've had some. I've been a sailor myself, a rough sort of sailor on steamers and fore-and-aft vessels. I have had the captain of a vessel threaten to strike me. To be threatened in this way makes a man who will fight see red. He would sooner be knocked dead than put up with the indignity. The captain did not make good his threat in my case, however, for I made him see that if he attempted it I should do him in,

and take the chances of what came after. We got to be friendly after that. He wasn't too bad a sort. His head had become a trifle swollen through hitting men who wouldn't hit back. Dear me, how time flies! That was some time ago. More than thirty years. It is almost as if it had happened in some other world. A long, long time ago. The sea was a rough business to follow in those days. There was nothing of the soft, cushy job about it. And still, in a kind of a way, I liked it. Or, to be more exact, there were times when I liked it. Yes, it was a rough business. And it's a rough business now, I'll be bound.

The first time I ever crossed the Western Ocean, I crossed it before the stick. I was the greenest of greenhorns, and if I had known what was in front of me, I should have jumped off the dock rather than have taken it on. My! oh my! It was an experience of the fearsome order. It was in the month of January, and the weather was worse than heavy. It was awful. The size of the seas was enough to make one quake. I had never been to sea before, and besides my being very sick, the nerve was knocked—or all but knocked—out of me. I felt the profoundest kind of pity for myself, and I vowed many a time and oft that if I ever got my feet again on dry land I would never leave it. I would be a landsman for good and all.

I was a Paddy West sailor. Old sailor-men will know what I mean, but for the benefit of those who do not, I may as well explain that a sailor of this kind simply meant a man who was signed on as an A.B. (able-bodied seaman) because the crew was a man or so short of the number that the law required before the ship was allowed to sail. The poor Paddy West sailor was usually an out-of-work man who had never been to sea. He was a kind of forlorn, helpless adventurer, so to speak. And as he was a useless and very-much-in-the-way kind of man, he got a rough time all round. He was knocked and pushed and thumped about.

Needless is it to remark that I got a rough time. But I prefer not to dwell upon it. Sufficient unto that far-off day was the evil thereof. That voyage lives in my mind now as a dim nightmare. It was not very dim then, however. No, indeed.

III.

Certain well-intentioned people have very odd views regarding the way sailors ought to be treated when they come ashore after a voyage. Jack has been subjected to the hardest kind of discipline from the weather, and from things and circumstances and man. He has been very much up against it. His natural instincts have been held in check, and these people of the good intentions feel that more discipline still is the nicest of nice things for

him, now that he has left the bounding billow. As a matter of fact, they want him to live the exact mathematically good life. He is expected to abjure wine, women, and song. His wages are burning a hole in his pocket; he wants to experience the exciting relaxations of life; and still he is advised to be good.

It goes without saying that our friend John does not see eye to eye with these people whose ambition it is to make him better than Providence made him. He gives them the eye that is not glad, and he goes forth on a 'bust.' He paints the town red. He circulates his money with free swiftness, which, according to the learned economists, is the right and proper thing for him to do. He has a rip-roaring good time all round, and quite often he winds up in the cloistral calm of the prison-cell.

He wakens up, refreshed but broke, and he goes forth blithely again to the bounding billow; that is, he goes forth as soon as the deities of law and order will allow him.

This is as it should be. Or, rather, it is as it is—which is far more to the point. Besides, if John looked not into the magic glass that inebriates, where on earth should we get sailors from? People with fat, stout bank-balances go not to sea. That is, they go not as sailors. No sailor worth his salt goes to sea till he is utterly and absolutely broke. It is then, and then only, that he listens to the siren sea-voice calling him.

However, these people of the good intention are not so bad, after all. They either do not know, or they ignore, Jack's real wants. But after Jack has had his fling, and he is on the rocks, they come to his rescue quite often. It is only fair to bear witness to this. And perhaps it is only fair to add that it is not possible for them to supply his real wants after he has come ashore from a voyage.

No, these Sailors' Home people are not bad people. In fact, they are all right. But in the nature of things they do not fill the bill for Jack when he comes ashore with his pocket full of wages.

IV.

I was in Frisco close on three years. In fact, I deserted a ship there. That port was the roughest and the worst in the whole wide world. The things that one heard of, and the things that one knew went on at the Front, were terrible. It was a great place for shanghaiing men. Indeed, I was very nearly shanghai'd there myself. You had to be careful when you were on the Front. Accepting drinks from oily-voiced strangers was dangerous. For often the merry knock-out drop was administered to a man under the cover of the drink fraternal. Yes, Frisco was the toughest port on earth. I wonder if it has changed for the better. . . .

The food was not always of the choicest at sea, but there was a certain thing that could not be

bettered anywhere. There was a certain thing that was the finest going. If you were the biggest millionaire possible you could not beat it.

It was the air! The fine, glorious, wonderful sea-air. It was the very essence of life itself. You were inhaling life! What mattered if the food were short? What mattered it if it were hardly eatable? The air made up for it. The glorious, splendid air.

It was not doled out to you by man. It was not hampered, or measured, or weighed. God gave it to you. None was there to challenge your right to it. There was no one to say, 'You shall only have so much.' It belonged to you as much as it would belong to a prince or a king—this wondrous, strong, healing air of the sea. It was the best thing that was going, and it was the most free. It was yours inalienably.

I remember meeting a young fellow once in Vancouver. He was from the north of England, and he had just left a British ship that had come from China. We talked about her in the abusing strain which sailors always adopt when discussing ships.

'Eh, lad,' he said, 't' food were awful. Nowt to eat. Only for t' air we'd 'a died.'

V.

You can always tell a man who has followed the sea, it matters not how long he has been away from it. There is something sound and vigorous about him. Or, at the very least, there is what might be called an echo of something sound and vigorous. The influence of the sea goes right to the core of one. It changes the whole physical being. And the mental being too.

You do not find mocking, cynical men amongst sailors. You do not find the atheistic, materialistic idiot who disbelieves in things just because his mind isn't big enough to grasp them. The immensity and the wondrousness of the sea put the sailor in key with a sense of the Infinite. It makes him realise that man is, after all, but a small thing in the vast and profound scheme of life. It matters not how dull he may be, he is made to feel this. It possesses him.

The water-world over which he sails day after day, day after day! It is immensely peopled with strange peoples. Down in the darkness, down and down and down, life is coming and going, and passing and passing. And from it there comes a mysterious radiation that passes into the sailor. Men who follow the sea show the influence of this in their eyes. The eyes of sailors are the strangest of all human eyes. They are not to be mistaken—strange eyes that see out into distances, and into profound depths.

At night when the sailor is on watch! He looks forth over the darkness. He listens; he is on the alert. He watches and hearkens for the death that may come at any time. For always there is danger. And to meet it, and to evade it, there must be eternal vigilance. It is the

price that must be paid. And it does not always suffice.

A night of stars! Glorious then is it to be on the deck of a ship. Glorious is it to watch the far-distant shining of the fire-worlds. Worlds of unimaginable mystery. The sailor is here on the deck of the ship looking up into an immensity that is at once a darkness and a place of wondrous shinings. He is sailing over darkness. He hears the sound of the waters as the bow of the ship cleaves through them. The waters are sounding out as a steady song. A deep, fine, splendid song. Yes, he is here on the waters of a world that is but as a speck in the universe, and is, at the same time, a world of vastness and mightiness. He is here on a frail thing, coming from the hand of man—a thing that, even so, endures and passes on its destined journey. A thing of smallness and still of greatness.

Even though he may not think consciously of these things, yet they enter into him and influence him. The wonderfulness and the mystery of life surround him. And he in the end becomes of it. He is marked with the sign of it. And, as I say, you will see this sign in his eyes—it matters not where you behold him. It matters not if it be in the darkest slum of a vast town, you will still behold this strange sign.

VI.

To be on the deck of a ship in a storm at sea is an experience at once terrible and magical. Death surrounds you. Death grips you, yet it possesses you not. The ship is struck and struck. It is as if foundering, but still it endures. It is a small, weak thing that is tossed and dashed about. And still it endures. You go along with the watch on deck, hauling on the halyards, tightening here, tightening there. It is as if the end may come at any moment. But you go along. And there comes to you a strange feeling. You find that you yourself gather strength from the contact with these hurtling, roaring elements. The wind gives to you power. The drench of the flying spray gives to you power. Death may come to you. But you care not. You go on with the watch on deck, hauling and hauling on the halyards, tightening here, tightening there.

Yes, death may come, and often it comes. Often the might of the storm smashes and breaks the ship, and she founders and goes down and down and down to death in the darkness. But you think not of this as you haul on the halyards. And even if you do, you care not. For in the storm at sea there is to the sailor, at times, a god-like stimulation. At times! Yes, I know, for I have felt it. I have been in the midst of it, and cared not for the thing that might come. I felt that I belonged to the elements—that I was of the elements.

But let me confess it. There have been times when I was afraid; times when terror seized

me. I remember a certain night. It was in the winter-time, and for days the weather had been ugly and heavy. I was with the watch on deck, when suddenly a hurricane smashed down upon us. It became pitch-black instantly. I could not see my hand before my face. Absolutely pitch-black. And the roaring of the wind was as the roarings of demons and monsters. It was as if all the frightful things of the depths had risen and were surrounding us: monstrous sentient things with stupendous, horrible voices; dreadful things of the air, and dreadful things of the waters; hideous fighting things of destruction.

I was stunned and confused. I could not move. I was bewildered. And still I sensed the monstrousness that surrounded me. I seemed to be alone with fighting things of horror. Though confused, a part of my consciousness was strangely active. To me these malignant things were sentient. They were fighting to destroy the ship and the beings thereon. Monstrous things of evil. And who is to say that these monstrous powers of the great waters and the wind were not sentient? Surely not you, nor I, nor any other. For we know not. We know not of the make or the scope of the powers that lie behind us. These powers were here in the world before we came. They are of the essence of things. And who is to say that they possess not a surer sentence than ever we ourselves possess? These dread storm-powers from out of which we have evolved! These powers that were here long, long before we came from out them! Who is to say that they are not frightful and terrible intelligences?

Man is not everything, nor anything near it. He is only a being going on a journey, even as are other beings. The way of his going is hidden from him. He is but a part of a tremendous life the springs of which are hidden from him. His intelligence is at best but a small, weak light. Before him and behind him is mystery. He is enclosed in it. The power to penetrate it is not given him. And, therefore, it is well for him not to be arrogant. It is well for him to take what comes. The most he can do is to ponder and to wonder.

Though he may not be always conscious of it, he learns this at sea.

VII.

It is not for any one to sum up clearly the kind of life that is lived by the man who follows the sea. It is a life that is at once vague and definite, and hard and cruel and beautiful. The life is as the sea itself, full of changing moods. There are days of beauty thereon, even as there are days of sullen half-darkness and menace. There are days that sing with the glory and wonder and magic of life; days when the sounds of the waters are as a mighty song, when the wind is as an angel of beneficence. Light, air,

and waters form a vast harmoniousness. The waves move evenly. A peaceful power is over all. Wonderful days are there at sea! Days when the soul of the sailor rises. To live in the midst of such a day at sea is to live in the midst of the power and the glow of life at its fullest. To live in the midst of such a day is to dream dreams of wonder. There comes into the faces

of the sailors a shining. There is an allaying of rancour. Gone are the hard looks and the scowls. The sailors are not as they are on the days of sullenness and menace. To them come softened visions of the past.

Yea, the sailor lives in the midst of glory and strangeness and wonder.

On certain days.

THE BLAIRS ROPE.

PART II.

IV.

THE detective was a tall, thin man. Through being out-of-doors a good deal he had a healthy colour, but he did not look like a countryman. Ross wondered what disguise he had adopted.

'I went down in khaki—it's a sure disguise,' explained Evans. 'I was a man in the battalion in which Sir Hugh was an officer; he was my company commander, and had promised to recommend me for a medal. Medals are got that way years after the event, you know, sir. I was down seeing him about it, and that was how he explained my presence. Being in the country, why not a day or two, as I was in no hurry? So he puts me up at the lodge—by the entrance-gates. Where better could I see everybody come in and go out? And I prowled about the village. Being a Tommy, what more natural than that I should go to the local pub?' Ross nodded. 'And they say things fall to the deserving,' added Evans, taking a long pull at his weed. 'Near the park—in it, in fact, a part of it—had been a military encampment, now abandoned. A nice mess it had made of the place, which I doubt will ever look the same again! One of the things the military left, because they couldn't take it away, was the incinerator. This is a fireplace for refuse, made of loose stones piled one on top of another. It is about as big as, and shaped like, a gate-legged drawing-room table. At the foot is an opening for starting the fire. There it stands, just as the military left it, full of half-burnt rubbish.'

'Well, a couple of miles away from this encampment is an aerodrome, and there is a good deal of flying practice. At this pub one day there called in one of the aerial gunners—a sergeant—and the conversation turned on how far from the earth a flying-man can distinguish moving objects below. I forget what the sergeant said—how many feet—but he said that one morning, flying very early, as they do sometimes, from fifteen hundred feet, it may have been, he had watched a woman walking across a field. He knew it was a woman by her skirts. All this, you know, was to settle an argument—he having mates with him who had also been

"up." Incidentally, he saw the woman stop by the incinerator—he spotted that—and stooped down. When I left the pub I went to the incinerator and poked about among the rubbish'—

'And found nothing?'

'As you say, sir. But it set me thinking. I had asked the airman what time he would be flying, and he had said it was soon after four. Early for a woman to be out, Mr Ross, unless she had something special to be out for! And a sure hiding-place.'

'You think Miss Serge "cached" the stones in the incinerator?'

'I have that suspicion.'

Ross mused over this. 'Well, inspector, your theory is as follows: Hauptmann and Miss Serge are confederates, and the valet their paid "hand." The valet took an impression of the safe-key while Sir Hugh Blairs was bathing; Miss Serge stole the necklace and conveyed it to town; and in due course Hauptmann will dispose of it?'

The detective inclined his head. 'Unless we get on its track while he is waiting for the hue and cry to cool.'

Ross slowly shook his head. 'You have not done so badly, inspector,' he said, 'and were not the case a peculiar one, you might be right; but I am sure Miss Serge did not steal the stones, I am sure Hauptmann didn't, and I am sure the valet did not take an impression of the key. He could have taken one any time when his master was in his bath indoors; in fact, he would have scores of opportunities. From the facts you offer I can deduce nothing, and I can only advise that you go down to Blairs Court again and renew your investigations.'

The inspector rose abruptly. 'I am obliged to you for your orders, Mr Ross. In reply, I am returning to headquarters with the information that you can do nothing to assist me—which being the case, I shall ask for a warrant to arrest, in the first instance, Edmund Cooper, the valet.'

'Sir Hugh will hardly consent to that, inspector. After all, you have practically no evidence on which to ask for an arrest-warrant, and the valet is his useful and trusted servant.'

'But I have already led him to suspect the man,' protested the inspector. 'To suspect all of them, in fact.'

'You have nipped a promising love-affair in the bud, then?'

'I had to. And as well, don't you think?'

'A great pity, to my mind.'

v.

As the inspector, hot and puzzled, looked at Ross, and Ross, in a brown study, gazed at the fire, the 'phone rang. Ross went to it.

'Yes! I am Mr Ross. Yes, he is here. All right.' Turning to Evans, he said, 'Head-quarters want to speak to you.'

Evans went. For about a minute he listened in silence. Then he said, 'Very well, sir,' and put up the receiver.

'Developments?' asked Ross.

'It has been put back,' murmured the detective.

Now he'd puzzle this fine gentleman!

'The necklace?'

'Yes.' Evans was looking at Ross with a twinkle in his eyes. 'Sir Hugh,' he went on, 'took Mr Hauptmann to the safe to show him where the casket containing the stones was kept. Opening the casket—there was the necklace.'

'The real one, this time,' purred Ross.

'Why'—The policeman stared hard at his host. 'You beat me, sir. What do you mean?'

Instead of replying, Ross went into the little lobby, and returned with his covert-coat and hat.

'Another peg?' he asked, his hand on the decanter. 'No? Well, now I'll see you through the gates. You'll be going down to Blairs by an early train, I presume?'

'I—I can't say,' the detective, at an entire loss, replied.

Ross closed his front-door, and led the way downstairs.

'Will you follow my instructions to the letter?' he asked the man.

'I suppose I must.'

They walked up to Fleet Street, Ross talking rapidly.

Arrived in the world outside the Temple, Ross held out his hand. 'I am going to my club,' he said, 'to get a little information. I shall see the man I want there. I shall be in my rooms at nine o'clock to-morrow—Thursday—night, awaiting a call from you at Blairs. I can then conclude the matter, as I wish, because I am going away on Friday—or propose to. Don't forget, will you? Get done all I have suggested by nine sharp. . . . Good-night.'

And they parted.

'Hang him!' muttered the detective, 'I believe he's right on the mark. But what a facer for him if he isn't!'

vi.

It was twenty-to-nine on the following night as Ross opened his door to admit Mr Scathways. The chief of the 'I's' bore a striking resemblance to his voice. He would be about sixty, but his years sat lightly on him; his hair, close-clipped,

was iron-gray, with still more iron than gray in it; his beardless, well-chiselled face was strong, yet mobile; his tall figure was erect, and he walked with the ease lent by excellent proportions.

It is fortunate for the world that such men as he, in quite welcome numbers, survive the ills of infancy, the perils sought in adventurous youth, and the maladies that accrue with middle years.

'You are very cosy here, Ross,' he said, glancing round the young man's room with approval. 'It is strange,' added the chief, sinking into a chair by the fire, 'how readily you fellows abandon this placidity for the unknown of matrimony.'

'A taste for gambling is deep-rooted in human nature, sir,' Ross smilingly replied.

'Well, to business. Evans is 'phoning you at nine, I understand?'

'To confirm my solution of the problem,' replied Ross with gentle arrogance.

'You are so sure, then?' The chief looked at his henchman with a touch of gravity. 'You know who the thief is?'

'I think I know who the person is that took the necklace.'

'Then it *was* a woman?'

'Yes.'

'And she had a confederate?'

'Two.'

'But,' said the chief, 'you told Evans he was wrong about Miss Serge.'

'He was.'

'Then what other woman could have taken it?'

'The old, fat aunt,' said Ross.

The chief of the 'I's' sat up a little straighter, for even he could be surprised.

'The aunt! But Evans had ruled her out. I saw him after you did, you know—as well as before.'

'I guessed he'd give you another call. Well, it was the aunt, as you'll see. It is nearly nine,' remarked Ross, consulting his watch.

'Just to fill up the interim,' said the chief, 'tell me how you arrived at that conclusion.' And he added, a thought anxiously, 'I don't want the Yard to have the laugh of us—as they will if you're wrong.'

'I'm not wrong,' said Ross. 'Let us go back to the beginning. Blairs meets Elfin Serge through her aunt, who is acquainted with *his* aunt. He invites Mrs Jacobs and her niece to stay at Blairs Court, and it is very evident what his idea is—to let the young lady see the place and understand the potentialities of the match he is about to propose. Not being quite certain of the girl, he proceeds to impress the aunt, who is pretty sure to have influence with the girl, by showing the old lady the famous family diamonds.'

'Yes?'

'When he next goes to his safe he discovers

that the necklace is missing. He communicates with the local police, who, wisely acknowledging it is beyond them, seek inspiration from Scotland Yard, who send down Evans. He takes a good look at the guests, and narrows down the possibles to Hauptmann—probably on account of his appearance, which is rather against him, poor fellow!—the girl, the aunt (as a make-weight), and the valet, and proceeds to find out all he can about the movements and the behaviour otherwise of the quartette. Quite by chance he haps across a bit of evidence from an early-flying airman, who noticed a woman by the incinerator in the abandoned military camp. He had learned Mrs Jacobs and her niece went to town the day after the discovery of the loss, just as they had gone the day following the bathing incident. Putting two and two together, he works it out thus: the valet got an impression of the key, and gave it to Miss Serge, who went to town and got a new key cut, returned, rose very early and bagged the jewels, and “cached” them in the incinerator, pending an opportunity to take them farther. She made that opportunity the next day. A week elapses, and the jewels are replaced in the safe—and at that point Evans is flabbergasted, beat to a frazzle.

‘And so, I confess, am I,’ put in the chief.

‘Well, sir,’ continued Ross, consulting his watch again, ‘I will tell you this—the first necklace was an imitation one, the second the real one. Does that convey anything to you?’

‘Nothing—except to marvel how you arrive at such a conjecture.’

‘It is not a conjecture; it is a certainty, as you will learn in about—er—three minutes’ time. I arrived at my conclusion thus: Wishing to impress the aunt, Blairs shows her the stones, and Mrs Jacobs, with a thousand years’ knowledge of such things trickling through her veins, spots them as spurious ones. With a little thought, saying nothing to him, she conceives how they got there—the old Lady Blairs, being hard up, had pawned the real ones, and substituted such a good imitation lot that only an expert would detect the fraud.’

Mr Scathways, engrossed in the expanding solution, drew a rather deeper breath than usual.

‘This little lot, thinks Mrs Jacobs,’ continued Ross, ‘are—as the breeze blows—to be worn by my girl, and as the members of my family, from Abraham downwards, have never liked to sport valueless gauds, I’ll have the real ones on my darling’s neck or know the reason why. So she writes to the ex-Lady Blairs, living in clover with her Tea King, and orders her to hand over the goods. Her ex-ladyship, who had doubtless intended to put things straight when she wormed the money out of her Tea King—whom she married, no doubt, partly for that reason—tells Aunt Jacobs to meet her in town, when she gives her her own key of the safe, and tells her to take the paste necklace out and bring

it up to her in London, when the real one will be handed over. This the aunt does; and so we gather that the lady by the incinerator was a much older lady than Miss Elfin, who doubtless knew nothing about the transaction at all, as it wasn’t likely that the old woman was going to explore the girl’s heart by telling her anything about it.’

The chief nodded approval.

‘But before the real one can be put back, the absence of the sham necklace is discovered, and the fat’s in the fire. The aunt now has to await her opportunity of replacing the thing, and at length finds a suitable moment.—But it is nine o’clock. The beggar’s late.’

‘But the valet and the bathing-box?’ queried Mr Scathways.

‘Taking his master a dry towel.’

‘The trace of bread on the key—or the other keys?’

‘The bunch might easily have come in contact with food.’

‘Hauptmann?’

‘Has, I have gathered, a keen desire to get into society with a large S, and so, if his services are useful to the young baronet, why, let it rip! An excellent pal to Blairs, I should say.’

‘And you told Evans’—

‘To see the aunt and make her tell Blairs all about it. It means giving the dowager away, but as things have fallen out, that can’t be avoided. She shouldn’t have helped herself to family property.’

VII.

The telephone’s insidious tinkle sounded. You talk about the heart-searchings a telegram will provoke, but are they not rivalled by the suspense hanging on a ‘phone’s little bell?

The chief took off the receiver. ‘Is that you, Inspector Evans? . . . At Blairs? . . . I am Mr Scathways.’ . . .

He listened, at intervals giving a slight nod. No further questions appeared to be necessary. A couple of minutes sufficed, and with a ‘Good-night’ he put up the receiver.

Ross had been watching him a little nervously.

‘Well, friend Ross, it did not fall out *quite* as you anticipated.’

The young man’s countenance dropped.

‘Yet in all essentials it *did*. The only difference is this: Evans, on arriving, found he had fellow-travellers in the shape of—guess.’

Ross shook his head.

‘The Tea King and the dowager! Brought her along to own up and clear the air.’

‘The best thing he could possibly have done,’ remarked Ross, his face clearing. ‘I wonder’—

The chief smiled. ‘I gathered from a homely remark of Evans’s that you needn’t wonder—the young people have arranged matters quite satisfactorily. And I fancy, from the cheerfulness of his tone, that the Tea King has behaved quite well to Evans—besides wanting to know the

address of anybody else who had assisted in the affair.'

'He didn't'—began Ross, a little scared.

'He did *not*, Mr Ross,' replied the chief. 'There is not a penny of commission coming to you this time, but—may I take the liberty?' (He filled two glasses that stood upon a silver tray near by.) 'I'd like to wish you joy on the

initiation of your "S" salary, since your abilities surely entitle you to one; and the toast is'—

'The new Lady Blairs!' cried the young man, his eyes kindling.

'And the quite-soon Mrs Roger Ross!' added the chief, taking the hand of his promising lieutenant in his own strong and friendly one.

THE END.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

III.—JAPAN, 1872-75.

By C. E. GIFFORD, C.B., R.N.

I.

THE period of our visit to the East, 1872-75, was one of extreme interest in Japan, where the result of studying the customs of Western nations was beginning to make itself practically felt. It is easy now to realise how absolutely we visitors failed to understand then what was going on. We had no inkling of the profoundly serious views of Japanese statesmen, and were rather inclined to regard the movement as illustrating the extraordinary imitative ingenuity of the Japanese race. Inquiries made by them in Europe had led to the engagement of French military instructors, of German medical instructors and hospital doctors, of British naval instructors, and so on; but so little importance did we attach to the phenomenon that we were inclined to believe a report which was circulated that, as a result of the Franco-German War, the Japanese authorities had concluded that they had not made a wise choice of military instructors, and that to remedy this they were dressing their soldiers in helmets instead of *képis*, and arming them with needle-guns instead of with *chassepots*.

A craze for European clothes, at no-matter-what cost, had seized the nation, and the great clothing establishments of Hong-kong and Shanghai were cleared out to meet the demand. There was also a wild desire to possess Western animals. I was in our contractor's office at Shanghai when he received a telegram from Nagasaki: 'Send in first steamer every rabbit you can buy, except white with pink eyes and lop ears.' As much as eighty pounds was given at Yedo for a pair of rabbits, and the craze became so virulent that the traffic was checked by imperial edict.

Similarly with pigs. We were told at Kagosima (Satsuma country in the far west) of a man who sold his possessions and bought a pig from a steamer. For a time it paid him to have it carried about by two coolies, and exhibited; but this did not last long, and he found himself penniless and unable to dispose of or to feed his pig. He therefore committed *hara-*

kiri. History does not relate what became of the pig!

Sheep would not live in Japan; the grass was said to poison them. Each treaty port, therefore, had its 'Mutton Club,' which imported from China by every steamer a few sheep, and stall-fed them until they were needed for the table of club-members. Japanese beef, especially that from Kobé, was excellent.

II.

Japan had no steam fleet in 1871, and the engines of the few merchant steamers she possessed were in the charge of Europeans or Americans. There was, however, no intention of letting this state of things continue, and the Japanese were assiduous in studying the working of engines and boilers. One of their steamers trading between Yokohama and Hakodate had a Scottish engineer. As she was about to sail on one of her voyages, he was told that his services were no longer needed, and generously paid off. 'Nothing venture, nothing win;' the Japanese under-study had declared his readiness to assume charge of the engines, and the owners had approved of his taking the place of the Scotsman. The voyage to Yezo, extending over some days, was successfully accomplished, but on approaching Hakodate harbour the new engineer went on the bridge and told the captain that he much regretted he had forgotten how to stop the engines! He suggested that the captain should steer the ship round and round the bay whilst he was working down the steam-pressure, and not bring her up to the anchorage until the engines had ceased working. The suggestion was carried out, and the device proved successful.

There is an old story, often heard in the navy, which may, perhaps, be not inappropriately repeated here. A fine old Cornish seaman, known as Captain Johnny Borlase, commanded in the China squadron a corvette, fully rigged as a ship and fitted with screw engines. He was coming into port under steam and sail, steering for the anchorage indicated to him by signal from the admiral. Sail was gradually

shortened so as to reduce the ship's way and bring her up to her assigned berth; but, to the captain's intense astonishment, she ran past it. Suddenly the truth flashed upon him, and he blurted out, 'Oh dear! oh dear! I forgot I waur a steamer!'

I am reminded of a story of a lieutenant of the United States Navy who had brought across from San Francisco a very smart sailing-craft, to be stationed at Yokohama as a store-ship. Discussing with some of our officers the relative sailing-powers of their ships, he declared that, on furling sails before coming up to the Yokohama anchorage, he found his ship was carrying so much way that he had to run her twice round Yedo Bay (some sixty miles) before he could get her speed low enough to anchor!

I must be allowed to drag in here another story of an American naval officer in Japan which has always seemed to me to be typical of American humour. The Commander-in-Chief of their China squadron received from his wife, as a birthday present, a handsome fitted bag, which he said was to him the fifth wheel of a coach, but which turned out to be very suitable for the lady herself. So, when her birthday came, he presented her with a pair of gold-laced trousers, which, curiously enough, happened to fit him.

III.

Whenever we found ourselves in the presence of Japanese naval officers, we had to sharpen our wits to be able to answer their questions. Several of these recur to my memory. One of their captains asked, 'In the British Navy, suppose the captain of a man-of-war is a greater *daimio* than the First Lord of the Admiralty, how can the Admiralty give the ship orders? A Japanese captain could not accept orders from an inferior.' Another: 'When the Queen comes on board a British man-of-war, and the royal standard is hoisted, does the captain haul down the pennant?'

We had two young Japanese officers for a year or two on board the *Iron Duke* under the fleet paymaster's instruction. One of them was a very sensitive youth, most anxious to become an efficient paymaster; and we were equally anxious that he should do well, for we had in our minds the sad fate of a Japanese midshipman who had been under instruction in one of our frigates. After one of the regular examinations of all the midshipmen on board, he learned that he had taken a poor place in the list; so, unwilling to disgrace his country any further, he retired below to his sea-chest, spread the canvas cover of his chest on the deck to prevent its being soiled, and then committed *hara-kiri*. To our relief, our students were landed safely at Plymouth on the paying-off of the *Iron Duke*.

Our relations with all the Japanese with whom we had any dealings were of the most friendly

character, and we became much attached to them. The days when it was dangerous for Europeans to venture far beyond the European concessions were past and gone, and the farther we got into the country the greater kindness we met with. I was specially fortunate in this respect, having been sent up-country to the sulphur-springs of Ashinoyu (literally 'leg-bath') for the cure of a troublesome attack of eczema. And here let me say that the cure was miraculous, two or three days' treatment in this Jordan effecting what months of treatment in the Abana and Pharpar of our hospitals had shown no signs of doing.

Later, in September 1874, furnished with passes from the Governor of Nagasaki, Captain William Arthur and I crossed the Gulf of Omura. He on horseback, I in a chair, we travelled to Tsukasaki and Uresino, where were well-known sulphur-springs. We took with us an interpreter, who said he could cook, and put up at a pleasant tea-house in the main street of a pretty village. After our passport had been inspected at the Saibansho (police-station), we received from the Prince of Omura the key of his bathroom at the public baths, and an invitation to use it during our stay. This was a great boon, and specially suited our Western ideas of modesty, for we should otherwise have had to bathe in the company of the whole village. Even as it was, we were the objects of much curiosity, mainly, so our interpreter said, on account of the whiteness of our skins; wherever a crack in the wooden walls of our bathroom gave a view of the interior, there was an eye fixed upon us! I do not suggest that we were more truly modest than the troops of villagers who bathed in the afternoon in public; or than the two young girls of Tsukasaki whom we saw walking home from the baths during a downpour of rain, and keeping their clothes dry by stowing them all above the ribs of their one umbrella; or than the old couple whom we saw sitting outside their door in the village street up to their chins in warm water in a wooden tub. This is a mere matter of latitude and longitude, each country fixing its own standard of what constitutes modesty.

IV.

The good people of this part of Japan had but a very slight knowledge of Europeans. Our landlord was one of the disestablished Samurai class, the two-sworded fighting-men, retainers of the *daimios*. We asked him to dress himself in his war-paint, and show us how two swords were used. Our interpreter explained to us that he did not wish to comply, because he feared we might suspect treachery, and it was with difficulty that he could be persuaded to do as we wished.

We had brought with us from Nagasaki a supply of bread, Danish butter, jam, preserved milk, and a big bag of potatoes. Potatoes

had never been seen in the district, and we could not refuse our landlord's request to be allowed to have them for seed. In exchange he brought us a duck, a good supply of onions, and of auratum lily bulbs, which are grown for food, just as we grow potatoes, and which we found to be very good eating. The duck was our difficulty; our interpreter confessed himself ignorant as to the mode of cooking it, and neither my captain nor I knew what to do. However, we decided on a division of labour—he to pick the feathers and clean the bird, I to cook it, the interpreter looking on at our efforts. Bread, onions, lily-bulbs, all chopped up small and smothered in butter, seemed to make a good stuffing, and we rammed it home tight. The landlord produced a copper vessel, in which we melted more butter; this we set over a charcoal fire, waited till it sizzled, put our duck in the pan, and our trust in luck. This latter was too blind, for, as the inside butter began to melt and the bread, onions, and lily-bulbs to swell, the strain on the framework of the bird became too great, and a minor explosion occurred. Nevertheless, the result was excellent and the duck delicious. We discovered next day that we could have boiled the bird at the sulphur-spring, which was so hot that the villagers were accustomed to dip in nets full of eggs and vegetables for their evening meal, and pull them out ready cooked.

At Uresino we were fortunate enough to witness the marriage of the landlord of our tea-house to a local beauty. At 9 P.M. the bride arrived at a house across the street, where she was dressed in her best, and our tea-house doors were all closed as if for the night. At eleven the bride was brought across the street in a jinricksha, a second following with her trunks. The doors were ceremoniously thrown open, and the whole family assembled to receive her. The mother-in-law elect took her apart, blacked her teeth with a preparation of oak-galls, and cut off her eyebrows—two marks of a married woman. About 2 A.M. we were called by our interpreter—'The bride hath paced into the hall.' The family party, some eight or ten persons, were squatted on the floor in a circle, and then began endless drinking of healths. The bride handed a bowl of *sake* first to the mother-in-law, then to all the others; the bridegroom followed suit, and was imitated by all the members of the party, each presenting the bowl to all the others, at the same time bowing the forehead to the floor. Girls playing the *goto*, a sort of harp, kept up an incessant twanging. Half-an-hour of this satisfied our curiosity, and we retired upstairs.

At 7 A.M. the feast was still going on. We had seen a large quantity of salt fish being prepared, and concluded it had stimulated the thirst of the revellers, who, on learning that there were foreigners upstairs, decided to pay them a visit. Our interpreter routed out all but one, a tipsy old fellow, whom we could get rid of only by

giving him a libation of brandy, which choked him.

Next day the villagers attended a ceremony in the temple in honour of the Harvest God. There was a weird procession of mummers in the streets, three playing a sort of flute, and four beating kettledrums slung on bamboos, and gesticulating wildly all the time. The rear of the procession was brought up by a body of men beating really beautiful bronze gongs.

V.

Nagasaki was our favourite port in the south-west of Japan. It was here, after the visit of Mendez Pinto in 1543, that the Portuguese were allowed to found a settlement. Their traders were followed by Jesuit missionaries, who made a great number of converts; but about the beginning of the seventeenth century the Japanese rose against the Christian converts and massacred them by thousands. The island of Pappenberg, in the middle of the beautiful harbour of Nagasaki, was, according to legend, the scene of wholesale massacres. Its wooded heights were crowned with temples, and it was from a precipice near by them that the unhappy victims are said to have been hurled on to the rocks below. The island had always been considered sacred, and we found on the station an order prohibiting any person in the fleet from even landing on the beach. '*Autres temps, autres mœurs*;' we got up a regatta in Nagasaki harbour, in which Japanese boats took part very successfully, and Pappenberg beach was the chief scene of the festivities, whilst we rambled freely over the picturesque little island.

On one of our many visits to Nagasaki we found the town wrecked by a typhoon. The force of these storms is terrific, and we were fortunate in never meeting one while we were at sea in the *Salamis*. We narrowly escaped one in the *Iron Duke* off the south-west coast of Japan, managing to keep on its outside edge. Even so it was a grand sight. I had never seen such angry seas. A tea-clipper (*Black Adder*, I think) was towed into the Shanghai River when we were there, with her three masts clean snapped off about six feet above the deck; whilst at Hong-kong a gunboat was blown out of the water, and landed on the top of the boat-house belonging to the yacht club.

Our wanderings shortly after this took us to Hakodate, the chief town of the northern island of Yezo. At this time Japan was much concerned at the advance of Russia; already she had lost the island of Saghalin, and she was fearful lest Yezo should follow. It was very sparsely inhabited, and far more attractive than Saghalin; whilst its ports, open all through the winter, would have given Russia the outlet for her trade which she naturally coveted.

Japan therefore decided that Yezo must be populated, and the Government, having selected

a suitable site, sent workmen from the south to build a new city. Whilst we were lying at Hakodate a steamer arrived from Yokohama with 150 carpenters. She also brought one hundred women, a report having been sent down that there were not wives enough for the settlers.

The houses of Hakodate presented a very unusual appearance, the roofs being covered with green turfs, held down by ropes weighted with heavy stones. This not only kept the houses cool during the heat of summer, but prevented the roofs being carried away by the strong gales which prevail at some seasons of the year.

Our sportsmen found amusement at Hakodate. Near by were good snipe-marshes, where a long-legged midshipman, just arrived from home, shot a solitary snipe weighing $10\frac{1}{2}$ oz., thus breaking the record. The former champion, our First Lieutenant H. A. Digby, tramped that marsh for days, and eventually came on board radiant with a bird a quarter-ounce heavier! I found a little stream, from which I took, with a Devonshire cast of flies, some fair dishes of trout.

Shortly before our arrival at Hakodate a Japanese fanatic—one of the suppressed Samurai class—had crossed the strait from the southern island, having taken a vow that he would kill the first European he saw, and so be avenged for the troubles which he believed the Western nations were bringing upon his country, and especially on the Samurai class. Not long after landing he saw the newly arrived German Consul—a small man in delicate health—leaving his house. He drew one of his swords, and rushing up to the unfortunate German, literally hacked him in pieces. As if by magic, Hakodate harbour became full of foreign ships of war, including two German cruisers. On our arrival, a day or two after the event, our consul told us that the Japanese were profoundly impressed with the belief that we had come to bombard the town as an act of reprisal. A special commission was at once sent from Tokio, and the wretched murderer, after being tortured to extract full confession, was decapitated.

VI.

The penal laws of Japan were at this period very severe. A battalion of Royal Marines was stationed at Yokohama, and one of their officers lost from his hut a watch and chain and some money. He reported the theft to the Japanese police, who soon found the watch. The lieutenant was asked to give evidence before the court, which sentenced the thief to be executed, and refused to listen to the urgent prayer of the lieutenant that such a sentence might not be carried out. 'You told us,' said the judge, 'that your watch was worth fifteen pounds; by the laws of Japan a man who steals goods of the value of five dollars forfeits his life.' The execution was carried out.

Whilst on the subject of the Japanese laws I must write my recollections of an extraordinary trial which took place at Yedo (the capital, the name of which was changed to Tokyo in 1869). We were lying in the *Iron Duke* at Yokohama, and in the middle watch the officer on duty heard a splashing at the foot of the accommodation-ladder. He sent down the quartermaster to see what it was, and between them they fished a Chinaman out of the water. A Chinese steward was sent for to interpret, and it was found that the man had swum from a Peruvian coolie-ship, the *Maria Luz*, which, with six hundred Chinese coolies on board, bound to Peru, had anchored far out, hoping to escape port dues. The man claimed protection, on the ground that he had been shipped at Macao under false pretences, and had been badly treated on board the *Maria Luz*.

A few nights later another coolie swam to the *Iron Duke*.

They were handed over to the British Consul, and in due course their cases were taken up by the Japanese Government, and their claim to be set at liberty came up for trial before a Japanese court. English counsel were retained for the coolies and for the Peruvian authorities who had shipped them.

A claim was set up on behalf of the men that they were detained as slaves on board the coolie-ship, and that their landing on Japanese soil, where slavery was contrary to law, made them as free as if they had landed on British soil. The other side replied that such an argument was worthless, considering that Japan publicly recognised, in the Yoshiwara system, the vilest system of slavery known to the world; that under it parents sold their young daughters for money to people who kept them for a term of years, practically as slaves, for immoral purposes, in the Yoshiwaras.

The judge adjourned the trial for a week, before the expiration of which an imperial edict had been issued, abolishing the Yoshiwara system and ordering all the inmates to be set at liberty!

Counsel for the coolies was triumphant; not only were his two clients set at liberty, but the whole six hundred on board the *Maria Luz* were sent back to China at the expense of the Japanese Government. The Portuguese and Peruvian Governments protested, and the latter ordered three ironclads across to Japan; but the order was withdrawn, and the affair ended.

In course of time a handsome gold medal was sent to the *Iron Duke* by the Viceroy of Nan-king, on behalf of the Chinese Government, with an inscription on both sides in Chinese characters. On the face was 'To *Iron Duke*, the Captain of a British Man-of-War,' and on the reverse 'For benevolence and good-will' (or words to that effect—I write from memory).

(Continued on page 734.)

DR MARBOLD'S EXPERIMENT.

By ROBIN FORSYTHE.

I.

I WAS sitting in Dr Marbold's waiting-room. Some newspapers and magazines lay on the table, but I was feeling in no mood for reading. My mind at the moment was chiefly concerned with the prospect of at last seeing what kind of man Dr Marbold was.

I had heard so much about him in an allusive way—hints and odd remarks from which I could glean very little that was definite; idle chatter, which had, however, succeeded in giving me the impression that there was something vaguely sinister about the man. It had bred in me an indefinable mistrust of him, yet mingled with this mistrust was a conviction that he was skilful—amazingly, fiendishly skilful.

He had once, I knew, practised extensively, and had come to be considered an eminent authority on human psychology and diseases of the brain. Then had occurred that strange affair of Parker Burnaby, the American Steel King and multi-millionaire. Burnaby had been suffering from frightful hallucinations, and Dr Marbold had been entrusted with the task of trying to cure him. In this he had failed, for eventually Parker Burnaby died in a most mysterious fashion. And in the subsequent settling-up of the American's affairs it came to light that he had left Marbold nearly a million of money.

After inheriting this fortune, Dr Marbold had given himself up to research-work, and had narrowed down his practice solely to those cases which interested him. So that when I asked him for an appointment, giving him a brief outline of my ailment, I was rather doubtful whether he would grant my request. Much to my surprise, he replied that he would be delighted to see me, and it was in pursuance of his instructions that I was now sitting in his anteroom awaiting him.

As I lay back in his comfortable chair, idly ruminating, I all at once became aware of the presence of some one in the room, revealed to me by that subconscious and wholly inexplicable message which life, on occasions, flashes to life, either mentally, or physically, or conjointly, I know not which. I looked up, and was conscious mainly of a pair of eyes, and behind them a man—but the remainder of his personal appearance was entirely overshadowed by his eyes. I cannot adequately describe them in sober language; they were large, intensely brilliant, and shone as they looked through me with what, from lack of more precise words, I can only designate as a bronzine gleam. They were the eyes neither of a poet nor of a man of science, but a commingling of both; and predominant in their expression was a

suggestion of amazing insight and infinite power. I started suddenly, because, though expectant, I had neither heard nor seen his entrance.

'Mr Quinton,' he said, referring to my card. The voice was of light quality, but very musical, and before I could reply he added, 'You have come to consult me about a recurrent dream which is troubling you.'

Regaining my self-composure as rapidly as I could, for his uncannily silent entry into the room had somewhat unnerved me, I related to him the nature of my ailment. While I spoke he kept his glance fixed on my boots, and gave me opportunity to notice that in all other respects save his eyes he was a very ordinary-looking man. His cheeks were fresh-coloured, and as smooth and delicate as a woman's; his light, glossy hair was brushed sleekly over a nobly shaped skull. He wore a suit of gray tweed, and looked like your ideal young college athlete before the world of business and society has rubbed the bloom from his manhood. I was dumbfounded that so well-known a man in the world of medicine should look so wonderfully youthful. I felt that he could not possibly be older than twenty-six.

'You have been suffering from a recurrent dream which is making you uneasy; you are possibly afraid of some incipient mental trouble. Well, cease to worry about it; I can cure you very easily. I can assure you that you will never be troubled by it again. Will you call again to-night at 9.30—that will give you time to get here after dinner—and I shall put you under treatment? *Au revoir!*'

A flash from those eyes, an electrical hand-shake, and he had opened the front-door and let me out. I was half-way home again before I was fully aware that I had never definitely stated that I should return at 9.30 to undergo his treatment. I was also aware of the fact that I should certainly be there!

II.

Punctually at 9.30 I arrived, and was at once ushered into Dr Marbold's surgery, which was situated on the first floor. This surgery was a spacious room, with walls and floors of spotlessly white tiles, and lit with movable clusters of powerful electric lights. Rows of shelves, laden with glittering glass-stoppered bottles lined the walls, and here and there about the room stood air-tight glass cases in which gleamed silver-bright instruments of fantastic shapes, lying on crystal-clear slabs, things of nervous and grimly morbid beauty. Through tightly closed glass doors could be obtained a view of another room and a ghostly glimpse of a marble operating-table,

with a rolled-up blanket lying thereon. Around the tiled walls of this farther room were more shelves, laden with glass tanks of antiseptic fluid, in which soaked tightly twisted towels. I glanced round quickly for Dr Marbold, and found him, dressed in snowy ducks, bending over a high-power microscope, and making a drawing of what he discerned beneath its magic lens. On his right was an electrical apparatus with a fine glass globe, which I knew to be an X-Ray installation, and not far from it stood a heavy steel safe.

At the sound of my footfall Dr Marbold raised his head from his task and shot me a swift, arresting glance over his shoulder. Brief as was the duration of that glance, it awoke in me again the knowledge of the power of his eye. It was dynamic, and seemed to seize me physically and hold me, and switch off again as he returned to a final observation through the shining brass tube of his microscope. Then he left the table and came over to me with short, brisk steps, his patent-leather shoes winking and flashing and winking again in the brilliant light. He took my hand, shook it, and, without letting it go, led me over to a chair beneath one of those blinding electric clusters.

'Sit down, Mr Quinton, and have a cigarette,' he said, handing me over a massive silver box full of choice Russian cigarettes.

'I'm glad you like them,' he said, reading my thoughts so easily that I felt intensely annoyed.

'I'm not particularly fond of Russian cigarettes,' I lied, with that sense of antagonism which a man feels towards some one who has suddenly and ruthlessly leaped into the guarded secrecy of his mind.

'Please don't be annoyed with me,' he said quietly. 'I have specialised in human psychology, and if I appear rude, it is simply because I have progressed so far that at times I forget conventional good manners. I could see at once that you liked my cigarettes, and I know that you denied the fact because I surprised your thoughts. Eh! am I right?' He looked at me and smiled. There was a wondrous warmth and geniality in his smile; it came like a ray of sunshine, and seemed to brighten the world within me.

'You are quite right, Dr Marbold,' I said, feeling mollified, and, to turn the conversation, asked, 'Are you busy over some disease germ with your microscope?'

'Yes, yes, always busy,' he said curtly, almost rudely, and his whole mind seemed at once a closed book to me. Excusing himself, he abruptly left the room and went downstairs, where I heard him telling his servants that they might go. On his return he explained to me that he always sent his servants home at night, because their presence in the house interfered with his work. Then he took a chair, and sitting down close to me, looked me full in the face. I turned my

gaze away, because I felt that he was peering into me and through me as if I were as transparent as one of his glass jars.

'Before we talk about your dream, Mr Quinton, I want to discuss rather an unusual subject with you. I see before me a man whom I should like to have beside me in a tight corner. Courage is one of your strong points!'

'You flatter me, doctor,' I said, feeling extremely uneasy under his compliments, though he spoke without the faintest display of any desire to please; he spoke as if he merely expressed his thoughts to an empty room.

'Have you ever been face to face with death?' he asked in a cold, almost toneless, voice.

The question gripped me with sudden alarm. What was this strange man with the extraordinary manner and the marvellous eyes driving at? Was he desirous of trying one of his diabolical experiments on me? I strove to retain my self-possession.

'Once or twice, when big-game hunting, I have had a narrow squeak,' I replied, as unconcerned as possible; 'but why do you want to know?'

'Would you care to face it again with the same chances of coming out unscathed?'

'I might in the same pursuit; a man must take risks when he is out to kill.'

'Would you in the interests of science?' he asked.

'I am not a scientific man,' I argued.

'No, I understand that; but apart from the question of science altogether, you must have a taste for danger; it evidently adds salt to your existence.'

'I shall be pleased if you will kindly tell me the object of your questioning, doctor,' I replied, looking him full in the face.

'I am about to tell you,' he said, returning my look of challenge, and his glance seemed to clothe me as if in a flame. 'In the first place, do you know anything about hypnotism?'

'Very little beyond what I have seen in stage displays,' I replied.

He burst into loud, scornful laughter. 'Then you know nothing at all. Stage displays are invariably showman's trickery. I have been a student of the art all my professional life. Long ago I passed beyond the old ideas of suggestion, and there is very little that I do not know about it now. Well, to get to my subject: a week ago I hypnotised a man, and told him during the hypnotic trance that he was to come here to-night at ten o'clock precisely and murder me with a hunting-knife, which I know he possesses.'

Dr Marbold ceased speaking and looked up in my face to see the effect of this utterance. As I sat absolutely speechless, he continued:

'Then I wakened him. In a quarter of an hour I shall know the result of my experiment; I shall know whether my will, transferred to him, is strong enough to overcome his moral scruples

and make him commit a crime. It is a supreme test! For years I have desisted from it through a dread of consequences. At last the overpowering desire for knowledge has brushed away all my scruples and fears, and I have succumbed to the temptation.'

III.

For some moments I sat as if in a dream, my mind striving to grapple swiftly and comprehensively with all the issues that the doctor's statement raised. Was he a scientist gone mad? If he was sane, there seemed an element of real nobility in his thus risking his life in an eager search after knowledge. Somehow, I had some strange but strong misgivings as to his veracity; unaccountably, I felt that there was more beneath this experiment than a talk of science and its interests—something more vitally personal to the doctor himself. Besides, there was the other man! What would happen to him were he to succeed in committing a murder for which he was not in the least morally responsible? He might go to the gallows! In a fever of apprehension, my thoughts flew to the possibility of the experiment succeeding. Could a man be hypnotised and, when awake again, carry out a command given during the trance? I looked up, and discovered Dr Marbold sitting with a faint smile on his lips. I could see that he was following my thoughts as if he were watching the actual physical movement of living things before him.

'You are considering whether my experiment is feasible,' he said. 'I may tell you that post-hypnotic suggestion, the old technical term for a command which the operator wishes to be carried out after the subject has been awakened, has been known to science for many years. I have travelled along this line of research farther than the old practitioners' wildest dreams. Nobody, to my knowledge, has ever carried the idea so far as I have done in this instance.'

'What if your subject murders you?' I asked bluntly.

'I shall try to prevent that cheerless occurrence,' replied the doctor, and a strident, spiteful note rose in his voice and made me glance up in his face. I saw there a most ghastly and unexpected change. His cheeks were all drawn in muscular tension, his eyes flaming with ungovernable hate and malignant power, his lips jammed down into a thin, hard, cruel line. It was the face of a devil!

'You see why I commanded him to commit the crime with a hunting-knife?' he asked.

'To give yourself a chance of preventing its successful accomplishment by grappling with him,' I returned.

'Just so; and further to obviate being killed, I have decided that you are to stay and assist me in securing my coveted knowledge.'

The words were spoken with the vehemence

of an overpowering command; they seemed to shoot swiftly into my inmost mind and nullify all my will. I strove to reply, to intimate that I intended to do nothing of the sort, that I could not on any account participate in such a serious affair, but my tongue was powerless and no words came. After a period I again strove to speak, but anything in the nature of contradiction or in opposition to his scheme died on my lips, leaving me a helpless and unwilling servant to his every behest. A little while longer, and I seemed to concur altogether with his demands, and when I spoke it was merely in a conversational tone.

'Who is the man?' I asked quite casually, as if it were a matter of indifference to me now whether he murdered half a nation.

'Gerald Naunton. I think you know him.'

'Good heavens!' I exclaimed with astonishment. 'Why, Dr Marbold, he was your rival for the hand of Cicely Mapleton, and a successful rival, too! Their engagement was made public a week ago.'

'Yes, I'm quite aware of that,' smiled the doctor, his face assuming an expression which I never wish to see again on human countenance.

'It's a plot—a fiendish, hellish plot—to ruin him!' I shouted, momentarily fighting free of his influence; but once again he fixed on me that extraordinary gaze of concentrated command and irresistible will. I strove to protest. A warm, thrilling tide of feeling, insuperable in its might, swept over me, and though I was perfectly cognisant of my antagonism, I inwardly began to agree complacently with Dr Marbold's nefarious scheme.

IV.

'This is my plan, Mr Quinton,' said the doctor, in slow, measured tones. 'I have not done with Gerald Naunton yet. My revenge is at hand. He has come in my way, brooked my ill-will, thwarted my passion. He must be removed. Ever since his engagement I have fervently longed to kill him. Now that I have devised a plan by which killing is no murder, I'm going to satiate my thirst for his life. I'm not such a fool as to think I can do Naunton to death by any of the stupid methods of ordinary criminals without being detected. I have too much self-respect to allow myself to be ignominiously hanged. As for justification, I am satisfied that there is no harm in removing a moneyed loafer from a world where loafers are so much waste!'

'You are completely justified,' said my lips, while my conscience looked on in an agony of contrition at this horrible dual action of my mind. I was powerless to grapple with and overthrow this fiend's superimposed will.

'I thought you would agree,' he remarked with satisfaction. 'But listen to the rest of my plot; the artistry of it will delight you. Before Naunton sets forth to-night, he will write and

leave behind him a letter accusing me of divulging some of his dishonest financial transactions to his betrothed, and setting down his intention to kill me in revenge. I know nothing of his financial affairs, I may tell you; but a jury must have a motive for the attempted murder, and I have made him supply one. When he arrives here with his knife, I shall simply shoot him down. Of course, I could have willed him to kill himself, but his sense of self-preservation would have fought to the last against my commands, and the plan might possibly have gone awry. No, that would not do; I take no chances. Besides, I want to kill him with my own hand. I shall kill him! I shall kill him!

Dr Marbold shrieked out these words with such an intensity of hate that his voice rose to a thin, piping wail, most terrible to hear.

'What if he comes armed with a revolver?' I asked.

'That may occur, but the contingency is remote, and the risk is worth running when I think of the pleasure it will afford me to destroy him. Here is where you will prove useful. I have enlisted your services, not only as a witness in my favour after the affair is over, but also as an accomplice who is to diminish the chances of my scheme proving fatal to me. You are to stand behind that Japanese screen with a revolver, and as soon as Naunton appears armed with anything but a knife, you are to shoot. But, remember, if he carries a knife, leave him to me!'

He handed me a cold, shining, blue weapon, and with inward consternation and horror I watched my physical self rise, cross the room, and take up a position behind the screen.

I glanced up at the clock. It was five minutes to ten. In another five minutes I might be a murderer! I felt my limbs grow moist with the chill perspiration of fear; my teeth began to chatter noisily in my head; I thought that I was going to faint, but that goading, driving, relentless force which Marbold had planted within me was in a most marvellous way holding my unwilling physical powers up to the point of action. I even practised aiming at a point midway between the door and the spot where Dr Marbold stood behind a big steel safe with just his head and shoulders exposed to view.

V.

That five minutes of tense expectancy seemed to me the flight of an æon of time, and every moment was a moment of poignant, pulsating pain. Was that minute-hand moving, or was even Time frozen into motionless horror by this pending, monstrous crime?

Hush! What was that? The outer door had been quietly opened and as quietly closed. I listened in an anguish of intentness. Footsteps came along the tiled floor of the hall, sounding hollow and sonorous through the silent house; and then followed the hardly audible thud, thud

of the same feet as they ascended the thickly carpeted stair. I cocked my revolver and waited—waited as eagerly as ever man waited in ambush for his bitterest foe, while my real self shrank within me in a torment of self-loathing and self-recrimination.

Thud, thud, thud, came the advancing footsteps, and then followed a silence. I knew what that silence meant. Naunton had reached the top of the stairs, and was standing hesitant on the large wolf-skin rug on the landing. Again there followed the sound of soft, stealthy footfalls drawing nearer and nearer. He was at the door! The handle turned gently, the door opened, and a man entered.

It was Naunton, but Naunton transfigured, for his face was the flaccid, expressionless face of a somnambulist. I immediately covered his heart with my revolver. He turned about and gazed round as if in search of Dr Marbold, and in his hand there flashed a long and heavy hunting-knife. My weapon fell listlessly to my side, and I remained as motionless as marble behind the screen, absorbed in watching the crouching, tigerish approach of Naunton, for he had discovered his intended victim standing waiting behind the heavy steel safe, with levelled revolver and coldly smiling face.

'At last!' exclaimed Naunton fiercely, and my real self felt a keen pang of pity for him as he unflinchingly approached inevitable death. The whole thing was inhumanly, brutally unfair.

'You dog!' roared Dr Marbold with a vehement oath; 'take that!' He callously thrust his weapon close into Naunton's face and pulled the trigger. I expected to see half of Naunton's face disappear, but there followed a helpless little click as the hammer drove forward into the empty chamber.

'Good God, I have forgotten to load them!' came a hoarse, broken mutter from Marbold. He moved swiftly from behind the safe; glanced about him to see if there was any loophole of escape; tried to rush back. But Naunton, with a bound, closed in on him and brought him to bay as a terrier drives a rat into a corner. I saw Marbold fence for an opportunity to grapple with his relentless opponent. Naunton raised his right arm; the knife flashed for an instant above his head, then shot in a swift bright arc straight to his victim's heart. The light died from the doctor's eyes, his arms flew up jerkily, and his body sank to the floor without a groan.

Naunton left the knife in Dr Marbold's breast, and turning swiftly on his heel, stole quietly past my screen and out of the room. I seized the opportunity of looking closely at his face; it was still the face of a man in a hypnotic trance. I listened for his retreating footsteps, but, strangely enough, neither heard him descend the stair nor cross the tiled floor of the hall.

I glanced across to where Dr Marbold lay. For some moments he remained deathly still;

then he strove to raise himself to his elbow. He returned my glance and smiled—but it was a smile of supreme triumph!

'My experiment has succeeded!' he muttered.

A sudden tremor, convulsive and jerky, passed over his frame; he fell back heavily, and the life went out of him. At that moment something snapped in my brain, like the abrupt severance of an overstrained wire, and I was conscious that his power over me had fled for ever.

VI.

Emerging from my hiding-place, I crossed over to where the doctor lay motionless on the tiled surgery floor, near the heavy steel safe. I stooped to lift him, and then stepped back, speechless and aghast. Where was Nauntou's hunting-knife, and where the wound it had inflicted? There was neither knife nor trace of wound anywhere about Dr Marbold's frame. How could this be? I looked about for the revolver Dr Marbold had used, and then for my own weapon. I made an exhaustive search; they were not to be found!

Could it be possible that Marbold had only fainted? I bent over him and listened for a trace of a heart-beat. I brought a mirror and held it above his mouth for evidence of faint breathing. In vain—Dr Marbold was dead!

I picked up the limp figure in my arms, gently laid it on a couch against the wall of the surgery, and rushed out of the house for medical assistance. Within half-an-hour I was travelling back to Dr Marbold's as fast as a neighbouring physician's car could speed. On the way I told my companion of the whole affair in detail as it had occurred, but he gave me no satisfaction as to whether he believed me or not.

On our arrival, after a brief examination, the doctor assured me that Marbold had indubitably died of aneurism of the heart; and this opinion was confirmed at the post-mortem ordered by the coroner. At the time I made no public statement of what I had seen occur. I should probably have been considered insane if I had. Some weeks afterwards I spoke to Nauntou about my strange experience. He only laughed incredulously at my story, and proved to me beyond doubt that at ten o'clock on the night of Dr Marbold's death he was at a theatre with his fiancée. He confessed, however, to having experienced a most extraordinary absent-mindedness about that hour, and remembered absolutely nothing of the second act of the play.

VII.

A sequel to my extraordinary adventure came about three months after Dr Marbold's death. Marcel Lafournier, one of the most brilliant intellects in the medical profession of France to-day, called on me.

'I am one of Dr Marbold's executors,' he in-

formed me, 'and he has bequeathed to me, his friend, all the valuable memoranda he had collected on the subject to which we have both devoted our lives. I have here a letter from him, written a week before his death, which may interest you, for he tells me therein that he was going to make you an unwilling participator in his last great experiment.'

Lafournier drew the letter from his pocket-book and handed it to me. With trembling hand I held it close to my study lamp and read:

'MY DEAR OLD MARCEL,—I am writing to tell you that my whole career is ruined. The woman I love has rejected me. I have decided, therefore, to end a life which can only be a source of misery to me. Yet I can make my end not altogether a case of vulgar suicide, for I am about to put my faith in our common subject of study to its extreme test, and sacrifice myself on the altar of Science. I am going to hypnotise myself into the belief that I shall be murdered in a desperate struggle with my rival. You know the enormous difficulties which such an experiment will entail, but I am sanguine of success. I shall ensure that the end be witnessed by John Quinton, the well-known big-game hunter, who is shortly to be one of my patients. Chance has been kind to place him at my disposal, for he will be able to make trustworthy observations at a most critical moment. If my experiment succeeds, you must call on him and get all the details of the affair. Carry on my studies, Marcel, from the point at which I leave them. Good-bye!'

'How extraordinary!' was all I could exclaim.

'He was a great genius,' replied Marcel Lafournier, brushing the tears from his eyes.

After the Frenchman's departure, I mused on the version of the story he had received from Dr Marbold. It differed in many particulars from my own. After mature consideration, I can only account for this variance by concluding that Dr Marbold's hatred of Nauntou came to the surface, in spite of himself, during his self-hypnosis, and tinged, in minor details, the general trend of his experiment. I'm afraid, however, that I shall never solve the mystery to my entire satisfaction.

THE GOLDEN GIRL.

THOU gipsy, dance—I love to see thy grace:
In scarlet dress, thou seem'st a fluttering leaf
From Autumn's hair. Thy brown, yet fragile, face
Is glowing now, and swifter still thy feet
Are floating where the shadows interlace.

The sunbeams are thy kin, their sister, thou!
Dance in the sun, and do not seek the shade,
O girl with golden arms and gleaming brow:
If I should kiss thy mouth, wouldst suffer me?
Or kiss again? Or direct vengeance vow?

MARJORIE TILDEN.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

YVONNE

By ANDREW W. ARNOLD, Author of *The Attack on the Farm*, *The Colonel's Murillo*, &c.

PART I.

I.

THOUGH I was but a child of about ten years of age at the time, I can remember, as clearly as if it were yesterday, seeing my parents and my elder brother and sister sail away from Le Havre to America one cold December day in 1798. We saw the outline of the great ship become fainter and fainter, as she went towards the setting sun, and gradually disappear in the dusk; and then my sister Julie and I returned to Paris with Aunt Hortense and her brother, Uncle Jean, who was one of the most famous doctors in Paris, and our dear old nurse Elise. Alas! nothing was ever heard of that ship again.

There were few more ancient or more powerful families down in the district of the Garonne than we De Prévilles. But families, like nations, rise and fall, and ours had become of minor account, when one Hugo, in the seventeenth century, brought it back to its former power and splendour. Fleeing the country on account of a duel (for his victim had royal blood in his veins), this dare-devil went off to the Indies, returning only after many years, but then with a huge fortune, which, for convenience, he had turned into diamonds and rubies. Some of the diamonds were sold to bring up the estates to their former level, but the rubies were always kept. Then the Counts de Prévile became as powerful as of yore.

The land adjoining our property was owned by the De Fresnoyes. They were an old Huguenot family, and had fought with us under Henri IV.; but they were poor. Both Denise and Hortense de Fresnoye were famed throughout the district for their beauty. Denise became my mother; Hortense married, at seventeen, a very rich young Genoese banker, and secondly an enormously wealthy Dutchman, Baron Taldevelde, whose splendid *hôtel* was in the Rue Dominique, not far from that of the Duc de Luynes. There were few finer connoisseurs of works of art than the late baron, and his house was filled with bronzes and tapestries and pictures. Of the last-mentioned, naturally, those by Dutch masters were the finest. In

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this beautiful abode, thanks to her ample fortune, my aunt lived in great state.

At first, down in our out-of-the-way district in the Garonne, little attention was paid to the rumours of the Revolution; indeed, my father thought it never would affect him, for he was loved by those dependent upon him. But Mirabeau had lighted the torch in the south, and it spread like wildfire. Rogues with little or nothing to lose soon saw there was money to be made by what they called Progress, Liberty, Equality, and so forth, and their example has often been copied since, in other countries and other times.

Among the scum who rose to the surface was one Jacques Martignac, who by his eloquence acquired great influence in the district. He was only a lawyer's clerk, but unfortunately he was in the office of the notary of my father, and knew all our private affairs. Soon companies of *brigands* were roving the country, burning churches and châteaux, and murdering and ill-treating indiscriminately the innocent and the guilty. It was this Jacques Martignac who, for his own ends, as I knew years after, first gave my father warning of what would be his fate, and thereby undoubtedly saved his life, enabling him to flee to Bordeaux, and thence to England. There he dropped his title and sold his rubies for 250,000 francs; and when the country had settled down he went into commerce at Le Havre, where he was very successful. But successful as he was, his younger brother in America was even more so, and it was by the latter's advice that my father started on his fatal journey to that country. Ere he departed he made my uncle and aunt our guardians, and left us children 100,000 francs each in *rentes*.

II.

Naturally for some little time Julie and I were sad at parting from our parents, but we could not have had any one more kind and good to look after us than our aunt Hortense, who, having no children of her own, simply doted on us.

As the man who, my aunt and we children

OCTOBER 16, 1920.

thought, had from sheer kindness saved our father's life, Jacques Martignac, whenever he came to Paris, always received a very warm welcome. He had now become a *Gros Bonnet*, and had actually bought our old château; and, being ambitious, he thought it would give a *cachet* to his daughter to finish her education in Paris. So it happened that when I was about sixteen and the girl a little younger, Martignac and his wife came to consult the baroness about a school for her, with the result that she was sent to the same school as my sister.

This was the first time I saw Yvonne. I was but a lad. I can't say I noticed her much, except that she was very shy. I only remember she had a dark olive complexion and dark brown eyes. On account of the distance, Yvonne went home but once a year, and so she became quite one of the family. From the very first my aunt had been taken by her gentle disposition, and, for a child, her extraordinarily thoughtful kindness towards others. Then came the time for me to go to the Military Academy; and when I was about eighteen I started on my first campaign as a sub-lieutenant in the Hussars—a campaign that was to end so quickly in the glorious victory of Jena; but, short as it was, I was fortunate enough to be mentioned in despatches.

For more than two years I remained in Germany. After the appalling ugliness of the North German women, no wonder I was struck by the beauty of Yvonne, now no longer a mere girl. Reserved, perhaps, she might be, but all the *gaucherie* of the schoolgirl had passed, and I was not surprised at my aunt's love and admiration for her. Besides, the baroness was very fond of music, and Yvonne had a most beautiful voice. Luckily for me, my regiment was quartered at Vincennes, so that even when my furlough was over I could still enjoy the continual round of gaieties that we young officers had showered upon us. Without exactly feeling in love with Yvonne, I always found pleasure in her society; the smile of welcome with which she greeted me, so open and sincere, flattered me, used as I was to flattery. It was only when I had to part from her, on our being very suddenly ordered to start for the campaign of Wagram, that I really knew how I loved her.

The day before happened to be the *fête* day of my sister. Any excuse, to my kind-hearted, pleasure-loving aunt, was good enough for a grand ball, and this was one of more than usual brilliance. Though we were starting on the morrow, our colonel, who was a frequent visitor of my aunt's—he fully appreciated the powers of her celebrated *chef*, and her fine cellar—had given me and a few of my brother-officers permission to attend.

The ball was over, and only my greatest friend, Pierre de Chaumonart, and I remained. I had on a new uniform. Something had come up

about it, and my sister Julie had observed lightly I must prove myself worthy of it.

'What a silly thing to say!' said Yvonne warmly. 'Has he not done so already? Just as if he would do anything else!'

'You are quite right,' said my uncle.

'I kiss your hand for that, Yvonne.'

'Bah!' said Julie, as I took Yvonne's little hand in mine; 'take her lips while you have the chance;' and she pushed the blushing girl right into my arms. So I did.

While Yvonne pretended annoyance, her bright eyes frankly showed her pleasure; and as for me, I could not for many a day help thinking of the kiss I had so luckily been able to obtain. Then, for the first time, I understood what Yvonne really was to me. The voice, to the lover, tells a good deal, but the eyes tell far more, and often afterwards I remembered how hers had lighted up at my approach. I loved to dwell on that, as it gave me reason to hope our love was mutual.

My aunt was always very exigent that I should write to her, and I wrote as often as I could. I suppose my feelings came out in my letters, for she told me that they were singularly uninteresting, and with gentle sarcasm minutely described how Yvonne passed her time. I was pleased to hear all such details, but I did not see the irony of my aunt's chronicle.

We took part in the battle of Easling. Then came the battle of Wagram, when my horse was shot under me and I came down with a horrible crash, breaking (as I found out afterwards) my collar-bone. For a time I was dazed, but on coming round I heard a feeble cry quite near me. I knew it was the voice of De Chaumonart, and with an effort I got to him. With his practical common-sense, my uncle had taught me what I ought to do in case of a wound or a fracture. My friend was as white as a sheet; a little longer and he would have passed away. I saw that an artery in the leg had been severed. But I knew exactly what to do till help came, and without a doubt I saved his life. Nothing could have exceeded the gratitude of De Chaumonart and that of his two old aunts—he was an orphan—and long after I had forgotten the incident they nobly repaid me.

When writing to the baroness I purposely said nothing about being injured, for she had a very highly strung and sensitive disposition, and I did not want to distress her; and she would have known nothing about it if it had not been for these two good ladies, who happened to be in Paris, and who told her everything. They had hardly left her when Martignac and his wife arrived. Both remarked to my aunt that Yvonne looked pale. She told them that I was in hospital, and therefore the girl had some reason to be pale, and there and then proposed that I should marry Yvonne.

Whether they were really as much surprised

as they appeared to be at this sudden proposal that their daughter should become the Countess de Prévaille, these bourgeois *parvenus* made no attempt to hide their delight. Apart from the position the marriage would give them, they knew the great wealth of the baroness, and they consented at once. As a lawyer, Martignac suggested that the settlements should be drawn out; and my uncle, however much he disliked Martignac (a dislike I could not understand in those days), agreed with him. But my aunt would not consent to put her hand to anything, and only by word of mouth promised to settle on me an ample allowance when the marriage took place; so, unfortunately for us, it came to pass that no settlements were put on paper.

Thus, without my actually knowing anything about it, I found myself betrothed to her whom I loved above all else on earth.

Whatever pain and suffering I may have had in the hospital, all passed away like a shadow when, one bright July day, I received a letter from my aunt telling the good news, and, what was even better, a little note from Yvonne saying how happy she was. As for me, I seemed to be in a dream. Alas! though the campaign was over, we remained in Germany, and I could not get leave till we returned to France the following year. Ah, what a happy home-coming that was!

'You gave me one kiss, *ma chérie*,' I cried, 'as we parted. I lived for months on the memory of that. Now I am going to have a dozen as we meet.'

'I think, Henri,' she replied shyly, with a blush, 'that it was you who kissed me; but,' she continued, throwing her arms round my neck, 'I will return it.'

If she was pretty when I left her, her beauty was nothing to what it was now. Her graceful form had developed; the sparkling eyes were brighter than ever.

III.

It had been arranged that we should all go and visit her parents in the old home of my ancestors, which both I and my sister naturally wished to see. In other circumstances I might have looked upon its old gray walls and turrets with a sense of bitterness, since it was in the possession of others, but with Yvonne beside me that feeling was softened down. Unfortunately, I received orders to rejoin my regiment at Perpignan, *en route* for Spain, to reinforce the troops under Marshal Suchet. We had now a new colonel. My aunt had used her influence to get him the appointment. She had done this as much in my interest as in his, as she knew it would be a good thing for me if my commanding officer were under some obligation to her. Colonel Delmartin was not a rich man, and he had hoped we should be sent to Russia, being well aware of the riches of Moscow. He was

anything but pleased, therefore, at our destination, especially to serve under Suchet. However, when we had left France over a year it fell to the lot of Pierre de Chaumonart (who had risen to be the captain of my squadron) and myself to give him the best piece of luck that he ever had in his life.

Fortunately we were then in a division whose headquarters were at Alcañiz, or this *coup* would never have succeeded. We were in a very desolate part of the country, at a place called Villarlengo, a few leagues to the south-west of Alcañiz. We had not been there long when our spies brought us word that the celebrated guerilla chief, Rodrigo Zalleno, better known throughout the province as Lagartillo ('the Little Lizard'), was busy on the other side of the mountains getting many men together, apart from some Spanish regulars. Whereupon our colonel took it into his head to send my squadron under De Chaumonart to reconnoitre. Our road took us through a long, winding valley known as El Val de Halcon (hawk). On reaching the end of it we saw before us a large, fertile valley, several leagues in length and about three leagues across; while dotted here and there were a few small farms and woods, and, beyond, purple mountains again. Carefully we surveyed the whole country through our telescopes.

'I don't care for this business, De Prévaille. I don't like the look of the country,' said Pierre. 'I don't mean to go far to-day. Do you see that little farm opposite? We will bivouac there to-night. This valley might prove a regular rat-trap. The road that we have come by is the only way of retreat, and I mean to keep near it. I propose to stay here. You will take forty men and go about two leagues to the right toward the north, and Duchamel' (his sub-lieutenant) 'will go to the left; and then you will both return. Remain out of sight as much as you can, but keep your eyes open.'

So I set off till I came to a narrow ravine in the midst of a chestnut wood, which was about the distance ordered. Apart from a few peasants below me, not a soul was seen. On my rejoining De Chaumonart, as soon as dusk had come on we made for the little farm. We had heard so many stories of sentries being found murdered in Spain that double guards were placed. I give these particulars to prove that what followed was through no fault of De Chaumonart's.

The dawn was just breaking when double shots rang out from a coppice to the south about one hundred and fifty metres from us, and in another moment '*L'Alerte*' was sounded.

'*Sacrebleu!*' exclaimed Pierre, springing up. 'If the horses stampede we are done for. You keep the devils off, and I will see about them.' He took half the men with him, and I took command of the rest.

The two who had been on guard by the

coppice were racing across the open towards us, and had almost gained their objective, when quite a hundred regulars, with some guerillas among them, came out of the wood. I seized two carbines myself, and jumped into a long, empty forage-cart with some of the men. Kneeling down, we shot two of their leaders, and wounded another. From every window we gave them such a warm welcome—at that range we could hardly miss—that the bulk fled right and left, and not a dozen got within twenty metres of the building. Then, as De Chaumonart came round from the rear, all those that had kept advancing were soon running like hares before him. I ordered our men to mount, and in a moment we were following the others.

On my rejoining him, De Chaumonart was just ordering some of the men to dismount and follow the Spaniards into the wood, when a trooper gave the alarm, and we saw at least one hundred and fifty of their cavalry coming towards the farm from the south.

'*Mon Dieu*, we will soon settle them!' cried Pierre; and, wheeling round, by galloping as fast as we could we got to the farm first. 'Are all your carbines loaded?' asked De Chaumonart calmly.

Many were, but more were not. Our halting seemed to make the Spaniards hesitate. They slackened their pace, and wheeled round within a hundred metres of us. But the movement was badly executed—the Spaniards were never famous for drill. While they were all in a bunch we poured a volley into them as they turned towards the Val de Halcon, and then we set off in pursuit as fast as we could.

IV.

All had gone well up to now, but, just as we thought we had them at our mercy (for our horses were fresher than theirs), at the very entrance of the valley a murderous fire was opened upon us—in fact, too soon, as even some of the Spaniards were hit. In a moment both De Chaumonart and I saw we were trapped. '*La Retraite*' rang out; we wheeled and turned, with many an empty saddle.

But this was not the worst. Behind us, from the original coppice whence the attack had begun, we saw a hundred more dragoons coming up. They had been in fours, but they broke into line, and so did we. We now had the advantage of the ground. I fancy they realised that; but we gave them little time to think, and rode straight at them. Sabring right and left, I only know that for my part I went right through them. My spirits rose with the danger and the excitement. Turning again, I rode straight at the nearest, emptying my pistol successfully at an officer who seemed half-dazed. All around were confused *mêlées*. Our men were fighting and chasing some of our foes here and there, and soon the 'Canaries' were flying in all directions.

Whether the famous 'Little Lizard' was really present or not I cannot say, but now for the first time we saw a monk, who was evidently a leader, hastening with some guerillas to another coppice, which he gained, alas! before we could intercept him; and ere we could get out of range they opened fire upon us. They wounded only a few, but they succeeded in scattering us. Seeing Pierre and two or three men, I raced after them. I let them keep on till they reached some woods, when, coming up with them, I told De Chaumonart of the ravine. I knew we could reach it long before the guerillas; and as for their cavalry, we knew they had had a lesson which would make them leave us alone for a time.

'Is it far?' asked Pierre, as I rode up beside him.

'*Ciel!*' I exclaimed. 'Are you wounded?' as I saw the white, haggard face and the way he leaned forward.

'Slightly; but it's not that. It is an old wound, I fear.'

Luckily I had some *agua fuerte*, and that restored him a little; but he remained silent, and we proceeded at a gentle trot, finally arriving at the mouth of the little ravine. It was but a simple bridle-path, with very steep and irregular sides, and a clear, murmuring stream at the bottom. We had got to the top, when at a short distance we saw a calvary, erected, according to the custom of the country, for those who passed to stop and pray for the soul of some unfortunate wretch who had been murdered at that spot. Quite close to it we were surprised to see two donkeys, a fine white one with most beautiful trappings—even the tassels were of silk—and a brown one. For the moment no owners were to be seen, till suddenly we came upon a cave at the side of the calvary, from which a brown monk, followed by a black Dominican, rushed forth in an excited state.

'Get back,' I shouted. 'Get back or you are dead men.'

The sight of my pistol was enough.

'What luck!' said De Chaumonart, with a little of his old animation. 'They will be fine hostages.'

Dismounting, we entered the cavern, leaving our men on guard outside. It was so dark at first that we were unable to make out anything; but we soon found that, apart from the Dominican, to whom great respect was paid, there were two others. They were almost too terrified at first to speak; then they told us to pursue our journey, and they would pray for our protection. De Chaumonart bluntly told them we were going to rest and look round first, and even in that dim light I saw on their faces the anxiety that his words produced.

In a very short time we had plenty of food, some splendid old wine, and even cigars. Before we commenced our meal, however, I bandaged a

slight wound on De Chaumonart's shoulder, which was of trifling account, but the old internal injury, which I suppose had been opened by his recent exertions, was what caused me anxiety, for, alas! I knew I could do little to alleviate that.

All this time the three monks had remained at the back in a group, conversing in whispers.

'I don't understand this,' said Pierre, after we had finished the best meal we had had for many a day. 'We will search the place high and low.'

With the aid of some altar candles we did so, and in the inner part we found stout oak chests stuffed full of vestments and church-plate, to say nothing of some long boxes in which pictures were rolled up. It was a veritable Aladdin's Cave. Haphazard, one or two of the boxes were opened. The first thing that met our gaze was a beautiful white enamel dove with fine ruby eyes, and round its neck a collar of the finest rubies and sapphires. Pertaining to it were three rings of silver-gilt of various sizes, which had chains attached to them; and they in turn had a far thicker and stronger plain silver chain, quite black with age, so that the whole could be suspended from the roof; while beside it was a reliquary in the form of a cross, of silver-gilt of the finest workmanship, and studded with the rarest gems.

'*Mon Dieu! c'est dur, c'est dur,*' exclaimed

De Chaumonart, a sudden spasm of pain coming over him.

'What is hard, my dear fellow?'

'Nothing—nothing,' he said testily. 'But look here,' he continued; 'I am in command, and I am going to have those two, and I give them to you. I feel I shall never leave this deuced place.'

'Don't get that idea into your head. Listen to me; you will be all right, but you must keep very quiet. It is not seven yet. I will put on the habit of one of the monks. You have three men with you. As the crow flies we are not a great distance really from our quarters. I shall be back with half the regiment by to-night or early to-morrow.'

'*Ma foi!* it's risky,' he replied. 'You will never get there.'

'I'll save your life if I can. The "*major*" will soon set you right. We shall bring carts as far as we can, and a stretcher for you.'

Our horses had been left outside, but fearing they might be seen, we brought them in. For safety the monks were bound hand-and-foot; if only one had escaped the whole country-side would have been aflame. Then, after a tender adieu—for I had no greater friend than Pierre—I put on the brown habit and the sandals of one of the monks and started on the brown donkey.

(Continued on page 742.)

THOMAS BEWICK, ENGRAVER AND MORALIST.

By Rev. GEORGE AITKEN, B.D.

IT is a common remark that some men who have gained a secure niche in the temple of fame have become for most people merely a name and a reputation, and are known only to the specialists. To put the matter to a practical test, how many of our readers can fill in the suggestion of the well-known title, *Bewick's British Birds*? Yet Bewick is one of the original geniuses in the history of art, and his autobiography, written at the age of seventy, is a delicious discovery to those who interest themselves in the difficult art of self-portraiture.

There is a tendency for artists of unusual gifts to reside in an environment where they may best develop their powers and find a congenial social circle. Bewick chose to remain in the neighbourhood where he was born, and the two foci of his life are the pleasant hillsides of Eltringham on the river Tyne, where he saw the light in 1753, and the city of Newcastle, to which he came as apprentice-engraver in 1767. Since his time vast changes have taken place in the district. Cherryburn, his birthplace, still stands, somewhat altered, and the seasons touch it as before with magic fingers. But the city has grown beyond recognition. If the reader wishes to form a mental

picture of Newcastle as it appeared to Bewick, he must wipe out the memory of its huge, dingy railway-station, the wilderness of red-brick houses, and the pall of smoke from innumerable chimney-stacks. In the eighteenth century the city was encircled by the ancient wall, within which were quaint houses, sequestered gardens, and orchards. The Tyne ran clear to the sea, and was spanned by a medieval bridge. On summer evenings the inhabitants would leave by the West Gate and stroll through the fields to the little village of Elswick. Of Bewick's Newcastle the only complete remains are the gate and keep of the old castle and the cathedral of St Nicholas, beside the south-east corner of which, near the door of a large modern building, a bust of the artist has been placed to commemorate the spot where his workshop used to stand.

We shall not dwell longer on the details of his career. He was content in his chosen task, and happiness has no history. The long catalogue of exquisite miniatures that bear his name are evidence of his successful absorption in the art which, in a true sense, became his very life. It is the way with such rich, self-contained, upright natures to mellow with the passage of years, and

a portrait of Bewick, in a painting by James Ramsay called 'The Lost Child,' impresses even a casual observer. He is clad in the dress of the period—cut-away coat, knee-breeches, white stockings and black shoes, ruffle at neck, and a tall hat thrust well back on the capacious head; but the most striking feature is formed by the eyes, set deeply in a strong, kindly face, penetrating and far apart under the high forehead. You can see this portly old gentleman walk along the streets, conscious of himself, but frank to his fellows; a man of genius who had been content all his days to move about quietly amongst his own folk, much respected. In 1828 he died, and was laid to rest in the family burial-place at Ovingham by the Tyne, under the morning shadow of the church-tower.

For varied and pleasing scenery, the valley of the Tyne will hold its own with that of any river in the kingdom. Its lower reaches have been invaded by the unlovely tread of modern industrialism, but in the middle of the eighteenth century it was a strath full of melodious beauty, sheltering and feeding a wide variety of birds, beasts, and fishes. Bewick came to know them all, treating them at first, as the 'young barbarian' usually does, with a thoughtless unkindness, but soon acquiring a human interest in their habits and appearance. His case is similar to that of countless lads reared in the country, except that this boy had the instinct to draw what his eyes fell upon. 'The margins of my schoolbooks,' he writes in the *Autobiography*, 'and every space of spare and blank paper became filled with various kinds of devices or scenes I had met with. As soon as I had filled all the blank spaces in my books, I had recourse to the gravestones and the floor of the church-porch with a bit of chalk. At that time I had never heard of the word "drawing," nor did I know of any other paintings besides the king's arms in the church, and the signs in Ovingham of the Black Bull, the White Horse, the Salmon, and the Hounds and Hare.' So decided a talent must make way for itself, and, though the lad took an artist's pride in the miscellaneous subjects set before him by his master, it is with the illustrations to an edition of Gay's *Fables* that his real powers show themselves. The fable, it will be noticed, makes large use of animals and birds as vehicles of moral truth, and the apprentice was thus able to draw upon a world of natural history familiar to him since childhood. With gods and goddesses and the other appurtenances of classical fable-land he never was at home, but in graving the creatures of the natural world he became more and more a master. It is something else than a coincidence that the age which saw a return to nature in literature in the work of William Cowper and Robert Burns saw also the appearance of a first-rank artist who copied his pictures from the living object.

The year 1784 is important in Bewick's life.

He began a series of designs for a book entitled *The General History of Quadrupeds*. The beasts native to his own land gave him no trouble, but his ingenuity was sharply exercised over those inhabiting foreign countries. He acknowledges his debt to Buffon, the French naturalist, and the advent of a travelling menagerie was hailed with delight. Nor was he without his difficulties even when the living specimens were at hand. He received a commission to sketch a bull belonging to the Chillingham herd of white wild cattle in Northumberland. Let him tell the story of how he observed these animals at close range. 'I could make no drawing of the bull while he, along with the rest of the herd, was wheeling about, and then fronting us. I was therefore obliged to endeavour to see one which had been conquered by his rival, and driven to seek shelter alone, in quarry-holes or in the woods; and in order to get a good look at one of this description, I was under the necessity of creeping on my hands and knees to leeward and out of his sight, and I thus got a sketch from which I made my drawing on the wood.' This picture of the Chillingham bull he thought his masterpiece, and no one who has seen it will deny the nobility of the subject or the rare skill with which it is drawn. In 1797 appeared the first volume of his most famous work, *The History of British Birds*. How lovingly portrayed they are! With what feeling the background is harmonised to the feathered subjects! Modern photography has produced artistic studies in bird-life, the result of patient waiting, often for days together, till a favourable chance came; but none are more alive than the best cuts done by the hand of Bewick over a century ago. Each picture is a miniature, occupying only an inch or two of wooden surface, and rivalling Meissonnier himself in pre-Raphaelite accuracy and finish. No verbal description can convey any adequate idea of their charm, and our wonder increases when we remember the circumstances under which they were done, and see the simple boxes of graving-tools as they lie displayed to a passing visitor under glass cases in the public collections of Newcastle.

One may well believe that wood-engraving was the earliest of the arts, inasmuch as its materials could be found everywhere. A sharp stone applied to the smooth bark of a tree, and, lo! a picture. We know that it was employed by ancient races, but its elevation to the position of a fine art belongs to the sixteenth century, when Albrecht Dürer used it to produce his weird and uncouth woodcuts, and Hans Holbein wrought on the same material his arrestingly beautiful and human designs. After those famous years the art fell into the background, till it was revived and developed by Thomas Bewick of Newcastle. It can be claimed for him that he made the process easier, and brought

the artist into more direct touch with the medium of expression. Put simply, the change is as follows. Before his time, the artist only drew the picture on wood, leaving it to mechanical workmen to cut out the surfaces between the lines. Bewick treated the empty block as a black surface, a background, as it were, out of which to carve the white lines which make the picture. He was thus at once designer and executor, and could bring to bear directly on his conceptions all the feeling, thought, and skill that he possessed. This invention, simple as it seems, revolutionised the art, and we have reason for saying that Thomas Bewick is 'the father of wood-engraving.'

Readers of the *Autobiography* already mentioned will have deduced that there was a didactic strain in Bewick's composition. This is proved by a study of the tailpieces which fill up blanks in the pages of his *Quadrupeds* and *British Birds*. One authority goes so far as to say that these little sketches will be his enduring claim to artistic immortality, since in the nature of things, as knowledge grows, his work as engraver will be superseded. Bewick gave much thought to these vignettes. As he lay upon his deathbed he was asked, in one of his waking moments, what had been occupying his mind. 'I have been devising subjects for some new tailpieces,' he replied. The writer confesses that the discovery of these pictures gave him a thrill of unaccustomed surprise. Here is a series of engravings depicting scenes from country life, summer and winter, episodes of field sports, chief amongst them angling, as befits an artist who lived all his days on the banks of a river. They are wrought with exquisite patience and skill, and many of them represent actual glimpses of Tyneside as they may still be seen between Cherryburn and the city. The last sketch shows his birthplace on the hill, and a funeral procession wending its way to the river, where a boat, rowed by two men, draws near to the landing-stage to receive the coffin and the mourners.

It is noticeable that none of the scenes deals with city life—a proof, if we needed one, that his heart was amidst the fields. The tailpieces establish Bewick's place as a companion of Hogarth with his satiric humour and serious wit, a precursor of Landseer in his sympathy with the lower creatures. It is evident that he feels for the poor and those who refuse to live within conventional limits. The poacher is seen making his heavy way across a snow-covered field. A tramp with a wooden leg shares his bite of food with a dog, just outside a large house, the peacock strutting about on the wall symbolising the exclusive pride of its owners. A woman has refused the appeal of two mendicants, and they quit the garden, leaving wide open the gate, through which come fowls, followed by swine; and, whilst the housewife pins clothes to a line, the intruders are busy undoing all her labour with those spread on

the grass! Sometimes we see the element in Bewick's nature in which he resembles Dürer. A sledge, drawn by two goats, has a repulsive driver—Death himself in flowing robes. A man on his way home, perhaps none too clear-headed, sees a clump of trees in the form of monsters grinning at him. By constitution and habit a wise man, though he lived in a coarse age, Bewick has no patience with excess, and many a time he shows his attitude of repugnance. The drunken miller sprawls on his back under a shrub, whilst a stone close at hand bears the date '4th June 1795,' indicating that the patriotic fool has been drinking too many healths to King George on his birthday. A horse is running away, and three boys who occupy the cart hold on to its sides in terror, whilst a fourth has fallen out behind. We learn from the sign-board on a house near at hand, and the appearance of the man who has issued from it, that this perilous incident arises from his lingering too long in the tavern. Nor does the artist hesitate to introduce personalities for castigation. A driver, whose cart has stuck under the gallows erected by the wayside, turns round to see behind him a demon! The allusion, we are told, is to a dishonest coal-dealer upon whom the artist revenged himself in this quaint fashion. The device was effective. 'He confessed his guilt,' remarks Bewick (can we not hear his chuckle?), 'and on his knees implored pardon.' Children, too, have their place in this amazing series. The artist loved them, and his earlier woodcuts of select scenes from the Bible, and a volume called *Tommy Trip's History of Beasts and Birds*, opened out a new era in the illustration of young people's books. One vignette shows a toddling child in a field about to tug the flowing tail of a horse, his distracted mother meanwhile making her rapid way towards him over the stile.

Like J. E. Millais in some of his pictures, Bewick's quick eye for effect has seized incidents at a crucial point before the issue is decided. He has what may be named 'the humour of situations.' This method adds to the piquancy of not a few, as in the case of a man fording a river with his cow in order to save the toll at the bridge in the background. In midstream he rues his action, and would turn back but that the animal has other intentions, and the owner pulls helplessly at her tail, his hat meanwhile sailing downstream on the current! The pathos, too, of human life stands out in the tailpieces. A donkey rubs his back across a pillar erected to record some 'splendid victory.' A sailor, on a rocky shore kneels in prayer as the waves creep towards his feet. Leslie the painter chooses this scene for mention as revealing Bewick's power of subduing the mind by emphasising the uncertainty of human things. A broken boat lying on the shore is a threadbare theme, but does it not suggest thoughts which carry the spectator among 'the tears of things'? This was the class of

Bewick's pictures that haunted Charlotte Brontë in her 'teens, and she has dwelt on their effects in the first chapter of *Jane Eyre*, where the lonely, ill-used child passes the slow hours of a rainy day looking over the illustrations to *The History of British Birds*.

But fine as all these and many others are, we feel the throb of passion most clearly when the tailpieces depict cruelty to animals. Over and over again Bewick has repeated the great lesson of sympathy towards the creatures which are in man's power. A currier, with a grin on his coarse face, looks at a terrified dog scampering away with a kettle tied to its tail, and pursued by three ragged urchins. Two lads have hanged a dog to the lowest limb of a tree, and sit watching it die, and in the distance, behind their backs, stands the gallows! 'The Snow Cottage' is one of the best known of all Bewick's works. A ruined house is surrounded by a bare, wintry landscape, and in the foreground a gaunt, tottering ewe gnaws the bristles of a

broom, her lamb digging into the empty teats. Could expression go further? The engraving is composed of the simplest materials, but its appeal is irresistible. Just before he died Bewick was at work on his largest block, 'Waiting for Death.' A lean-ribbed hack stands in the rain in an exposed field above a village, the very embodiment of exhaustion and wretchedness. The sorrows of dumb animals seem to have been a lifelong obsession with him, for as far back as 1785—forty-three years before he executed this engraving—he had described as 'the service of unfeeling avarice and folly' the lot of such a horse in the possession of one Skinfint, a horse-dealer. He meant to dedicate the picture to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and hoped that it would hang in many a cottage to remind people of their duty to faithful and defenceless creatures. Thus did he use his art as a lesson-book, confirming his own words: 'O, this is a bonny world as God made it, but men make a pack-horse of Providence.'

A BRACE OF TIGERS.

By C. G. NURSE.

PART I.

I.

TO a keen sportsman who has spent many years in India the prospect of leaving that country finally without killing a tiger is as humiliating as it must be to a young lady of some pretensions to good looks to settle down to spinsterhood without having had an offer of marriage. During the days of my youth I had made several attempts after tiger without success, though on one occasion I managed to give the finishing-touch to one which had been previously wounded by a brother-sportsman. But for a number of years fate had decreed that I should serve near the frontier, or in stations far removed from the haunts of the larger carnivora, and consequently, until nearly the close of my Indian career, I had never had the satisfaction of bringing one down to my own rifle. When, therefore, I found myself under orders to take over the command of a regiment at Jubbulpore, in the Central Provinces, one of my first thoughts was that at last I ought to have a fair chance of bagging a tiger.

At the time of my arrival in my new station the hot weather was too far advanced for me to hope for any success till after the rains, and I therefore contented myself with making inquiries regarding local conditions and suitable localities, with a view to taking advantage of such opportunities as might occur during the following season. In the Central Provinces there are certain forest rules laid down by authority, and the whole of the jungles are, for shooting pur-

poses, divided into 'blocks' of various sizes, running up to 150 or 200 square miles. Any British officer or civilian may, on payment of the necessary fee, reserve for one month the shooting rights over an area that has not already been allotted. Many of the 'blocks' are, however, of little or no use for big game, and as the jungle is in a condition for shooting only from December to May or June, there is naturally a considerable demand for the best localities during these months. I managed to ascertain from a friend, who had recently been transferred elsewhere, the names of several suitable 'blocks' of jungle, one of which—and in his opinion the best—was known as the Khitauli area. So I determined to make every effort to secure the shooting rights over this jungle as soon as the season was ripe for the pursuit of big game.

The nature of the undergrowth in the Central Provinces renders elephants quite unsuitable for shooting purposes, and the universal custom is to shoot from a *machàn*, or shooting-platform, securely fastened to a tree at some height from the ground. The *machàn* itself is rather like a child's bedstead, and is easily made by any native carpenter. A light ladder is useful for the purpose of ascent; and the necessary rifles and ammunition complete the sportsman's equipment.

There is, however, one matter, in addition to the provision of the requisite equipment, which no one who hopes for success at big-game shooting in India can afford to neglect—namely, to establish good relations with the district officials, including

the local officers of the Police and Forest Departments. If any one attempts the pursuit of big game without the aid of the local officials, the natives will at once assume that he is not a *persona grata* to the powers that be: beaters will not be forthcoming, petty supplies will be difficult to obtain, and every obstacle that subtle Eastern minds can conceive will be placed in the way of the sportsman. Arm-chair critics may imagine that the natives would be only too glad to be rid of such unwelcome neighbours as tigers, but this is by no means invariably the case. The crops on land situated just outside jungles often suffer terribly from the incursions of deer and pig, and the presence of a tiger or two serves to keep down the number of these depredators. The great majority of tigers prey chiefly on wild animals, and so long as they do not take to killing cattle or human beings, the local natives are usually quite satisfied to leave them alone.

By payment of the modest sum of fifteen rupees, I succeeded in reserving the Khitauli jungle, an area of perhaps a hundred square miles, for the month of February. I was already, thanks to a common taste for 'bridge,' on the best of terms with the Deputy Commissioner and the District Superintendent of Police, but I determined to go and see the latter officer to ask for the active co-operation of such of his subordinates as might be stationed in the neighbourhood of my proposed shooting-ground. He gave me a 'chit' to the inspector of the Khitauli subdivision, saying, 'My dear colonel, you can tell him that if he does not assist you to the best of his ability, I'll wring his neck. But I can show you a tiger much nearer than Khitauli.'

He led the way into the compound, where a tigress, about three parts grown, was tethered by what seemed to me an absurdly weak chain.

'She's as tame as a dog,' remarked the D.S.P. 'I have had her since she was a few days old; in fact, I brought her up on a bottle at first. But I shall soon have to get rid of her, as she will be getting dangerous.'

The tigress recognised her master, and even permitted me to stroke her. The D.S.P. let her loose for a bit, and she gambolled about the lawn like an immense cat. I left him playing with her, and went to call on the Forest Officer, who promised me all possible assistance from the forest 'rangers' in the Khitauli district.

The only matter that remained to be arranged was the provision of a few young buffaloes, to be tied up in various parts of the jungle as 'baits' for tigers. The majority of the natives of this part of India are Hindus, and they strongly object to young bullocks being sold as 'baits,' but their objection does not extend to the use of buffaloes for the same purpose. The purchase of the necessary buffaloes could best be effected near the shooting-ground, so I handed over a hundred rupees to my orderly, and sent him out to Khitauli for that purpose, with orders

to get into touch with the local *shikaris*, and to prospect generally.

Mahomed Khan, my orderly, was something of a personality. Standing about six feet three, of spare build and very active habits, with all the instincts of a sportsman, he was an ideal man for my purpose. He was a Punjabi Mohammedan, and the natives of the Central Provinces, who are for the most part small men, respected him on account of his commanding stature and dictatorial manner. But he was not without a certain amount of *suaviter in modo*, and often managed to obtain, by small gifts of tobacco, information regarding game prospects which was exceedingly useful to me.

II.

About a week after the departure of Mahomed Khan, I received from him a very ill-spelt and ungrammatical letter in Urdu telling me that he had made the necessary arrangements, and urging me to come out as soon as possible. I therefore obtained ten days' leave, and set out for Khitauli, taking with me my native servant Jaisukh, a horse, my gun and rifles, and a supply of food. At the nearest station, which is ten miles from Khitauli, I found Mahomed Khan waiting for me.

'Well, Mahomed Khan,' I said, as I replied to his salute, 'what news? Are there any tiger about?'

'The jungle people report tiger.'

'What about buffaloes?'

'*Huzir*, I have bought twelve, of which six are tied up in various parts of the jungle, and I am keeping the rest in "support."' (He used the English word, made familiar to him by his military training.)

The well-marked track from the station to Khitauli ran chiefly through a thin belt of forest, but here and there was a small village, with a few acres of cultivation, the crops including tobacco for local consumption. I saw a couple of doe *sambur*, but nothing else in the way of game except a few green pigeons. Khitauli proved to be a large village, consisting of some 200 or 300 houses, of which the great majority were of the usual Indian type, with mud walls and tiled roofs. The few *pucka* (brick built) buildings included the local school, in which I could hear the boys repeating the multiplication table in a kind of chorus as I passed. I had permission to occupy the Forest Officers' rest-house, a roughly built but commodious building on the outskirts of the village. Here I took up my quarters, and spent the rest of the day in interviewing the local *shikaris* and settling my plans.

After the preliminary arrangements for a tiger-shoot have been made, the period of waiting until a 'kill' is reported requires the exercise of some patience. One has to remain on the spot, at any rate in the mornings, so as to receive reports

from the men who have been detailed to visit the different 'baits.' To disturb, by beating for less important game, any part of the jungle where there may be a tiger may prove absolutely fatal to one's chances of success, but one can usually get a little small-game shooting either on the outskirts of the jungle or in the fields close at hand. I managed to get a few peafowl and jungle-fowl by having them beaten across a ravine, where they afforded excellent shots. In most parts of India the natives object to peafowl being shot; but here they had no such objection, and I was glad enough to get a change from the inevitable *murghi* (fowl) and goat's flesh, which were all that was procurable in the small *bazar*.

I had plenty of opportunity of studying the inhabitants of Khitauli and the neighbouring villages, who were chiefly Hindus of the cultivating class. Like most sportsmen who have come into close contact with Indian peasants, I have a strong liking for these simple and unpretending people. During the past year there had been a partial failure of the crops, and though the Government had remitted a considerable proportion of the land revenue, there was a good deal of local distress. For this reason I never had any difficulty in obtaining beaters, as the poorer classes were glad enough to earn even a few annas to supplement their scanty resources. The customary rate of pay for beaters seemed ridiculously small if judged by European standards; two annas (twopence) a day was the recognised local rate for beating for small game, and three or four annas for big game. Of course, the local *shikaris* and headmen expected *backshish* in the event of a successful day, and as one had to employ large numbers of beaters, expenses mounted up.

My licence entitled me to kill a *sambur* (the Indian elk), and as I had ascertained that there were a few in a part of the jungle where I was not likely to disturb larger game, I determined to have a beat in the hope of getting one. I asked for 100 beaters from the nearest villages, but when I counted the candidates for employment, I found that they numbered 190. I did not wish to send any of them away disappointed, so I took the whole crowd with me, having first issued to each of them a gun-wad—I had bought a couple of boxes of these for the purpose. The wad would be carefully tied up by each man in the end of his *pugri*, or elsewhere in his scanty clothing, and produced in the evening as a voucher that he had 'borne the heat and burden of the day.' This precaution is necessary to prevent loafers who have taken no part in the proceedings turning up at the time of payment and demanding wages for services not rendered. I never fired my rifle on this occasion, as I saw only a couple of hinds; but on the way back Mahomed Khan, who was always looking after my interests, gave orders that each man should carry in a large log 'for

the *sahib's* fire,' and thus my fuel for the rest of my stay cost me nothing.

Towards the end of my leave a tiger was reported to have killed one of my 'baits' about eight miles from my headquarters. A beat was organised, but I was doomed to disappointment, as the only animal of any size that appeared was a bear, which, of course, I would not fire at while there was any chance of larger game. However, after I had given up all hopes of seeing a tiger, I arranged to beat for the bear. He was duly driven towards the tree where I was sitting; but my first shot only wounded him, and he broke back among the beaters, who with one accord made for trees. The Indian sloth bear is a formidable beast when wounded, and one of my beaters bore evidence of this on his own person, as he had lost nearly half his face from an attack by a bear some years previously. When I got down from my tree to walk up to the wounded animal, the men all shouted, '*Khabardar* [Take care], *sahib*!' but a few of the bolder spirits advanced with me, and the bear was soon located and shot.

III.

So far my efforts to obtain a tiger had been unsuccessful, but I determined on one more attempt before taking leave to England. I had managed to reserve the Khitauli jungle for the month of April, and sent out Mahomed Khan to make the usual arrangements. The young buffaloes that remained from my previous trip had been entrusted to the care of a native, and had been daily driven out to pasture with the village herds, for which services I paid a small sum monthly. The local natives had proved very honest, and not one of my animals was reported to have died, as I expected would be the case, judging from what usually happens in other parts of India.

A few days after my arrival on my second visit, Mahomed Khan came to my quarters in a great state of excitement, saying, '*Huzur*, there is news.'

'What news?' I inquired.

'The *sahib* knows where a buffalo was tied up near the stream about three miles from here. The man who goes every morning to feed it has just come back, and says it was killed during the night.'

'All right. What about beaters?'

'Rama [the local *shikari*] is in the village collecting them.'

'How many did you say would be required?'

'About a hundred. They ought to be here in an hour or so.'

By the time I had seen to my rifle and ammunition, and arranged for a lunch-basket, the beaters had begun to arrive, and were squatting about in the shade. I was in no hurry, as no experienced sportsman attempts to beat for a tiger till midday, up to which time Master Tiger is on

the alert, and ready to move off if he hears any unusual sounds in his vicinity. But by about noon, especially if he has had a good meal, the beast usually becomes drowsy, and takes up a position for a siesta in some secluded spot at no great distance from water.

It never rains but it pours; and while the beaters were assembling, a couple of men arrived from a village about ten miles distant, and reported that a cow had been killed out of the local herd on the previous evening, and urged me to come and beat for the tiger. Owing to the distance, however, it would be impossible to attempt to beat both jungles on the same day, so I decided to go after the tiger first reported on that day, and try next day for the other. The day's beat proved unsuccessful, although, judging from the state of the 'kill,' and the 'pugs' (footprints) of the tiger, the animal could not have left the neighbourhood more than a few hours.

Next morning I started for the other locality, without much hope of a satisfactory result, as it was more than thirty-six hours since the cow had been killed, and it seemed probable that the tiger had moved elsewhere. However, I did not wish to miss a chance, as I should in any case have to pay the beaters, for the engagement of whom I had arranged the previous day. The village where the kill had occurred was a small one, and could supply only a limited number of men, so I took with me about fifty of the Khitauli natives, and started off on horseback, accompanied, of course, by Mahomed Khan, who carried a spare rifle to be used in case of emergency.

When I arrived near the village I was met by the local *shikari*, who escorted me to the place where the remains of the cow had been dragged by the tiger, which was supposed to be still in the vicinity, and probably in a patch of thick jungle which was pointed out to me. We discussed our plan of operations, and, in order to select a suitable spot for my *machùn*, I ascended a slight hill to have a good look round. As I approached the summit Mahomed Khan said in a low but excited tone, '*Sahib*, I have just seen a tiger over there.'

'All right; keep quiet,' I said, looking in the direction indicated, where I could see nothing. I did not in the least believe him, as he was accustomed to romance a bit at times; but in any case it was necessary to keep as quiet as possible, so as not to alarm the tiger if he were anywhere in the neighbourhood. From the top of the hill I could see the lie of the ground fairly well. The portion of the jungle where the local men believed the tiger to be lying was separated from the main forest by the bed of a stream some forty or fifty yards wide. This was evidently during the rains a raging torrent, but at present it contained only a comparatively small trickle of water along the right bank, the remainder of the bed being quite dry and sandy. At one place the stream made a slight bend, and here I decided to place my *machùn*, as I should have a clear field of view in front and on both sides. A fringe of trees and bushes on the right bank would afford points of vantage for the 'stops.'

(Continued on page 749.)

A CORRESPONDENT OF JANE AUSTEN.

By A. FRANCIS STEUART.

LITTLE though the great Jane Austen was known to the public during her lifetime, she had her modicum of recognition. She was able to discover that the Prince Regent had 'read and admired' all her publications, and was permitted to dedicate *Emma* to him; and she was soon to know that she had another warm adorer in the 'fashionable world.'

This was Frances Talbot, Countess of Morley. She evidently was an early admirer of 'The Immortal Jane,' as the latter wrote, in 1814, to her brother, Charles Austen, about another sailor brother: 'Poor fellow! not a present! I have a great mind to send him all the twelve copies [of *Emma*] which were to have been dispersed among my near connections, beginning with the Prince Regent and ending with Countess Morley;' and Lady Morley wrote to the authoress from Saltram, 27th December 1815:

'MADAM,—I have been most anxiously waiting for an introduction to *Emma*, and am infinitely obliged to you for your kind recollection of me,

which will procure me the pleasure of her acquaintance some days sooner than I should otherwise have had it. I am already become intimate with the Woodhouse family, and feel that they will not amuse and interest me less than the Bennetts, Bertrams, Norrises, and all their admirable predecessors. I can give them no higher praise. I am, Madam, your much obliged,
F. MORLEY.'

To this Jane replied, on 31st December, with a letter of thanks, and added: 'It encourages me to depend on the same share of general good opinion which *Emma's* predecessors have experienced, and to believe that I have not yet, as almost every writer of fancy does sooner or later, over-written myself.'

It does not appear that Miss Austen and Lady Morley ever met. The latter was intimate with Lady Granville Leveson-Gower, *née* Lady Harriet Cavendish, an admirer (*vide* her charming letters) of *Pride and Prejudice*.

If one is allowed a digression here, it is on the

name of this book. Miss Austen probably found it in the work of her sister-author, Miss Burney's *Cecilia*; but the phrase occurs earlier, in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (vol. i., chap. 2), and who shall say that Miss Austen was not one of his readers also?

Lady Harriet Leveson-Gower (Countess Granville) was also early introduced to the works of Miss Austen; they were read at Althorp, the seat of her uncle, Lord Spencer. Her aunt, Lady Beborough, wrote, 25th November 1811, to Lord Granville (whom the niece ultimately married): 'Have you read *Sense and Sensibility*? It is a clever novel. They were full of it at Althorp, and tho' it ends stupidly, I was much amused by it.'

And now we come to Lady Morley herself. She was Frances, daughter of Thomas Talbot of Wymondham, Norfolk, and, when very young, married, 23rd August 1809, John Parker, Viscount Boringdon of North Morton, created Earl of Morley, 29th November 1815. Lord Boringdon (known as 'Borino' to his friends) had been married before, to Lady Augusta Fane—a sister of the great heiress, Sarah, Countess of Jersey (generally called 'Silence'); but she eloped with Sir Arthur Paget, and was divorced in 1809, leaving one son, to whom her successor, until his death in 1817 by an accident, proved a devoted step-mother. Lady Morley was Châtelaine of Saltram, in Devonshire, and on her marriage entered *le beau monde*, presiding over the hospitality there, as well as the world of letters, in which she was already so well known that Miss Mitford attributed the authorship of Miss Austen's first two novels to her—an immense honour.

We learn much about Lady Morley's charm from Lady Granville's correspondence. In 1815 she wrote to her sister, Lady Georgina Morpeth: 'I dined at Holland House. . . . Mr Sheridan was there in his best, discussing all the young women of his acquaintance with much phrase and some little cuts. He says, "Silence [Lady Jersey] is a pretty, pushing babbling stream, never stagnant. Lady Borino, his favourite, has hit the line between good-natured frankness and vulgarity, just touch and run." She tells us that Lady Morley was much in Paris, in the set of Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier; that at Saltram she had 'high spirits but not overpowering;' and that in London, in 1817, 'Lady Morley is a great comfort to me. She came last night, looking beautiful in a white hat and feathers, with a Marie Stuart ruff.' So much was the pleasure Lady Granville had in her society that in 1821 she wrote: 'Lady Morley *fait mes délices*, and after her departure I mean to end my *soirées*.' And next year we have this eulogium:

'What an adorable woman Lady Morley is! Never did any one person unite so much, pretend to so little, so bright, all the comfort of

solidity, and all the ease of *légèreté*. I esteem her, I love her, admire her, but it is impossible to praise her as she deserves.'

But it was not only Lady Granville that sang Lady Morley's praises. In the Holland House circle she met Sydney Smith, and he at once succumbed to her wit. He wrote:

'I believe our friend Lady Morley has hit upon the right plan in dining modestly at two. When we are absorbed in side-dishes and perplexed with variety of wines, she sits among us lightly flirting with a potato, in full possession of her faculties and at liberty to make the best use of them—a liberty, it must be owned, she does not neglect, for how agreeable she is! I like Lady Morley; she is what I call *good company*.'

Nor did she hesitate to break a lance with the Rev. Sydney when he enunciated the scientific fact that no baby was ever born a Quaker. Lady Morley riposted at once:

'That the Bluecoat boy should be the larva of the Quaker in Great Britain is possible, and even probable; but we must take a wider view of the question, and here, I confess, I am bewildered by doubts and difficulties. The Bluecoat is an indigenous animal—not so the Quaker. . . . No one has seen a Quaker baby. And as to Sir R. Ker Porter. He has travelled over the whole habitable globe, . . . and yet he never saw a Quaker baby; and what is new and most striking, never did he see a Quaker lady in a situation which gave hope that a Quaker baby might be seen hereafter. . . . But let us not be checked or cast down; truth is the end and object of our research. Let us not bate one jot of heart and hope, but still bear up and steer our course right onward.'

It was to her that Sydney Smith wrote in 1831: 'I went to court, and, horrible to relate! with strings to my shoes instead of buckles—not from Jacobinism, but ignorance. I saw two or three Tory lords looking at me with dismay, was informed by the clerk of the closet of my sin, and gathering my sacerdotal petticoats about me (like a lady conscious of thick ankles), I escaped further observation.' And when, in 1832, he took possession of his preferment and entered Amen Corner, he asked her to come to his Sunday dinners 'to six clergymen and six singing-men at one o'clock. Do me the favour to drop in as *Mrs Morley*.' Later (in 1840) he wrote: 'I am always glad when London-time arrives. It always seems in the country as if Joshua were at work and had stopped the sun. You, dear Lady Morley, have the reverse of Joshua's talent, and accelerate the course of that luminary:

By force prophetic Joshua stopp'd the sun,
But Morley hastens on his course with fun,
And listeners scarce believe the day is done.

Rumours have reached us of your dramatic fame.'
It is sad that Lady Morley's 'beautiful hand'

does not appear in any known print, or her fine eyes—which were said by the Bishop of Exeter to hurt her (from cold) as ‘a judgment for the mischief they had done’—in any accessible picture; but some of her works do remain, for later in life she also tried her hand at novel-writing. In 1834 there appeared a book called *Dacre, a Novel*, edited by the Countess of Morley, 12mo, which was well received by the *Edinburgh Review* of July, and by the *Quarterly* of November in that year. Though Lady Morley had a large hand in it, we now (since Miss Eden’s letters have appeared) know that it was mainly written by Mrs Lister (afterwards Lady Theresa Lewis, née Villiers) and her husband, ‘a refined and accomplished gentleman of literary tastes.’ Although—as Jane Austen might have said—it was ‘pleasing but not capital,’ it obtained, as Professor Saintsbury points out, more adulation and notice than D’Israeli’s early novels. Lady Morley wrote a later book, in two volumes, in 1852, *A Man without a Name*; a poem, ‘The Nose,’ in six stanzas; and—a skilful artist—illustrated two squibs: the second *The Flying Burgomaster*, a *Legend of the Black Forest*, while the earlier one (1829), *Portraits of the Spruggins Family*; Arranged by Richard Sucklethumbkin Spruggins, Esq., gained for its author the contemporary praise of Joseph Jekyll that ‘the comical Countess is Hogarth in petticoats.’ The portraits are really amusing, as he says, ‘from their own ancestors, who were aldermen in the reign of Henry VII., to the young cub of the two families entered at Christ Church, Oxford, last month.’ The letterpress is whimsical and delightful. The initial coat of arms containing an honourable augmentation ‘granted by King Charles the Second to Sir Solomon Sucklethumbkin, Knt., on his presenting to that monarch his great national plan for purifying the waters of the Thames by ignition.’ We draw attention to the portraits also of the Puritan Spruggins, who published ‘a very edifying tract entitled—“Sandpaper to polish ye snuffers of the onlie tru candlestick,”’ and to that of Cynthia Spruggins—represented leading a lamb—who, ‘far too refined to engage in the ordinary pursuits of this turbulent world, . . . passed her innocuous life in administering to the comforts of the brute creation, and admiring the works of nature. She died a spinster.’ There is also a character sketch of the Rev. Theophilus Spruggins, ‘much addicted to literary pursuits,’ all, as Jekyll said, ‘in the various English of the times, and the costume of the different periods admirably accurate.’

Lady Morley became a widow in 1840. Her one son, Edmund, second Earl of Morley, gave her the satisfaction of providing her by marriage with the daughter she wished. In 1842 his cousin, Lord Clarendon, wrote: ‘Morley is going to be married to Mrs Coryton, who is his second cousin and a widow. A more delightful, amiable person does not exist, and he has made a most

judicious choice. Lady Morley is quite beside herself with joy. It is just the marriage for him. That makes her perfectly happy, as I know you will be glad to hear;’ and perfectly happy and contented she remained until her death, on 7th December 1857.

As her letters are none too common, it is permissible to quote three to Horace Walpole’s Miss Berry, to show how Lady Morley loved her and her sister, and tried at their vast ages to give them heart.

On 24th November 1844 she wrote:

‘I daresay ‘tis a very good thing to be stowed away in a well-fortified castle [perhaps Catherine Morland thought so too—once!], but I don’t think it cheerful in these piping times of peace. Magnificence is always melancholy to me. Here I sit at this present writing, choked up with velvets and satins and mirrors, and gold and silver and precious stones. There is my bed! redolent of damasks and carvings, with crowns of gold on the top, as if it were all prepared for a Royal Corpse to lie in state. I feel afraid of stepping into it, and have serious thoughts of passing my night on the sofa. Then, when I try to cheer my spirits by looking out of my window, I see nothing but hornworks, and breastworks, and bastions, and chevaux-de-frises. . . . All the sweet face of nature shut out; not a bit of green grass or trees to be seen. I’d rather be a frog (*not* a toad), and live upon the vapour of a dunghill (provided it commanded a pretty prospect of the surrounding scenery) than pass my life in a fortified castle.’

The next is from Saltram, 27th February 1848:

‘You are surrounded, almost as you were in your youth, by those who admire you and love you with all their hearts and souls. You have a volume of past events in your memory to interest you at all times; you have still a cheerful *enjoying* spirit, and, above all, that blessed hope that, as this world and its pleasures draw to a close, a far, far higher state of enjoyment awaits you.’

And this is the last, also from Saltram, 3rd December 1848:

‘My ammunition is saved by your small dispatch received this morning, by which I may infer that you are pretty flourishing, as you only refer to your eighty-sixth ailment, which I hold to be a very light matter, and to *you* above all people—with your ears and your eyes, and your limbs and your mind, and your zest, and your capabilities of enjoyment all alive and kicking, as if you were eighteen instead of eighty-five. . . . God bless you, my dearest Miss Berry. It will be a great pleasure to find oneself knocking at the door of 8 Curzon Street. Best of loves to Miss Agnes.’

And with this charming letter—fragrant now as when it was scented and delivered—we may take leave of ‘dear Lady Morley.’

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

JAPAN.—*continued.*

VII.

WE paid a visit to Kagosima, the fortified town which in 1863—ten years previously—had been burned by the British squadron under Admiral Kuper, on account of the refusal of the Prince of Satsuma to pay an indemnity for the murder by his followers of some English residents.

It was well that our people should have considered that British honour was avenged, for we found that the Kagosima folk still sang songs descriptive of the driving away of the British squadron! It appears that the flagship steamed past the sea-forts, which are close to navigable water, set fire to the town by shell, and at once put to sea, whilst almost the first shot from the fort (according to the local version of the incident) took off the heads of her captain and her commander!

We had a very friendly reception, especially from a large class of young Japanese who were studying English, and who took advantage of our arrival to test their progress. Each carried a vocabulary and a grammar, carefully wrapped up in a bit of silk. There was a sameness in their conversation, which began with 'I beg your pardon; what is your name?' or 'I am very glad to make your acquaintance;' but they were very polite, intelligent young men.

We were regaled by some *daimios* with tea and sponge-cakes, in lovely gardens, ornamented with miniature bridges, temples, and trees, and backed by a hill six hundred or eight hundred feet high, clothed in grand trees and the densest foliage. Close to these delightful gardens was an enormous cotton-mill, freshly imported from Lancashire.

Our cruisers in Japanese waters took us more than once through the beautiful Inland Sea. At its western end it is entered through the very narrow straits of Shimonoseki, which are at one part only six hundred yards wide, and hemmed in by hills wooded to the water's edge.

It was here, in 1846, that Admiral Kuper's ships bombarded the forts of Shimonoseki as a punishment for their treachery in firing upon European ships.

We anchored off the town, and found that the inhabitants were afraid to come on board, though they surrounded us in boats; and when we landed, the women and children scuttled away from us. Curiosity, however, soon got the better of timidity; and when, after scrambling to the top of the hill, we returned to the ship, we found crowds on board. They were of all ages, from decrepit old men and women to babies slung on their mothers' backs. Young

men and boys had mounted to the tops, and the girls were so much in love with their own faces as reflected in our mirrors—they had only polished metal looking-glasses—that we could not get into our cabins. Fortunately our stay was only a short one, for on the morning after our arrival they were on board again by seven o'clock!

The cruise through the Island Sea was delightful; we anchored daily in time to land and scramble before dinner to the top of the highest neighbouring hill. At Awasima, from an elevation of six hundred feet, we counted seventy islands, all beautifully wooded, and some with tea-plantations.

From Kobe, a flourishing treaty port at the eastern entrance of the Inland Sea, we made pleasant excursions into the hill country, including an expedition to the Temple of the Moon, which is built on the top of a hill two thousand feet high at the back of the town. At the foot of the hill there was a shrine containing a picture of the future state, with a large zigzag wall down the middle of the picture dividing the cursed from the blest. The cursed were being tortured by every possible means, while the blest were rowing in boats on a lake with *musumes* (girls), or sitting in verandas gambling and drinking *sake*. At Arima, a pretty village built round a babbling spring of warm chalybeate water, and celebrated for its ornamental basket-work, we found pleasant quarters in the temple itself. The ecclesiastical person in charge was a Buddhist priestess, a vestal virgin of about fifty, with whom we made futile attempts to carry on conversation with the aid of a dictionary. We spent a week in the temple, living principally on boiled cucumbers, brinjals (egg-plant), marrows, potatoes, beans, spinach, rice, and auratum lily bulbs—a truly wholesome diet.

These little expeditions into the interior were very interesting, especially when we could get far enough beyond the beaten tracks of Europeans to see the village life of Japan, unaffected by the inroads of foreigners.

VIII.

A pleasant trip from Yokohama was to Oôyama (the Great Mountain) and the silk-worm district. Captain Huntley Walsh, of the Marine battalion, catered for us, and sent two pack-horses ahead with our baggage and food. We could trust to the country only for rice and eggs, so we took hams, bread, soups, and a crate of fowls. We started, a party of five, at daybreak in July 1872, walked ten miles before the heat of the day, and then journeyed on in jinrickshas;

but our men refused to have their little vehicles ferried across a broad, rapid-running stream, and we had a further tramp of ten miles before reaching the foot of Oöyama. After our twenty-mile walk, we were not pleased to find that the village of Oöyama extended about three miles up a ravine, and that we had to mount an interminable flight of steps to reach the tea-house where our horses were put up. We rolled into a sparkling stream which ran at the back of the tea-house, and then set to work to cook our dinner.

Life in a Japanese tea-house in summer would be much pleasanter were it not for the fleas (*nomi*, they call them) which swarm everywhere, and are apparently devoted to English blood. We could protect ourselves against the mosquitoes, but it was not until after some experience of the misery of nights spent on the matted floor (there are no bedsteads) that we learned that a hammock is the only means of escape from these pests.

Next day we mounted to the Higher Monastery, four thousand feet above sea-level; but here the fog came down on us, and we failed to reach the summit of the mountain.

We met numerous parties of pilgrims coming down. There are little shrines about every fifty yards of the way, with seats to rest on.

Our third day saw us at Menonge, a village at that time rarely visited by Europeans, where we were the objects of much curiosity. Perhaps our costume of a Japanese kimono over cricketing-flannels—adopted as being very cool and comfortable in the hot weather—may have given some cause for this. From Menonge we walked to the charming village of Miyanoshta, the centre of the silk district; our way led us through a grand gorge, the hills rising one thousand feet on either side of the path. A fine stream runs past Miyanoshta; we bathed, and I caught a few fish for supper. I might have had a better dish, but my angler's pride would not admit of my using silkworm grubs as bait, and the fish were evidently strangers to my Devonshire flies, and too conservative to take kindly to them.

The whole population was engaged in winding off silk from cocoons, and in caring for the mulberry-trees, which cover many miles of country.

Here, as at Arima and elsewhere, we were accommodated in the temple. The priest brought us the visitors' book, and proudly pointed to its contents, which spoke freely of the doings of the 'bad old priest.' The shrine was screened off; the images had been removed to an outhouse; and the priest was allowed to take in visitors at a charge of a *boo* (a shilling) a day apiece for lodgings. A steep bank at the back of the temple was resplendent with auratum lilies, and the surrounding country was full of flowering shrubs.

Two days passed very pleasantly amongst these lovely hills, and we were sorry when the time came for us to return to the plains and make our way back to Yokohama.

IX.

Early in 1874 Japan took advantage of the first opportunity of putting to the test the fighting efficiency of her French-drilled troops. A rebellion broke out in the west, but the two-sworded men engaged in it were soon mowed down by the rifles of the new regiments.

Later in the year a dispute arose between Japan and China, which led to the former invading Formosa, a beautiful fertile island lying south of Japan and off the coast of China. Japan bought up all the old steamers that she could lay her hands upon, and landed some thirty thousand of her new infantry at Takau, the chief town in the south of the island.

The origin of the dispute was curious. The Loochoo group of islands, situated to the south of Japan, were in the unhappy position of paying tribute to Japan and to China—both countries laid claim to them. The island of Formosa, belonging to China, had never been fully occupied by that country, and the aborigines, who were cannibals, still roamed at large in the hill country. We had personal experience of this, for at Su-au Bay, in the north-east corner of the island, when we started off one day for a country walk, we were warned back, and assured we were risking our lives.

These savages hated the sight of a pigtail, which they regarded as the distinguishing mark of the nation which was oppressing them and depriving them of their territory.

Now it so happened that the Loochooans too wore pigtails. One of their junks was wrecked on the south-east coast of Formosa. The crew swam ashore, and the savages, always on the look-out for revenge (and incidentally for food), seeing, as they supposed, some of their enemies, pigtailed Chinamen, at their mercy, forthwith clubbed and ate them.

Japan claimed from China an indemnity, which of course the latter refused to pay, not admitting the Japanese right to sovereignty over the Loochoo Islands; whereupon Japan, perhaps not averse from testing the efficiency of her new European-drilled and armed troops, landed an expedition at Takau.

The savages, for their part, protested that they would not have eaten the Loochooans had they not believed them to be Chinamen, and expressed regret. China took no military steps towards ejecting the intruders; and the Japanese, having no foe to fight, set to work road-making. The summer came on, bringing fever with it, and there was great mortality amongst the troops, who became very anxious to get back to Japan.

China persisted in her refusal to pay an indemnity, and a deadlock ensued, which was put an end to by the diplomacy of the British Minister at Peking, Sir Thomas Wade. He had an intimate knowledge of the Chinese character, and great influence in Peking, and suggested a solution which, while saving China's face, would satisfy the Japanese demand. It was that China should pay Japan for the work which her troops had done in making military roads in Formosa, the amount of the payment being the same as that claimed as indemnity! Both sides accepted the suggestion, and the Japanese returned home.

X.

Formosa furnishes a good instance of the effect of the sea on climate. It is separated from the mainland of China by a channel only a few miles in width; but this is sufficient to protect the island from the hard winter which is met with on the opposite China coast. We saw great farms of pine-apples, magnificent tree ferns (even in the extreme north of the island), and other tropical and sub-tropical plants, which would not have survived a Chinese winter.

From Tamsui we started under the guidance of Mr Baber (the British Consular Officer, who later made a celebrated journey through China and Burma), and ascended a beautiful river which ran across the north-east corner of the island. We rejoined the *Salamis* at Su-au Bay. Mr Baber wished to test the truth of a native report that across this part of Formosa there was a subterranean passage, which had never been explored by Europeans.

We accordingly made up a search-party, requisitioned the boatswain for cordage and lanterns, donned our oldest clothes, and packed some provisions.

The entrance to the subterranean way was said to be concealed by a temple, but Mr Baber found no difficulty in obtaining permission from the priests for us to explore. From the temple, an insignificant little building, we passed into a dark, damp passage. Here we found, kneeling in a niche in the rock through which this tunnel passed, a contemplative priest, looking almost as much mildewed as were his surroundings. The priests of the temple were said to take turns in occupying this niche day and night. The passage opened into a vast cavern, at the far extremity of which appeared what we took to be the entrance to the subterranean way; but it turned out to be only a crack which led some ten or twenty feet into the rock, and then stopped abruptly. We searched in vain; there was no outlet except the passage by which we had come, and the myth was exploded.

Mr Baber was preparing interesting Formosa exhibits for the Vienna Exhibition. One showed the native mode of fishing in the fresh-water

streams. A canoe is used for the purpose, and is anchored, bow and stern, across the stream. The top part of the side of the boat facing upstream is fitted on hinges so that it can be turned outwards, forming a sloping shelf under the water. This shelf, which at the hinges is a few inches above the level of the water, is painted white. Running along the whole length of the opposite gunwale rises a net about two feet high. Fishing takes place at night; the hinged side is turned out; and torches are lighted at the bow and stern, where the fishermen seat themselves and bide events. The fish, attracted by the lights, swim rapidly towards them. The white sloping surface of the shelf is not visible to them, and their momentum carries them up it and into the canoe, while the net prevents their escape over the opposite gunwale. I am sorry that we had no chance of seeing the boat at work, but we were assured it is a successful mode of fishing.

Another exhibit was a very rough method of extracting camphor from the wood of the camphor-trees which abound in the island, and supply a large proportion of the world's needs. Unfortunately it involved burning the wood.

MAGIC CASEMENTS.

To mortals 'tis not always given
To see the fairy path.
But it may be, when the glen below,
Mist-filled, is lit by the sunset glow,
And the fitful light blown to and fro—
In the evening's aftermath—
By the breeze; and the clouds are riven,
So that mayhap afar
You can see the black rock's beetling face,
Built as it were to encircle space,
And you think by chance you can almost trace
That gate that stands ajar
Where the pathway enters. And the fairy train
Sweeps in, in its pride,
To the garden fashioned beyond the ken,
Untrod by the feet of mortal men,
A flower-clad mead in a lonesome glen.
For a peep inside
You would give your soul, and to catch the strain
Of the fairy phantasy
Of music and dancing, for in bower and glade,
By the golden birch-trees overlaid,
The fairies wander, in sun and shade,
In sportive ecstasy.
And just perchance you see them beckoning
For you to follow,
To join the revels that evening bright,
Lit by the glowing sunset light,
Until at last the summer night
Sleeps o'er the hollow.
Dance on, dear fairies, dance and sing
By night and day;
And now and then let mortals see
That life, and love, and melody
Will make the earth an Arcady
For ever and aye.

J. M. H.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

BRITISH FLAX FOR BRITISH LINEN.

By ALFRED S. MOORE, M.Text.Inst.

I.

THE test of leadership is doing things which other countries with similar economic problems will be doing a little later, but are not able and ready to do yet; and 'one of the best indications of the nature and extent of a country's leadership is to be found in the character of the goods which she exports, and of those which she imports.' Judged by this sound criterion of Professor Marshall, it must be to the credit of the United Kingdom that she has gained the leadership of the world in respect of her textile manufactures of cotton and linen. The value of her exports of the twain—totalling over £140,000,000 for 1918—represents more than one-fourth of the value of our entire exports of all manufactures, and contributes to our national revenue a sum that must make all other nations envious. This value is irrespective, too, of the millions in Lancashire and Ulster to whom the sister-textiles provide subsistence and happiness.

Singularly enough, while the public understand that Lancashire cotton goods have their basis in foreign cotton, to many it may seem irreconcilable that what is styled as 'pure Irish linen' is in probably nine cases out of ten made from foreign imported flax. Yet there was a time when Ireland supplied almost all the flax necessary for her linen manufacture, which is practically that of the United Kingdom. In fact, during 1864 there were 300,000 acres under flax in the Emerald Isle, producing about 60,000 tons of fibre, but gradually the cheaper foreign flax imported displaced the Irish-grown flax, until in 1898 only 34,500 acres were sown, yielding merely 6284 tons of fibre towards the total of about 115,000 tons requisite in a normal year as the raw material for 'Irish' linen. Even earlier than 1864 this foreign blight was beginning to kill home-grown flax.

It must be admitted that flax is a crop calling for much care, and the high price of corn attracted farmers to take up that cereal in preference. Moreover, the Treaty of Paris made British ports free to fibre produced in Russia at very low prices, because of the favourable land-tenure conditions there, together with low wages. Improved methods were also being evolved and practised

in Holland and Belgium, and they were guarded closely as secrets against the foreigner. In consequence of these improvements the fibre sent into the English market by these countries commanded, by reason of its superior spinning qualities, more than double the price of the home-grown commodity.

In Scotland, too, flax had been grown at one time in considerable quantities. In 1812 about 5000 acres were grown, worth (at £20 an acre) £100,000. After the Treaty of Paris great complaints were voiced about the growth of flax at home having ceased, and strong recommendations made to renew it. It was calculated that £48 to £56 a ton could then be got for Scottish flax, which would pay the grower well. Nevertheless, the price at which coarse Russian flax could be imported left the farmer no choice but to relinquish this crop, until it dropped to merely a few hundred acres. During recent years there have been some attempts at a revival of flax-growing in Scotland.

In manufacturing linens the Scottish makers cling rather to the production of the heavier makes, such as damasks and canvas, whereas the Irish weavers produce not only these, but cambrics, batiste, and the very fine grades for which Irish flaxes are highly suitable. So Scotland, depending almost wholly on Russia for her raw supplies, now finds that through the *débâcle* of that unfortunate country her once-famous linen industry has dwindled to be rather a name than a reality.

To revert to the growing of flax in Ireland. For the period 1906-10 the average crop weighed around 10,000 tons. Stimulated by Government guarantees and the defection of Russia during the war, the area was increased in 1916 to 91,454 acres; in 1917 a further area in production gave as much as 15,362 tons; while the following year witnessed another increase in acreage. Yet the result was disappointing, only 15,703 tons of fibre resulting. Last year's realisation was somewhat better at 17,990 tons; and now that present prices are as much as £500 per ton, with the certainty of an increase (probably to £600) a year hence, cultivation of the useful fibre must be largely stimulated. In fact, it is affirmed that since it will require fully four times the equivalent of a normal year's linen production

to bring up to level the linen requirements of the world, the price for flax fibre cannot come much below £550 per ton for some years to come. And the price only seven years ago was just one-tenth of that figure.

On referring to a table of sources of flax-supplies it will be seen that Russia before the war furnished over two-thirds—about 81,567 tons out of a total of 115,876 tons (the quantity requisite in 1913)—of the raw material supply for the British linen manufacture. Russia's collapse meant the complete stoppage of imports from that disastrously disorganised land. Further, the supplies derived from Belgium and France—18,278 tons in the pre-war year—were also cut off, while the Dutch Government retained for home use its usual 2000 tons contribution. By deduction, then, all left to keep the British linen industry going was the 17,990 tons of home-grown Irish fibre, supplemented by a few hundred tons obtained from Canada and British East Africa.

To carry on such an industry as is the Irish linen manufacture—the third of our great national textile industries in value of its exports, an industry employing no fewer than 120,000 operatives—with stocks of raw material thus reduced to a minimum has meant that other materials, such as hemp and cotton, have had perforce to be used, either in admixture with flax in 'union' cloths, or as substitutes. Moreover, to keep the mills open it has been necessary to cut down the working hours, though it is to the credit of the manufacturers that they continue paying full wages until matters improve. The outlook is precarious; in July there was only 3000 tons or so of fibre available to last until October.

II.

It might be asked if this shortage could not have been foreseen and guarded against. Frankly it may be admitted that the present acute crisis has been brought about to some extent by the neglect during recent years of the vast resources of our colonies, just as had been customary for three-quarters of a century. Some State departments are conservative in their defects rather than in their virtues.

It has been said by an experienced parliamentarian that if you want a grievance absolutely forgotten in limbo, there is no better method than to spend £20,000 on a Commission. Soon after the war began such a Commission was appointed with the pretentious *raison d'être* of providing textile raw material supplies for after the war. Naturally the provision of flax was included, and after a year's alleged deliberations the conclusion arrived at was that Canada and India appeared fitted to provide flax. However, that finding was so much verbiage, at the wasteful expense of the public, since not a scrap was done practically to carry that recommendation into effect.

This precious resolution was given out in

January 1917, and had the Commission insisted on resolute instant action the British linen industry would to-day be prosperous, instead of plunged in a morass of fatality and uncertainty. In fact, while the Commission casually referred to the capabilities of India and Canada for flax-growing, officialdom took upon itself the idea of what seems to me a wild-goose flax-growing scheme in England.

Flax is not an exotic, for it will grow in most parts of the world if properly cared for. On suitable soil, after due preparation, it can be successfully grown in many regions within the British Empire. Although none has been cultivated in India during recent years, it was formerly raised there. So far back as 1859 a Parliamentary Committee had abundant evidence of its profitable possibilities. In 1854 there were 250,000 acres under cultivation in India, and some of the fibre was sent to Belfast. It cost on quay at its landing £30 per ton, but was so good that it was quickly bought up at £50. If this was possible then, surely its import now would pay tenfold better. Even in 1918 the *Indian Industrial Handbook* gives this expert verdict: 'Numerous experiments have shown that there are possibilities in Hindostan for flax production on a considerable scale.'

Wherever flax-growing has been adopted in the British Colonies, its development is due entirely to the Colonial Governments concerned, and not to the home departments, which might logically be considered as its rightful patrons. In Canada it has become a permanent industry, especially in Ontario, and has encouraged the Dominion to embark in linen-weaving also. Canadian flax is now recognised as an expanding and important factor on the Irish flax-markets, and for coarse fabrics is very suitable. Its possibilities are, indeed, valued so much that many of the leading Ulster linen manufacturers have leased large tracts of land in Canada for flax production.

Another new source of supplies in course of development is British East Africa, where flax can be grown very successfully in the upland regions. Although the enterprise dates back only a few years, the quality has been proved little inferior to that produced in Belgium. The area under flax is believed to be about 4000 acres, and a much larger area would probably have been planted but for the difficulty in importing machinery. The chief drawbacks are lack of organised labour and of white settlers, who can combine most profitably other products such as sugar, coffee, and cotton. However, during the past year very many intelligent young men, mainly ex-officers, have served a novitiate at the very excellent Municipal Textile Institute in Belfast, which must prove of immense service to them in British East Africa.

We know that flax will grow in almost any place; so, looking at the big patch which Aus-

tralia represents on the map of the world, exceeding Europe if you leave out the Hispano-Portuguese peninsula, it would appear strange to an observer that the cultivation of linen's raw material has not been attempted there on a very large scale. Hitherto, through lack of knowledge of the preparatory treatment, very little flax has been grown in the Antipodes; but now, as a result of the Conference of Agricultural Scientists convened in 1917, which urged the Government to persist in encouragement by means of guarantees for the raw fibre, wonderful results have been achieved, and the prospects are still rosy. Despite adversely dry weather, over 1800 tons, representing the 1918 crop, were delivered at the mills, and last season saw a great increase. As was inevitable in what to many of the growers was an entirely new venture, the lack of the necessary experience militated against a very high standard and complete success. However, it was estimated that products to the value of £25,000 resulted. As an inducement to growers the Government now guarantees £5 per ton for raw fibre, as well as an offer to purchase at £170 per ton, c.i.f. (albeit most growers will prefer to ship to Ireland and pocket the difference between the possible quotation there, on the upper side of £550, and the Commonwealth price).

Having reviewed the probable sources of future flax-supplies to endeavour to meet the enormous cumulative demand for linens over the next half-dozen years, we arrive at the deduction that British Colonies must be encouraged very much more substantially. We recognise that the United Kingdom holds the world's lead in linen production, and we must keep that primiership. Immediately before the war Austria was running a neck-and-neck race with the Irish trade in quality of linens; and now Germany's reconstruction, with the backing of

the immense supplies of fibre so readily obtained from Russia (her immediate neighbour), may mean a challenge to us in quantity. Even with the very attenuated exports of linen goods possible last year—the United States usually takes half of our total foreign exports—their value probably exceeded fourteen millions sterling, while our home consumption accounted for over three millions sterling more.

Linen is the aristocrat of textiles by reason of its price. It has hitherto been costly in production, but mechanical pulling inventions and the more general increase of the factory system of cultivation and preparation, together with greater supplies, would do much to make the demand for linen goods at least fourfold what it is. There need be little fear of renewed competition from Russia, where cheap labour has received its *coup de grâce*, and both transport charges and taxes must be immensely adverse.

Let it be emphasised, too, that linseed, which is so valuable a commercial commodity—whether it be as oil for paints, linoleum, and other uses, or as oil-cake for stock-feeding—comes from the same plant as the delicate sinewy fibre which goes to make the dainty *lingerie* of the lady of fashion. Yet our imports of linseed and flax combined for 1915 amounted to the gigantic total of £12,529,340. Fully 85 per cent of this big sum went to foreigners—and for commodities which the overseas Empire, given half a chance and encouragement, could readily and willingly supply. Let us be patriotic above all things. In our hour of need the British Dominions and Colonies and India did not fail us in supplies either of men or materials—as certain foreign countries did so lamentably. A mighty national movement is in progress to free the British cotton industry from foreign control. Why not institute a similar movement to end our dependence on foreign flax-supplies?

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

IV.—RUSSIAN TARTARY (EASTERN SIBERIA), 1873-74.

By C. E. GIFFORD, C.B., R.N.

I.

SINCE the Russo-Japanese War, people in the British Isles have become more familiar with the geography of the north-eastern coast of Asia, but at the time of which I am writing it was well, when one spoke of the charms of a summer cruise to the ports of Russian Tartary, to add, 'That's in Eastern Siberia, you know, north of Korea, which, you may recollect, sticks out on the map just opposite Japan.'

In the hot seasons of 1873 and 1874 the tranquil state of affairs in the Far East set the admiral free to spend a few weeks in this remote part of his command. The summer

climate of Russian Tartary leaves nothing to be desired, but in winter the cold is very severe; for seven or eight months every year its great river, the Amur, is frozen, and access by sea to Nicolaevsk, the place of residence of the governor-general of Eastern Siberia and the headquarters of the convict establishments, is barred by ice. Little wonder, therefore, that the Russian Government was anxious to get possession of a warmer port in the south.

At the time of our visit, in 1873, a new town of Vladivostok was being built, with a view to the establishment there of a naval station, and the transference of the headquarters from Nicolaevsk.

Vladivostok harbour, which was known either

as Port May or Victoria Bay—when it wasn't called the Golden Horn of the East—was admirably suited to be a naval station, except that it was closed by ice about four months each year.

The climate of this part of Eastern Asia is a marked illustration of the comparative effect on temperature of sea and land. Nicolaevsk and Liverpool are in much the same latitude—about fifty-three degrees north—Nicolaevsk, with the whole continents of Asia and Europe at its back, is open to water-borne trade during only four or five months out of the twelve; Liverpool, thanks to the Atlantic and its warm ocean currents, has no closed season.

On our way across the Sea of Japan we called at the beautiful Tsushima Islands, a group which afterwards gave its name to the destructive naval action wherein the Japanese Fleet sank the Russian. A quiet, peaceful harbour, a beautiful little temple on a tiny islet, with its base washed by the sea, and a village of fishermen, remain in my recollection. Somewhere in the 'sixties a cruiser of the Russian Asiatic squadron, which made the Tsushima Islands a place of call, had set up a carpenter's and blacksmith's shop on shore in this secluded spot—a natural first step towards occupation. Admiral Sir James Hope arrived in the *Impérieuse*, and those who remember how thoroughly he deserved the description of *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, will not be astonished to read that his intimation to the Russian captain that the islands belonged to Japan, and that this action could not be regarded as friendly, was immediately followed by the departure of the Russian cruiser with its carpenter's and blacksmith's shop on board! Forty years later these islands furnished shelter for Admiral Togo's fleet, and the base from which he fell upon and destroyed the Russian Fleet under Admiral Rozhdestvenski.

At the period of our visit there were two thousand Russian cavalry at Possiette, on the Tumen Ula River, which formed the boundary between Russian territory and Korea. We met some of their officers at Castries Bay; they complained of their absolute banishment from civilisation, there not being even a village near their camp. The private soldiers were all sons of Siberian prisoners, but the officers belonged to the European Russian army. Often, they said, they could get no meat for a whole week, and nothing remained for them but to drink!

II.

We had been led to expect splendid salmon-fishing in the rivers of Russian Tartary, but not a salmon was taken with the rod, though we caught some nice fish near Vladivostok. It was the spawning season for salmon, and the rivers were full of spent fish. From Barracouta harbour we steamed in our pinnace some miles up a promising stream, and then walked with our fishing-rods across a big bend of the river.

Here we hoped to find fresh water and a chance of a salmon. On getting near the upper water, however, we were nearly poisoned by the smell of decayed fish; there were hundreds of salmon dead and dying, some on the shingles where the falling stream had left them high and dry, some brought up by overhanging stumps, some floating helplessly down with the stream. Fortunately a Gilyak, one of the aborigines of this part of Tartary, came downstream in a dug-out canoe; we hailed him, jumped into his boat, buried our noses in our handkerchiefs, and dropped down the river until we reached our steamboat and pure air.

Later, at Nicolaevsk, on the Amur River, we saw canoes laden to the gunwale with salmon. A very large number are dried in the sun as food for the convicts, who would doubtless welcome a regulation such as those which in the old days protected apprentices and servants from a surfeit of salmon. So plentiful and cheap were they that for a dollar the admiral's steward bought fifty clean-run fish, averaging fifteen pounds, which works out at about twelve shillings a ton! This marvellous wealth of fish is equalled in some of the streams of Alaska, and it has more than once happened that looks of doubt on the faces of my hearers as to the strict accuracy of my tale of the salmon of the Amur have disappeared on the story's being capped by a visitor to the Mackenzie River, on the opposite side of Behring Strait, where a similar state of things exists.

At Vladivostok the officers of the Russian corvette *Bogatyr* organised a deer-drive for us on the little island which lies at the entrance to the harbour. Two hundred of their bluejackets were the beaters; but there was more goodwill than good sport, and the bag was not heavy.

The Danish head of the telegraphs at Vladivostok, a keen sportsman, took us to a stream where we had good fly-fishing. Notwithstanding the night-poaching of the Russian soldiers, we landed a nice basketful of salmon-pearl and trout; but our nerves were kept on the strain the whole day by the tales told by our guide of tigers and panthers found in the neighbourhood of the river, and we were in constant expectation of seeing panthers crouching on the boughs of the trees overhanging the stream. We had full confirmation of the existence of tigers from seeing the skins of some freshly shot beasts drying on the churchyard railings! A soldier working at the brick-kilns in the woods where we were had recently been decorated for valour in having cut with a pocket-knife the throat of a tiger which had leapt on him and fixed its claws in his shoulders. Trout-fishing was not, in these conditions, the peaceful amusement contemplated by the followers of honest Izaak Walton, but the only inroad made on us in these wild regions was that of the freshwater crabs, which, discovering that we had left

our fish in landing-nets just awash to keep them fresh, made a meal of them.

We found splendid harbours on this coast besides Vladivostok, especially St Vladimir, Olga, and Barracouta, at each of which was a detachment of four or five Russian soldiers in military occupation. Beyond the log huts in which they lived, there was no sign of civilisation; not a square yard of ground cultivated, no clearance of the primeval forest which surrounded them, extending to the water's edge. Their food was sent to them from headquarters. A little gardening and poultry-breeding would have relieved the dull monotony of the lives of these unhappy soldiers.

Two or three of the aborigines (Gilyaks) came alongside us with salmon, which they were anxious to barter for clothing; money had no value for them, but an old pair of seaman's serge trousers was gratefully accepted in exchange for a twenty-five pound fish.

III.

Our admiral was determined to reach Nicolaevsk, but was not encouraged to do so by the Russian naval authorities, who said they could not get a pilot for him in less than a fortnight. The navigating officer of the *Dwarf* gunboat expressed his readiness to pilot her, and took us safely from Castries Bay to the Amur River, spending much of his time at the jib-boom end, looking out for shoals.

The Amur is a grand river, navigable for about two thousand miles. The town of Nicolaevsk is absolutely unattractive. There were said to be fourteen thousand convicts in the province, chiefly employed in gold-mines on the mainland, and in the coal-mines of Saghalin, the coal-mining being the more severe form of labour, reserved for the worst characters.

Quite unintentionally we were present, though for a moment only, at the knouting of the last of three convicts who, for the murder of two women, had been sentenced to receive thirty-two blows of the knout, and to be sent for the remainder of their lives to Saghalin.

The *Iron Duke* coaled at Dui, and one of the convicts there smuggled on board a letter, which was given to me on my return to her at Nagasaki, and of which the following is a copy:

'I will permit to pray to the Sir Captain and the company of Officers on board H.M.S. *Iron Duke* to read and answer the following lines: Being a convict and being deprived from every pay from the Government, only with feet and winter clowthes, I pray the Officers do not refuse me as a work of misericorde, some chops some clowthes some tobacco and in general what they could to give to a poor fellow who is no in possibility even to gain his living only by that what give the Government. I pray at the last to pardon but in God's sake I pray to help me.'

I have mentioned how isolated Nicolaevsk was. To test this, I posted there on 31st August 1873, a letter marked by the officials 'By Dog Post, via Moscow,' and it reached Cornwall on 29th January 1874, five months in course of post. We were told that in winter the snow made sledge-travelling more rapid than the summer dog-post.

The governor-general of Eastern Siberia at this time was Admiral Crown. I don't know how he spelt his name, but seeing that a post-office official at Nicolaevsk, on a receipt for my registered letter for Cornwall, spelt Gifford 'Tueperegy,' I fear to venture on any attempt to spell a Russian name, even when pronounced so simply as 'Crown.'

IV.

On paying an official call on his Excellency—who, by the way, was born in London and spoke English perfectly—our admiral said he wished to confess and ask forgiveness for a peccadillo committed by us at Barracouta harbour. 'You know, admiral,' said Sir Charles Shadwell, 'how reckless young officers are at times, and how many cutters' masts and studding-sail booms they carry away. In the absence of any Russian authority from whom we could have asked permission, we helped ourselves to a few young pines from your boundless forests.' The only reply was, 'The export of timber from Eastern Siberia is strictly prohibited.'

On our way south we again spent a few days in Barracouta harbour, and orders were given that on no account were any spars to be cut; but, alas! the thoughtless act of a chaplain destroyed more timber than would have supplied boats' masts and studding-sail booms for the fleets of the world. He landed on Saturday afternoon, and lighted a fire. Before going off to his ship he beat it out with his cane—at least he thought he had done so. Next morning the Russian soldiers came on board the *Iron Duke* to say that the fire was still burning and would spread. In consequence of this the crew of the chaplain's ship spent all that Sunday afternoon (usually devoted to sleep) in passing water in buckets from the beach, and pouring it on the smouldering fire. At sunset it was reported to have been extinguished, and the crew were re-embarked. Next day was that of the fishing expedition already mentioned, and on our rounding the point at the mouth of the river, just before dark, an enormous conflagration came in sight. A strong breeze had sprung up, the smouldering moss and tinder—in places two or three feet deep—had burst into flame, and in every direction, so far as we could see, the forest was ablaze. All we could do was to cut down the trees near the soldiers' huts and dig a deep trench. This occupied some four hundred men all the next day. Our interpreter asked the Russian corporal how long he thought the

forest fire would burn; the reply was, 'There will be snow in six weeks.'

The sequel to the story is very sad. The chaplain, who was grievously distressed at the calamitous result of his thoughtless action, was invalidated for melancholia. On the passage to England in the mail steamer he disappeared, and was supposed to have been drowned.

At St Vladimir Bay the flagship gave a picnic, inviting the officers of the ships of our little squadron. Our sportsmen landed early in the hope of providing the luxuries of our somewhat ambitious menu. We bargained for salmon, turbot, trout, venison, deer's liver, wild duck

and teal. Turbot, in large quantities, and teal were forthcoming, but for the rest Crosse and Blackwell had to provide substitutes.

At noon our Commander-in-Chief arrived, and was received by a salute of fifteen guns from the sportsmen, drawn up as saluting-party and guard of honour, under the command of our gunnery lieutenant, (the late Admiral Sir) Charles Drury. Such a motley crew surely never before formed a guard of honour to a British admiral! The officer in command had fallen into the river, and his trousers were drying in the sun, but a rug and a leather waist-belt converted him into a passable Highlander.

Y V O N N E.

PART II.

v.

IN spite of the enormous plunder, I was depressed by De Chaumonart's state, and I could not at first get him out of my thoughts; but I soon began to realise that I was not very comfortable. It has been said that a certain monk was once canonised because he made a vow, and kept it, that he would not wash himself for seven years. I fancy that the owner of the habit I had on had made a similar vow, for I felt I was being bitten all over.

The path was descending now before me, and I came to a large, desolate plain. Below me was the little stream. I could stand the torture no longer. I tied the donkey up near where I saw a pool, and shook and shook the garment, and then placed it under the water, and finally had a bath myself. Thoroughly refreshed, I put the habit on again, soaking wet as it was, for I knew a Spanish sun (it was already rising) would soon dry it; moreover, I took care, as I had no tonsure, to put the cowl up. I was about to proceed, when, away to the left, I saw a young fellow coming with light step towards me. As he got nearer I saw that he had both a handsome and a pleasant face, and was evidently dressed all in his best.

'Good-morning, father,' he said.

'*Pax vobiscum*, my son,' I replied. 'Tell me how far I am from Villarlunga, and which way do I go?'

Nearly two years in the country had made me speak Spanish fairly well, but I saw he detected my foreign accent, and a slight look of suspicion came over his face.

'I should not advise you to go there; it is full of those Gavochoes.'

'That is why I am going.' Then, purposely looking right and left in a mysterious way, I almost whispered, 'I am English, my son.'

'English!' he exclaimed, with a lengthening face, and raising his hand to cross himself. 'But I thought they were all heretics.'

'Not all, my son, by any means. I come from Ireland, where most of my enlightened countrymen belong to Holy Church. My sacred habit will enable me to mingle with those savages who have invaded your country, and the sooner I can get to Villarlunga the better, as time is precious.'

Perfectly satisfied, he told me he was going in the same direction, but not so far, himself. Unfortunately we should have to make a great detour, because of *la tierra de los Demonios*, or the Land of Evil Spirits, and he pointed out a large slate cross on the borders of the sterile land before us.* This was a surprise, and not a pleasant one; but in such a case audacity is everything.

'That is nothing to me, my son. It is within my power to drive away spirits and devils; and, moreover, you will be perfectly safe under my protection.'

'I am going to the village of my fiancée, where there is a *festa*, and I will gladly come under your protection. We shall save nearly two leagues. It will be such a surprise for her to see me arrive so early.'

Assuming a grave air as soon as we had reached the foot of the cross, I said, 'Now, my son, kneel down and cross yourself.' Latin was not one of my strong points. It was not required for a military education, but I knew that De Chaumonart's life, and my own too perhaps, depended upon this enterprise being executed quickly. So, kneeling beside him, in a solemn voice I chanted, '*Benedicite nos, Domine, Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori, Balbus muram ædificat, nulli secundus*,' and a few regimental mottoes and three or four more Latin tags I remembered, concluding with a solemn 'Amen.'

My companion looked scared at first, but soon,

* 'A rude slate cross marks the enchanted ground of the Batuecas, the haunt of demons, so that every shepherd shunned it.'—*Life of Santa Teresa*, by Mrs Cunningham Graham.

with a brisk step, he was walking beside me; and it was not long ere he had told me all his family affairs. But it was when he came to speak of the *festa* that was to take place that day, and how they were going to dance that night, and how, whether it was a *jota*, a *malagueño*, or any other dance, no one could equal his Mercedes, that he became quite animated. I listened to all his rhapsodies with sympathy, for every word he said regarding his inamorata I might have applied to my own Yvonne.

'See here,' he said; 'what do you think of these little shoes? I have had one of hers matched.'

They were certainly pretty little articles, made of the finest black kid, with little pink ribbon bows like butterflies on them. I expressed my admiration; but as for their smallness, I said, much depended on the height of the wearer.

'You are right,' he answered; 'that is the wonderful part about her, for she is a fair height. I would like her neither taller nor shorter; she is just perfection.'

'Well, the handsomest woman,' I remarked—'I don't say the prettiest—that I have met in this country I saw at Lerida. I was told that as regards temper she was a perfect fiend, but I know that she had a wonderful contralto voice, and played the guitar better than any woman I ever heard play it. But her feet were her weak point—she had such very fine ankles. She knew it, too, and always wore very long skirts, and'—

An intensely interested but peculiar look had come over the countenance of the young fellow. I stopped suddenly—I saw I had made a *faux pas*. I had quite forgotten my rôle of a monk.

'It had nothing to do with me,' I hastened to explain. 'I had to go and see her, you must understand, on behalf of a friend who loved her. I told him to resist temptation, that beauty fades as the flowers of the field.' After that I took very good care not to talk about *le beau sexe* and their peculiarities, but I thought afterwards that the animated conversation we had—his father was a horse-dealer—on the various ways of filing horses' teeth to enable them to be palmed off as younger than they were was hardly in keeping with my ecclesiastical character. I was about to ask if he had ever seen a mule's teeth filed, when we suddenly saw a few trees and some very green grass, and hurried towards the spot, as we were both hungry. I was well provided with some venison, wine, and cigars, and he had bread and ham.

'*Cielo*, father!' he said, 'I have never tasted such old wine. I should not like to take much of it. I know now the truth of our proverb, "If you drink it with water, you lose your wine; if you don't, you lose your head"—though, of course, it is nothing to you religious.'

'It will make you dance well to-night,' I answered with a laugh.

The cigars were equally to his liking.

Time was precious, so we hurried on, and soon after saw another slate cross. We now knew that we were off the haunted ground. And then, to my horror, we had not gone far when I saw a monk approaching.

'Ah, here comes Brother Antonio. He seems in a hurry,' said my friend.

'Thank God for that,' I thought to myself, feeling very uneasy. However, I had my fright for nothing.

'*Pax vobiscum*, brother,' he said, keeping his eyes on the ground in the regulation way and muttering what sounded like a verse of the psalms.

'*Pax vobiscum*, brother,' I replied, '*Deo gratias. Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.*'

Mutually edified, we passed on, and I breathed freely once more. Then my young friend told me that our paths were now in different directions. Though I was glad inwardly that it was so, I was deeply touched by his concern for my safety.

'You English,' he said, 'are brave—very brave; but father says—and you must not mind my telling you—that you are equally simple. You think every one is as honest as yourselves; wherefore any one can fool you—at least for a time. Those French devils are very different; they shoot any one they think a spy, and talk about it afterwards.'

I thanked him sincerely for his warning, and reassured him; and after I had learned the shortest route, we parted with many a good wish.

VI.

My arrival at headquarters in my new garb was naturally greeted with loud laughter by my brother-officers. The information I gave the colonel, and the production from my pocket of the reliquary cross and the beautiful white dove, had an instantaneous effect. My chief could hardly believe his ears at the story of the plunder to be got if, as I pressed upon him, we could only get to the cave in time. The loss of our men during the night had to be seen to, and as the senior officer of all the troops at Villarlunga, he would to a certain extent be held responsible. Accordingly two hundred infantry and half a squadron of our men were sent off at once by the Val de Halcon to find or rescue our wounded; and within half-an-hour the colonel, with one hundred and fifty men, had started for the cave.

Such was the colonel's eagerness that he rode beside me as I acted as guide. To our surprise, on reaching the cave we learned that no attack from the guerillas had taken place; but, alas! within a few hours of my departure my poor comrade had passed away. The monks had had writing materials, and feeling his end approaching, Pierre had written two letters—one to the colonel asking him, as I had been the means of discovering the cave, to allow me to have the

reliquary cross and the dove. Though this was irregular, I may say that the colonel and my brother-officers were so delighted with their luck that they unanimously agreed to Pierre's request. The other was to a M. Lassenot, notary in Paris. This he wished me to deliver, if possible, with my own hand. I kept it carefully, little guessing its contents. Had I known, how much anxiety should I have been spared!

How can I describe the richness of our *trouvaille*? For leagues round all the valuables from monasteries, churches, and convents had been placed in that wild, deserted spot, unmarked on any map. The supposed haunted ground gave it additional safety, as few of the superstitious peasantry, or even guerillas, cared to approach it. I had taken care to have some mules with us, but we had to carry a good deal ourselves, so great was the spoil.

Death is such a common incident in a soldier's life that only passing attention is paid to it; but the loss of De Chaumonart prevented me from entering into the riotous enjoyment of both men and officers as we returned, and the warm congratulations I received gave me little pleasure. By the death of De Chaumonart I now found myself a captain.

There was not one of my comrades, apart perhaps from the *médecin-major*, who was any judge of pictures or works of art. (Workmanship went for nothing, if only an article was of pure gold, and had jewels on it. For my part, I secured a very beautiful Italian ewer and salver.) At any rate I did know something of Dutch pictures, because my aunt had so many. Every Madonna to most of my comrades was a Murillo, and every portrait a Velasquez; but little was thought of a picture of the wife of a burgomaster, with a beautiful background. It was this background which made me choose it, because, strange to say, it was the very same as in one that my aunt had. And this, as it turned out, was the best picture of all.

Apart from pictures and vestments, about two hundred thousand pesetas were found in the cave; and we also found on the Dominican the equivalent of fourteen thousand pesetas. Half of all this specie, according to the custom, went to the officers, and half to the men, and my share as the junior captain was four thousand pesetas.

It was soon after this that I was wounded, and it was three months before I was fit for service; but the worst of it was that I could not attend the wedding of my sister, who had married a very rich, handsome young fellow in the Diplomatic Service. I would have given anything to have gone to it, as Yvonne was her chief bridesmaid.

VII.

Fortune up to now had been very kind to me, but I was destined to know by the autumn of 1813 that her wheel could turn.

I had hardly returned to my duties when I received, to my surprise, a letter from Jacques Martignac. I almost feared to open it, dreading that perhaps Yvonne was ill; but I was still more surprised when I read it. He told me that my aunt, soon after my sister's wedding, had been taken very ill. He had had to go to Paris, but had not been admitted. It was a case of nerves. She was under the impression that she had led a very frivolous, useless life, and now thought, for the sake of her soul, she ought to forsake all the vanities of the world and seek seclusion in some convent abroad—where, without a doubt, he added, they would get every sou out of her. Then he reminded me that he had wished the marriage-settlements drawn up in a legal, binding way, but the baroness would not consent; so, as a very eligible suitor, a large neighbouring landowner, named Morot, wished to marry Yvonne, I might consider my *fiançailles* with her cancelled.

For a time I was stupefied with grief and anger by this epistle, and nearly impotent with rage. Such villainy seemed unbelievable. The guerillas came in for a fair share of my anger, because I knew letters from Yvonne and my uncle must have been intercepted. I had had till then no inkling of my aunt's illness. As regards her money, my aunt had a perfect right to do what she liked with that; but that I should be robbed of Yvonne, through no fault of my own, was like losing a limb. But, knowing her as I did, I did not believe that Yvonne would consent to marry any one else—that was the only consolation I had. In any case, I had, like my sister, more than five thousand francs a year of my own, besides my pay.

Now, for the first time, I was thankful I had got some loot, though I had no real idea of what I should get for it. I went at once to the colonel and asked for leave. As he was indebted to the baroness, while he could not grant my request immediately, he promised to do so as soon as ever he could. Though I was disappointed at the time, it was a good thing that he did not let me go at once, as I should have missed a letter I received shortly afterwards from my darling Yvonne. She wrote in a very down-hearted way, but told me not to have the slightest fear of her marrying any one else. She begged me to try to get leave as quickly as I could, and told me to send letters to the address of a schoolfellow of hers who lived near to her. This letter caused the world to look brighter; and it was soon to look brighter still, because not long afterwards the colonel sent for me and told me that a large convoy was leaving Lerida, that he was going to send his pictures and other valuables to France, and that I was to go with them and deliver them safely to his wife.

Our progress, of course, was slow, as we had many wounded and wagon-loads of loot; but

once we had crossed the frontier, I set off for Paris as fast as I could post.

VIII.

Having safely deposited the pictures, &c., and many thousands of francs, with the colonel's wife, I went off to see my uncle Jean before visiting my aunt Hortense. I found my uncle and aunt in the *salon* in company with a Monsieur de Courcy. I was vexed at first that he was there; but I was glad afterwards, as he had been an intimate friend of Baron Taldevelde, and was one of the finest judges of works of art in Paris. He was really one of the old nobility, but had dropped his title, having lost money and estates by the Revolution. His fine taste had proved of service to him, and he had eventually become a dealer in works of art. Naturally he asked me if I had brought back any pictures, and I told him I had chosen a Dutch one, simply because it had the same background as one that my aunt had in her *salle à manger*, but I did not know the name of the artist.

'If it is the one by the window,' said my uncle, 'it is a burgomaster by Holbein.'

'Is it a woman's portrait?' exclaimed De Courcy excitedly.

'Yes; and an ugly one, too.'

'*Mon Dieu!* then that is the burgomaster's wife. That makes a pair. I will give forty thousand francs for it.'

'If it completes the pair,' I said, 'I shall give it to my aunt. She has been very good to me.' So we went down to see it.

They were all so enraptured with the picture that it was some time before they could look at anything else. The dove,* it appeared, was very rare. De Courcy said, for himself, he knew of only two—one in the Louvre, taken from the Abbey of St Denis during the Revolution, and one given by the Pope to Maria Theresa, which was in Vienna. This latter was larger and covered with jewels, but the workmanship was not so fine. The reliquary cross, too, he said, was very rare. The ewer and the salver, I was informed, were made by a pupil of Benvenuto Cellini, and he offered to give me sixty thousand francs for the four articles, which, by my uncle's advice—for I knew little about such matters—I took. Nor did it worry me when I learned afterwards that he sold them for eighty-five thousand francs, because I knew that the Jews would not have given me twenty thousand, and would not have been content without getting more profit than De Courcy did. My aunt was more interested in the vestments and the embroideries, and my uncle in a number of the coins, and I gladly presented them with some of the best. Thus the time went by, and it was late ere we were alone.

'Now listen to me, Henri,' said my uncle after I had told him all my troubles. 'As for Yvonne, you could not marry a more charming girl—as a doctor I am used to studying character, and I will say that of her—but as regards the villainy of her father, I am not in the least surprised.'

'Well, I am, uncle, because I have always understood he saved my father's and mother's lives.'

'I will tell you what I have never told you before; nor does your aunt know the facts even now. Had she known, you would never have been the fiancé of Yvonne. I have lived in terrible times. I learned, for one thing, as a young man, when a chance word might take a man to the guillotine, to hold my tongue; secondly, it was your father's wish that I should tell you the facts when you were older. All the district knew about those rubies. Your mother wore them when the *Parlement* at Toulouse was opened, and when your parents went to the Court at Versailles, as it was the custom for the nobility to do in those days. When the Revolution broke out, Martignac saw his chance. "I will keep *Messieurs les Brigands* away for a week," he said to your father, "on condition that I have half the rubies."

'Your father's first impulse was to knock him down, but common-sense prevailed. You were not two years old; your sister Julie was not born till six weeks later. He thought of your mother and your other brother and sister, and he fetched the gems. They were the foundation of his own fortune, and of Martignac's too, for the matter of that. But your father was always very sensitive about it. No man was really braver, but still he had the idea he had shown no courage, whereas he had reason on his side, and he saved his family by yielding to the rogue.

'Now comes the question of your aunt's health, which has brought this misfortune upon you. Her life has been one round of everlasting gaiety, and she has paid for it. I have done what I can, and she has had the very best advice in Paris; but these *maladies des nerfs* are always difficult. The festivities connected with Julie's wedding were the climax. It was after that that unfortunately she fell under the influence of a very handsome, clever, and eloquent preacher, the Abbé Ladrez. He came continually to the house, and while he drank the choicest wines and enjoyed all the finest dishes made by her famous *chef*, this charlatan impressed upon her the emptiness of human pleasures—so much so that she thought she ought to retire into a convent. That, however, would not have suited him at all—her wine and table were too good. Besides, he would not be able to get the money from her that he said was for the poor. He judged that once she was in a convent the sisterhood would not only get the greater part of her

* Pugin's *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Art*.

income, but would, when she was on her death-bed, secure the capital, to get her soul out of purgatory. She would have to pay for what has wittily been called a "spiritual fire insurance." So Monsieur l'Abbé kept her from that.

'However, from a friend in the secret police I found out a few particulars about this clever and eloquent abbé. He had many other lady admirers, some much younger than your aunt,

if not so rich. I wrote a short note to the archbishop. Hortense is not likely to see him again. I really believe that the pleasure she will have in seeing you will do more than any physician can do for her. But you must say nothing, till I tell you, about your engagement being broken off. The shock would do her harm, as she is bent upon the marriage.'

(Continued on page 757.)

HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.

VII.—THE FOX.*

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

IN the wilderness only the fittest survive. The jackal and the wolf are gone; but because the fox is the wisest of his race, because he has proved best able to adapt himself to changing conditions, he has lived on as the lone and last survivor of his tribe.

There is only one species of fox in the British Isles, the common Red or Royal Fox. The beautiful silver, the black, and the cross fox furs, so much prized as robes of fashion, are merely northern colour-freaks of the red fox. Thus a red vixen may produce cubs of different varieties, one of them being worth as much as five hundred pounds for its pelt, while the remainder of the litter may be worth only a few shillings apiece.

Similarly the strong and wiry mountain-fox of the north, dreaded by keepers and shepherds alike, is a red fox whose wild and rugged surroundings have changed his habits and his form, so that he would seem quite a different creature from, say, the foxes of Leicestershire and the New Forest.

Black fox pelts are so much prized solely on account of their rarity, for they are certainly not more beautiful than the red pelts. See our common fox in his autumnal coat, shaded with gold and russet, and even touched with silver, and you will think him the most beautifully clothed of all living things; and were he as rare as the far northern varieties, his coat would be the apparel of kings.

The length of head and body in an average dog-fox is about 3 feet, tail 1 foot 2 or 3 inches; 3 feet 6 inches is a big fox.

When foxes are reared in captivity in a hunting country the tails of the vixens are often docked before the animals are liberated, so that hounds will have difficulty in following their scent-trail,

and they will thus survive to breed and multiply. Whence comes this mysterious scent which hounds so easily follow? Not actually from the tail, but from the musk-glands which are situated at the root of the tail. By docking a fox's tail the scent is not so readily led to the ground, and the animal is difficult for hounds to follow.

Every master of fox-hounds can tell you the history of some fox which, surpassing his fellows in fleetness and cunning, led hounds and huntsman many a pretty chase, baffled them and checkmated them, and finally left them with a mystery to solve—nothing but a mystery!

The beginning of wisdom is in profiting by previous experience, and undoubtedly the fox does this. Reynard knows that the scent he leaves behind is the true cause of his peril, and does all that he can to break or scatter that tell-tale line. He will run along a railway track, knowing that the glazed steel and the tarred sleepers do not retain the scent well; and more than once he has been known deliberately to lead the hounds under the wheels of an express train, which, of course, he could hear from afar, with the result that several of the hounds were killed, and the hunt so broken up that the fox escaped to safety.

Running water is a never-failing friend to the hunted fox, and well he knows the value of it.

A fox will of set purpose run among a flock of sheep so as to mix and scatter his scent with theirs, and he has even been seen to jump on the back of a sheep and ride a considerable distance, thereby breaking the guiding line.

But many a good fox who has fooled and baffled the hounds and given them a glorious run has won his freedom only at the cost of his constitutional fitness. Emerging at length from his sanctuary, after a rest of many hours, he is no longer the wonderful running-machine that he was when the hounds took up his scent, but is now a broken creature—lungs gone, heart gone, merely a physical wreck. And, again, many an exhausted fox, seeking shelter in a wet drain, lies there till, sick and chilled, and his vitality

* Earlier articles in this series, published in the May, June, July, August, September, and October parts of *Chambers's Journal*, dealt with the Badger, the Pine-Martens, the Water-Rat, the Hedgehog, the Brown Hare, and the Gray Rat respectively.

becoming low, he falls a victim to the fatal red mange, the scourge of the fox kind. In the mountains of the north, where the rugged nature of the country does not permit of fox-hunting, red mange is quite uncommon among the foxes, simply because they are never run to exhaustion.

II.

Just as foxes are clever and original in deceiving the hunter, so are they clever and original in their own hunting. Reynard possesses remarkable vocal powers, and can imitate exactly the bleat of a lamb, the squeal of a hare or a rabbit, and numerous other sounds belonging rightly to the creatures he is out to kill. One night, when driving home along a country lane in Dorsetshire, I heard what I took to be the bleating of a lost lamb coming down the hedge-row towards me. On making some commonplace remark concerning the sound to the farmer who was driving me, he replied, 'That isn't a lamb, sir; it's a fox. You can hear them bleating any night this time of year.' It was the time of the year when young lambs are about.

Many seasons later I again heard the bleating of a fox—this time in the hills near Burnsall village. I was spending the evening with a shepherd in his tiny cabin out on the moors, and as we both sat at the open door, smoking our pipes before he turned in, we heard the bleating of a lamb coming towards us down the wall-side. The cry was exact, save for an indescribable sinister ring about it, which at once raised my suspicions, bringing to mind the night in Dorsetshire some years previous. The shepherd reached for his gun; but Reynard evidently saw the movement, for there was brilliant moonlight, and we just caught a glimpse of him as he slipped, flattened out, over the wall-top.

Reynard clearly thinks that by mimicking the cry of a lamb he will spread unrest among the nursing ewes, and if any ewe has lost one of her lambs she may set off eagerly towards the sound, deserting her remaining charge, which is then at the mercy of the fox.

Rabbits are often called by a fox to within striking distance, Reynard lying concealed behind a tuft of grass or inside a bush, and imitating exactly the squeal of a rabbit in pain. I have myself called rabbits to within a few yards by this means—the old bucks or nursing mothers of the colony coming hopping up, stamping, and full of foolish, goggle-eyed importance, to see which member of the community it is that has fallen into difficulties.

The bushy tail of the fox has many uses, foremost among which is its value as a wrap or a travelling-blanket. In referring to the foxes of Manitoba, where the cold is intense, Seton says that he does not believe a fox which has lost its tail would survive the winter; but this certainly does not apply in the British Isles. As already

mentioned, vixen cubs reared in captivity are often docked before being liberated, and a tailless vixen generally lives to produce many litters. There is no doubt, however, that the tail is a considerable comfort to its possessor, for the fox, when resting, curls into a ball, its exposed nose and paws packed closely together; then it wraps its tail over them, and breathes through the long, close hair.

Thus curled, a fox is very difficult to distinguish against a background of leaves or bracken, and will lie perfectly motionless so long as it thinks itself unobserved by the passer-by—watching through the hair of its tail, which thus serves an additional useful purpose by hiding the bright eyes that might otherwise give the show away.

Foxes use their tails considerably when fighting, the combatants striking each other in the face, and thereby causing a momentary diversion which serves to cover a snap or a parry. I have heard it stated in all seriousness that a fox, before going out in search of a rival whom he intends to engage in combat, will deliberately sprawl in water, then roll in sand till his tail, and indeed the whole of his fur, is filled with grit, which so blinds his opponent that victory is easily gained!

Again, the tail of the fox is of value in assisting him to follow the lightning twists and turns of Brer Rabbit, acting as a rudder and a stabiliser; but nevertheless there are times when this generally useful piece of equipment is a severe drag. A hard-run fox that has been compelled to take to water finds his wet brush a sorry burden, and in the end the slight additional weight may prove his undoing.

I doubt very much whether the fox is so fast in a short sprint as the rabbit; twenty-eight miles per hour is probably the average maximum, but between the maximum speed of the fox and the speed it is capable of maintaining over a considerable distance there is but a narrow margin. Thus the prime fox, whose maximum speed is 30 m.p.h., will probably prove capable of maintaining 20 m.p.h. over a distance of four or five miles where the going is favourable, whereas a rabbit, which may attain 33 m.p.h., could not maintain 20 m.p.h. for more than five hundred yards.

III.

Gestation occupies fifty-one days. The young are born early in April, and are blind for about two weeks. Usually they appear at the den-mouth when about three weeks old, but they do not venture far from the area of trodden sand till about three months old, when, singly or together, they begin to accompany their mother on breathless mouse-hunting expeditions.

In fox-hunting country, where the home-den of the vixen and her cubs is never disturbed, foxes often choose the most exposed and open

place for their 'earths,' as the home-burrows are called; for instance, I have known one to be located in the centre of an open fallow field, sliok on the skyline, the mound of newly turned earth vastly visible against the sky. In mountainous districts, however, where the nature of the country forbids hunting, the utmost caution is exercised by the parent foxes in the location of their den. They choose some little-frequented and almost inaccessible spot as far from human habitation as possible, knowing full well that their little ones, if discovered, will be dug out and killed by keepers or shepherds.

The dog-fox, in spite of various doubts raised on the point, is a devoted father, though while the cubs are small he has little to do with their upbringing. His share at this time is to bring food to the vixen, leaving it at the den-mouth for her; and thus, by making sure that she is well fed, he can have no doubt that her precious cubs will not be neglected. Also, he acts as guardian of the den, making note of any strange figures that appear, and warning the vixen in case of danger. It is to be feared that in the days of spring-time plenty he often destroys more food than is needed, going out on long excursions of piracy, and earning a bad name for himself. Should the vixen meet her fate while the cubs are small, their father nobly takes charge of them, carrying them perhaps to some safer locality, and caring for them in the best way he knows.

Every infant fox is taught the lessons of life by its parents, and the cubs of a wise mother grow up wise foxes. As soon as they are old enough to play about the mouth of the den their lessons begin. First they are taught to use their noses; the parents, having brought food for them, hide it some little distance from the earth, and leave the cubs to locate it by their own keenness and cleverness. Thus the clever cub fares well, while the dull member of the family comes in only at the tail-end of the feast. A little later they are taught to pounce mice out of the grass, taught the folly of chasing the fleet-winged grouse that rise from the heather, and taught that, above all, stealth and cunning are the crowning virtues of the master of woodcraft.

One day their mother leads them to a new track on the hillside, and sniffing it, she bristles and growls, looks this way and that, then sneaks swiftly into the heather, keeping in the hollows, never showing herself against the skyline. Each cub sniffs the new track, bristles and growls because mother did so, and sneaks furtively after her, fearful of some unknown peril. And after that day the scent of that track brings fear to the heart of the fox-cub, and encountering it in his rambles, he sneaks off through the hollows, for it is the scent of the watchful shepherd!

Every nursery of fox-cubs has its playthings,

such as the wing of an old cock-grouse, dried by exposure to sun and sand, and durable as leather.

Until three or four months old fox-cubs give practically no scent at all; so little, indeed, that hounds will run over them—a very generous provision on the part of Dame Nature. At the time when they are old enough to play about the den-mouth, the vixen, evidently with the idea of widening their outlook a little, sometimes prepares for them a yard or a playground a little distance from the earth, and thither, on fine nights, or even during summer days if the place be sufficiently secluded, she takes them at regular intervals. Usually the yard is located in the midst of dense bracken, or some other suitable cover, and easily accessible from the den. The dam treads out a bed for herself at one side of the small open space, and there she lies watching her little ones while they roll and scuffle in front of her—keeping, always, to strictly defined limits.

The parents of the cubs are often very fearless and cunning in their efforts to draw away any intruder from the vicinity of the family.

A Highland keeper told me that one day, when crossing a moor, he was much mystified on seeing two foxes running apparently aimlessly round and round a boulder. He thought they were chasing each other for amusement, and forthwith proceeded to stalk them. Almost immediately, and without looking in his direction, the foxes made off, keeping together for a short distance, then separating. The keeper urged his dogs in pursuit, and was about to make his way to a point of observation, from which a chance shot might be obtained, when it occurred to him to look round the boulder where he had first seen the foxes, for clear it was that they had seen him before he saw them. Going to the place, what was his surprise to find a solitary little cub seated under the rock, so young that its eyes were hardly open! The man could not find it in his heart to kill the lonely little wean—apparently the sole charge of its parents, who, the man now realised, were busy, when he first saw them, scattering their own scent about the place so as to overwhelm that of the cub, finally running off together in order to leave an unmistakable line to lead away the intruder.

IV.

Early in the autumn, when the cubs have learnt to hunt and to take care of themselves, the family finally splits up, the fox and the vixen driving the cubs out of the home-range, this being a natural prevention of overstocking, which would result in many enemies or in scarcity of food. Each cub now sets off to seek his own fortune, and he may travel for days ere he finally settles on a range of his own. During this time of migration, while travelling restlessly from hill to hill, from forest to forest, the cub invariably carries something in his jaws. It may be an old sheep-

horn or the sole of a boot, or possibly it is the last thing he killed—a water-vole or even a frog. Exactly what his idea is one cannot say, unless it is that, feeling himself an emigrant, he is actuated by a desire to carry his worldly possessions with him. More probably, however, the ruling instinct is that of carrying a small store of food lest, in his wanderings, he should encounter a fruitless land and suffer hunger.

Many foxes have little secret caches or hiding-places, where they bury certain things which happen to take their fancy. All manner of strange oddments are buried here—little things the fox has picked up during a night's wanderings, carried for an hour or two, then hidden with his secret store, to be meditated over in leisure hours. An old barrel mole-trap containing a dead mole, a medicine-bottle which had held some strange-smelling concoction, a bit of a slipper, and an old dog-collar were found in one such cache, which was located in the decaying root of a tree in the centre of a lonely forest.

The fox is a hard-living animal, and, like all the canines, is not remarkable for longevity. He is old at ten years. Eight years is probably Reynard's allotted span of life, for once infirmity sets in, immediately his senses lose their keen edge, and he inevitably succumbs to one or other of his foes.

The fox is gifted with extraordinarily keen sight, and, like all predatory animals capable of speed, he uses it very considerably in his hunting. His nostrils, however, are as well trained as those of the best setter or pointer. In hunting, the general trend of his direction is against the wind, and his nostrils are aquiver at every step. Suddenly he stops, head aloft, ears acock, one paw upraised in an attitude of sculptured gracefulness—freezes into a statue, save for that never-ceasing quiver of the nostrils. He moves a step or two to left or right, tests the wind again, then slowly sinks to ground. In that dense clump of heather just ahead a blue hare is crouching. He cannot see it, but his nostrils have marked it down to within an inch. He leaps, pinning down the heather between his forepaws; then a thin-edged scream goes up, a pewit rises a-wing, another follows—but what matters the hubbub

now that Reynard has procured his supper? He lopes easily away, and the night sentries mark his going, screaming aloft.

When Reynard—and, of course, the same applies to other animals—hunts by scent, he must, at every stride, 'watch the wind.' His exquisite sense of smell would be of no value whatever to him unless it were worked in conjunction with an equally exquisite sense of wind-direction. Scent alone could not have told him just where that blue hare lay. The scent was of a potency and a property which meant 'two yards away,' but it was wind-direction, and wind-direction only, which marked its exact whereabouts.

Thus the nose of a fox is not only his scent-machine, but also his wind-vane. Both functions are performed by that small, moist, cold member which leads the way everywhere. If you desire to ascertain the direction of the wind, you moisten your finger and hold it up before you. The cold side is the wind side. Reynard's nose is moist by the natural course of events, and is so sensitive that it conveys to its owner the direction of currents of air so slight that they amount merely to faint movements of the atmosphere.

When a dog or a fox falls ill its nose becomes hot and dry. This is one of nature's remedies. A period of starvation is the finest medicine in the world, and with the drying of the animal's nose starvation is temporarily enforced, and, its hunting abilities gone, the sick creature is content to den up and sleep itself well. Thus at every turn we find nature's schemes worked out to attain a definite end.

It will be seen that the fox has many characteristics which are not unknown in man himself. We have our nurseries and our museums—so has he. His school is the great school of the woods, in which, during his cubhood days, the fox learns, lesson by lesson, the things which are to carry him through later life. If he learns earnestly, he lives; if not—well, there is no place in the Wild for the dull-witted and the foolish. The clever fox lives on the fat of the land; the fool is hungry and hunted till he falls a victim to the merciless weeding-out process that permits only the fittest to survive and breed their kind—the offspring of wise parents.

A BRACE OF TIGERS.

PART II.

IV.

A SLIGHT digression is necessary here to explain, for the benefit of those who are unacquainted with the *modus operandi* of tiger-shooting, how it is possible to drive a tiger to a single sportsman. When a tiger is aroused from his midday sleep by the shouts of the

beaters and the noise of 'tom-toms' (native drums), he naturally follows the line of least resistance, and makes off in the direction opposite to that from which the sounds emanate. He is not looking for trouble, and only wants to slink away to some place where he will not be disturbed, and can finish his siesta. He consequently walks or trots forward, looking

straight in front of him, and it does not occur to him to look upwards among the trees, from which he is not accustomed to anticipate danger. Any slight noise in front of him will cause him to turn in a direction which appears to be safer, and the sportsman takes advantage of this knowledge of his habits by placing men in trees as 'stops.' These, as soon as a tiger shows itself in front of them, cause him to turn elsewhere by coughing, or, if he appears to be likely to break through, by shouting. Usually a cough is quite sufficient to send the tiger to another part of the jungle, where he can escape from the din of the advancing beaters. He may come up against another 'stop,' and be eventually turned in the direction of the sportsman, who is sitting quietly waiting for him. There is, of course, no certainty about it; and it is especially necessary to choose suitable men for 'stops,' as one man may, by losing his head, ruin all chances of a shot. The selection of men for this purpose is generally left to the local *shikari*, whose *backshish* depends on the success of the beat, and he usually details for this duty reliable men who have been out after big game before.

In the present instance the *shikari* had selected eight or ten men, and on looking over the ground I indicated where I thought these should be placed, and left the matter in his hands while I superintended the tying of my *machan*, which had been brought to the spot by a couple of coolies. I found a suitable tree, and the *machan* was securely tied by ropes in a fork about twelve feet from the ground. By the time it was ready the *shikari* returned and reported the 'stops' all placed, and I sent him back by an indirect route to where the beaters were assembled, with orders to begin the beat.

I ascended to the *machan* by a light ladder that I had brought for the purpose, and after Mahomed Khan had cut away a few branches to give me as clear a view as possible in all directions, I told him to remove the ladder and take up his position in a tree about a hundred yards in rear. He carried my spare rifle, but had orders not to use it except in case of emergency, or on receipt of a direct order from me. Everything had, of course, been done as quietly as possible, and all orders were given *sotto voce*. I duly loaded my double-barrelled rifle, placed some more cartridges ready beside me, and sat as quietly as possible in the *machan*, awaiting the beginning of the beat. It was now nearly one o'clock, and the heat was intense, as there was not a breath of air.

Presently shouts and the sound of a drum were heard in the distance, and I knew that the beat had begun. A few peafowl appeared in the scrub jungle on the opposite bank of the stream; they stood looking for a few moments, and then, headed by a magnificent peacock, his tail trailing behind him, crossed the bed of the stream and

disappeared into the jungle on my left. A few minutes later some jungle-fowl ran across my front, and were lost sight of in the forest. I could hear the chattering of a few monkeys on my right front; but they never came into view, though I could see the branches of the trees swaying as they passed. I heard a distinct double cough from one of the 'stops' on my left, and feeling pretty certain that he had sighted a tiger, I strained my eyes to discover any movement in the jungle in front of me, but could see nothing. A few of the small, stingless, wax-producing 'dammer bees,' which probably had their home in some hollow tree in the neighbourhood, began to annoy me by settling on my face and hands, presumably attracted by the perspiration. I brushed them off, but they continually returned to the attack, and in spite of their small size—for they are smaller than a house-fly—caused me considerable annoyance.

v.

Suddenly I heard a cough from one of the 'stops' on my right, followed by a few words which I could not distinguish, and I felt sure that the tiger must have been moving in this direction. A minute later I saw, on the opposite bank, at a distance of about fifty yards, the dim outline of some large animal standing broadside on to me. It was so obscured by a bush that I could not distinguish which way it was facing, but from its size I felt convinced that it must be a tiger. I had not seen it come there, and it had appeared as if thrown on the screen of a kinema. I carefully aligned my rifle towards it, but would not fire until some movement occurred which would enable me to distinguish it more clearly. A few moments later it moved a couple of paces forward, and I fired, aiming carefully just behind the shoulder, which was now clear of the bush which had previously hidden it.

Almost simultaneously with the report of my rifle came a tremendous roar, and the tiger rushed out at full gallop straight in my direction. His head looked enormous as he came down the slight slope of the sandy bed of the stream, and when he was about twenty yards from me I fired the second barrel, aiming between the eyes. He turned a clean somersault, just like a shot rabbit, and fell in the stream a few yards from where I was sitting, splashing me from head to foot with the force of his impact on the water.

I quickly reloaded, and waited to see if he showed any signs of recovery. Although he was not quite dead, and gave an occasional gasp, I felt sure that he had received his quietus, and I did not want to spoil the skin unnecessarily. Up to this moment I had never felt the least excitement, but now I began to feel that the blood was congested in my forehead, and I was streaming with perspiration. The tiger gave forth a sound like an enormous sigh, which I felt sure was his dying effort. The beaters were evi-

dently getting quite near, and I had no thought that there was any chance of another shot, when I saw another tiger coming down the slope of the river-bed about sixty yards to my left front.

Although I was considerably surprised, my excitement disappeared in a moment. The tiger was trotting quickly just like a big cat, and I aimed at the shoulder and fired, when it changed to full gallop. I just managed to get in the second barrel before it got behind an overhanging branch, which hid its further movements. I felt sure that my first bullet had struck it, but was not so sure about the second. The beaters were now appearing among the bushes in front of me, and I did not want to run the risk of having any of them mauled, so I shouted to them not to advance any farther. It was not easy to descend from my *machân* with my rifle in the absence of the ladder, so I called out to Mahomed Khan, 'I have got one tiger and wounded another. Has one come out on your side?'

'No, *sahib*, it has not passed me.'

'Then I have got two! Bring the ladder quickly.'

In a couple of minutes Mahomed Khan appeared with the ladder, his face one huge grin with satisfaction, and I descended from my perch. We made sure that the first tiger was dead, and then proceeded to walk to the place where I expected to find the other. She (for it proved to be a tigress) lay on her side quite dead, about twenty yards beyond the stream. I called to the beaters to advance, and soon found myself in the centre of a salaaming crowd, who began hurling invective at our fallen foes. We then began to drag the first tiger, a fine male, from the water on to the dry bed of the stream, and here an amusing incident occurred. Some water must have got into his windpipe, and when the natives took hold of his legs and commenced to drag him shorewards, the air from his lungs, escaping, caused a slight noise like a gasp, with the result that there was a general stampede, and I was left alone, standing in the water by the side of the dead animal. I laughed so heartily that I could barely manage to keep my feet, and in a few moments the beaters, realising their mistake, returned and dragged the carcass on to dry ground.

.VI.

I now consulted with Mahomed Khan and the local *shikari* as to whether we should skin the animals on the spot or take them with us to Khitauli. The latter course was decided upon, as, if the skinning were effected on the spot, the operation could hardly be satisfactorily concluded before nightfall. Arrangements were accordingly made for the construction of a couple of litters from poles cut in the jungle, and while this work was in progress curiosity prompted me to walk to the spot where Mahomed Khan had said he saw a tiger in the morning, to ascertain

whether there was any sign of one having been there. He had evidently spoken the truth, for I found the track of a full-grown tiger exactly at the spot he had pointed out.

As soon as the litters were ready the bodies of the tigers were securely fastened on to them, and they were carried by relays of men towards Khitauli. After seeing matters well under way, I left the direction of affairs to Mahomed Khan and cantered on to my temporary quarters, thoroughly elated with my success. Two or three hours later a cheerful but perspiring procession arrived at the rest-house, the bodies of the tiger and the tigress were deposited under a large tree, and I proceeded to pay off all who had assisted me in the day's work, the *shikari* and the headmen receiving liberal *backshish*, and the beaters double pay.

During the evening Mahomed Khan, who had already covered more than twenty miles on foot, but whose energy seemed inexhaustible, arranged with the local *chamars* (skinners) to come at dawn next morning and skin the animals, and then, having engaged a couple of villagers to keep off jackals and prowling dogs, placed his *charpoy* (native bedstead) near the bodies of the tigers in order to see that the watchmen remained on the alert during the night. The smell of a dead tiger is appalling; how he endured it I cannot imagine, as I was conscious of it nearly all night, although I was in the bungalow some fifty yards away.

Over the skinning process I will draw a veil; but I may say that the whole of the flesh was consumed by natives of the *chamar* and other low castes. The fat was boiled down, six bottles being obtained; it is held in high esteem among the natives of India as a remedy for rheumatism. The skins were duly dressed with a preservative of which I had brought an ample supply with me, and pegged down in the compound, Mahomed Khan remaining on guard during the two following nights. On the third morning I noticed that some of the soft parts were beginning to show signs of decay, so I determined to send the skins at once to Jubbulpore, where there was a competent European taxidermist. No native of the better class will touch the skin of an animal, so I engaged one of the local *chamars* to take them, sending with him my grass-cutter to show the way and keep an eye on him. (I must explain, for the benefit of those who do not know much of the natives of India, that the whiskers and the claws of a tiger are considered to be powerful charms; and my object in sending one of my own men was to ensure their being delivered intact to a brother-officer, who was living in the same house with me at Jubbulpore.)

My leave had still a few days to run, and I wished to remain on the spot in case any opportunity occurred of increasing my bag. The man who was sent in charge of the skins

duly returned, bringing a note from my friend to the effect that when the parcel containing the skins was opened three claws were found to be missing. I at once questioned the men who had taken the package containing the skins, but both strenuously denied that it had been opened; it appeared that, as my brother-officer was absent on parade when they arrived, they had handed over the parcel to the wife of my servant, Jaisukh, for delivery to the *sahib* when he returned. Jaisukh had a small son, aged about five, the apple of his father's eye, and I at once came to the conclusion that his mother had taken the claws with the object of hanging them round the child's neck to avert the evil eye. I therefore summoned Jaisukh, and after informing him of my suspicions, said, 'A charm, to have the desired effect, must have been obtained honestly. If your wife has taken the claws with the idea of bringing your child good luck, they will be quite useless, and may have the opposite effect.'

Jaisukh agreed, and said, '*Sahib*, do not put me to shame, but leave me to deal with the matter when we return, and if my wife has really taken the claws, I will surely return them to you.'

'Very well, I shall leave it in your hands,' I said.

VII.

On arrival at Jubbulpore on the expiry of my leave I reminded Jaisukh of his promise, and next morning he informed me that he was quite unable to account for the disappearance of the claws, but that his wife had not taken them. I began to fear that I must reconcile myself to their loss, when Mahomed Khan appeared, and said, '*Huzur*, I believe Jaisukh has told the truth, and I suspect the man who brought the skins from Khitauli of stealing the claws.'

'How can we recover them?' I inquired.

'If your Honour will give me the money for the journey, I will go out to Khitauli and see if I can get them back.'

I handed him sufficient money to cover his expenses, and he departed. Three days later he returned, his face beaming with satisfaction, and placed before me a piece of old newspaper containing the missing claws. I inquired how he had recovered them, and his story was as follows.

'When I arrived at Khitauli, I at once went to the *chamars'* huts outside the village, and found the man who had carried in the skins. I told him that I had another job for him, and thus induced him to come to the Forest Officers' rest-house, and then accused him of stealing the claws. He denied it; but I locked him up in the cook-house, and left him there for a couple of hours to think over his sins. Then I returned, sharpening the big knife that MacLean Sahib gave me.' (I knew the knife well; it had a blade about eight inches long—he once cut a large thorn out of my foot with it.) 'When he saw the knife in my hand,

he asked me what I was going to do; so I said, "The colonel *sahib* has turned me out of the regiment for having stolen the claws, and I am quite innocent, so I am going to cut your throat, as without doubt you stole them." The man fell on his knees and begged for mercy. He confessed that he had opened the package during the temporary absence of the grass-cutter, and had extracted the claws, two of which he had sold to a fellow-villager. But he promised that if I would spare his life he would restore them. I therefore released him, and in a few hours' time he brought me the claws. I have thus executed the *sahib's* commands.'

I congratulated Mahomed Khan on his success, and the claws were duly restored to the skins, which were eventually set up by Rowland Ward, and now hang in the hall of my English home.

I thought that Mahomed Khan deserved some special recognition of his services in connection with my shooting expedition, and the subsequent recovery of the tigers' claws, so I obtained from Bombay a silver watch, with a suitable inscription, which I presented to him when I retired from the service a few months later. He shortly afterwards completed his time for pension, and returned to his native village to cultivate his bit of land. I have little doubt that when the village elders assemble about the well for their usual evening gossip, Mahomed Khan, who is blessed with a vivid imagination, recounts his exploits in love, war, and sport, and proudly exhibits my parting gift as a proof that he saved his colonel from the jaws of a tiger.

NOVEMBER LEAVES.

THE ghost leaves of November come drifting,
drifting down—

The sad brown leaves, the sodden leaves, November
leaves of town;

Each careless gust of autumn, each touch of
winter's cold,

Brings from the faithless branches dull showers of
tarnish'd gold.

(Ah! fickle trees of autumn, that shake your
shoulders free,

Disdainfully discarding your tattered finery—

Against pale skies of autumn your naked forms
uprear,

Delicate yet defiant, virginal yet austere.)

But lowly on the pavement the leaves of autumn lie,
Till winter, whistling on his pipe, comes arrogantly
by.

He sounds a mocking summons, he blows with icy
breath:

'Come, get you up, ye laggards, and dance your
Dance of Death!'

The ghost leaves of November rise wraith-like from
the ground,

And madly whirling in the air, go dancing round
and round;

While down the wind comes drifting, as they go
hurrying by,

A gust of phantom laughter, a memory-haunted sigh.

B. NOËL SAXELEY.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, Yesterday.

IN November of this year the United States makes its choice of a new President to succeed Mr Wilson at the White House, Washington. The people of this country, not quite understanding or appreciating the American method and disposition, which for the most part are perhaps no more illogical and stupid than our own, have been amused at the proceedings at the two great conventions, first the Republican and then the Democratic, at which the rival candidates, Mr Harding and Mr Cox, were respectively nominated. These proceedings were official only so far as the two parties were concerned; they resulted in a decision as to candidates. Subsequently the various states choose their representatives for what is called an Electoral College, which nominally makes the choice of President. But in that these representatives are chosen on political lines and are pledged to vote according to instructions, their own election foreshadows the result of the presidential election proper; and, in truth, though the College is supposed to meet sometime between now and March, and to deliberate before formally casting its votes, this is a formality but imperfectly, if at all, observed. Once the states have voted, the name of the new President is known. Some states by their population have more representatives and more votes than others, and that is why they count more heavily in the final reckoning. This now is a great hour in the politics of the world, and it is of importance to consider what are the possibilities and probabilities of this American presidential election.

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Despite certain doubts and various minor disparagements, it is the general expectation that this time the Republican candidate will be elected to the Presidency—that is to say, Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio. There may be a slip, and there are strong influences running against Mr Harding; it has even been hinted that there are considerable forces of his own party that are not pleased with him and may do something to impede his election. If he succeeds in the contest, it will be because of his sound republicanism, and not so much for the strength of his politics and his political personality as they have been known. The chief fault that is

brought against him, so it seems, is that which arises largely from the circumstances of his selection by the great Republican convention at Chicago, which swung round to him as a sort of compromise when it found itself to be hopelessly, because equally, divided between two other more favoured candidates. The convention could not properly decide between Wood and Lowden. Happy could it have been with either had the other been away; but as they were both there, they divided the votes too equally, and that was fatal to the substantial majority that one of the candidates needed to have for adoption. Thus they had both sorrowfully to be abandoned; and then the Woodites and the Lowdenites compromised upon Senator Harding, who had been languishing in a kind of electoral wilderness. When he was chosen, the Democrats, the rival party, throughout the United States rejoiced—or it may well be that they affected to rejoice—for they said that their enemy had done a good thing for them in that he had chosen a poor candidate, and verily their own prospects of a victory in November were much improved by the circumstance. The newspapers said things that were not complimentary or pretty about the man from Ohio who was thus likely to be the governing hand in the United States for four years to come. One would have it that neither party had ever chosen a more 'respectable' candidate, or, since the days of James Buchanan, a candidate so little qualified to grapple with the nation's problems. It was said that he is a 'colourless and mediocre Ohio country politician,' whom his friends are fond of comparing with McKinley because he resembles the murdered President superficially. The most dignified newspaper in New York referred to Mr Harding as a very respectable politician of the second class, whose record at Washington, it said, was faint and colourless. But this is the American way; none of it must be taken very seriously. Insincere or rather shallow criticism of a boisterous kind is one of the least commendable habits of our cousins, but perhaps it is no worse than the custom in other countries, especially where monarchies stand, of adulation that is no less insincere and shallow. Of the two, indeed, the moralists and the independent philosophers would probably

urge that the American way by search and stimulation is the safer. For all that the papers say, Senator Harding is a great political force. He is a fine speaker, and often in past times has made a great impression upon the national conventions. Though he was born on a farm, and has been intimately concerned with the work of his newspaper in Ohio, he has always had a great attachment to politics, and has invariably been known to be scrupulously, and (as some Americans think) even absurdly, honest in his practice of them. In the all-important matter of the association of the United States with the war and with the peace, he was one of those who made up their minds that the Treaty of Versailles was not good for the United States, and that the best and only thing for his country to do for its peace of mind, its political freedom, its material prosperity, and its progress on that independent line it marked out for itself at the beginning, so far as it could continue it, was to back away to some considerable extent, and remain in only on some understanding of limited liability. Without being an extremist, he supported the reservations put forward by Senator Lodge, the discussion of which excited so much interest in this country, as well as in America, last winter.

* * *

He has always been an unswerving Republican. He it was who, in 1912, nominated Mr Taft for the Presidency, and when Mr Roosevelt went his own way and led a Progressive party, Senator Harding assailed him bitterly. Yet thereafter, during the war-time, he and Mr Roosevelt became friends again; and it was Mr Harding who proposed a legislative measure in favour of authorising his old opponent to raise two divisions of volunteers for service in the war in Europe—a proposition to which Mr Wilson did not assent. In the Senate he has worked hard on the Foreign Relations Committee, and has probably a better grasp of European affairs than most of his colleagues in that house of the American Parliament. He does not take his knowledge from the newspapers, or from what others tell him. He has been to Europe many times for the sole or main purpose of making the closest possible first-hand study of domestic and foreign politics, economics, social conditions, and all the rest in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and other countries, and has come to definite conclusions of his own about the position and prospects of Europe and the relations that the United States should hold towards the old continent. And the result of his studies and of his deductions from the tremendous and terrible things that have happened in the world in recent years is that the world will not tend in time to become all of an international piece, as many believe and hope, but that nationalism will the more assert itself, at least so far as America is concerned. During the war the

United States was joined up to the general life of the world, called upon to bear its anxieties and sufferings, share with it in all its strife as never before, and as she had hoped she would never have to do. It was against the American principle, against the determination and the conviction that had animated the first Americans, and then in turn their descendants. That is a point which was not sufficiently taken into consideration when the United States was blamed so much for not entering into the war earlier than she did. But though now America can no longer preserve such a degree of isolation as she was wont to do, Senator Harding would have her regain all she can, with due regard to her own interests and the cardinal necessities of the civilisation and the progress of the world. 'We should cling everlastingly to American nationality,' he says, 'and we should suffer no abridgment of American constitutional liberty. For myself, I like the old-fashioned Americanism which arrogates to ourselves the keeping of the American conscience in all our foreign relations.' Yet he is a man for armies. Before 1914 he was a firm advocate of maintaining a considerable degree of military preparedness in his country, and now he is in favour of what he calls an 'ample' navy and a bigger army than America had before the war, and would like to see every young American undergo a period of military training, which, however, he considers should be voluntary and not compulsory, and should have the assistance of the Government in the shape of substantial grants towards the holding of annual training-camps. This can hardly be that mediocre politician at whom the New York newspapers jeered when the convention nominated him! In truth, so little mediocre is he that it was a question even in 1916 as to whether he should not then be nominated as the Republican candidate. He is essentially a senatorial selection. A group of senators who controlled the Republican convention were chiefly responsible for his being chosen, and it is considered that if he is elected the Senate will have scored a great victory in a continuous battle it is waging against the President in the White House, the Senate feeling that in these latter Wilsonian days it is being flouted, and that its authority is being usurped by a President with too much of a tendency towards autocracy. And, on the other hand, it has to be realised that if Mr Harding is elected—and, indeed, if Mr Cox, the Democrat, is elected instead, though perhaps not to the same extent—there must be a change in the political aspect of the relations between Britain and Europe generally on the one hand and the United States. America will be more self-assertive. Some difficult questions will probably be opened. For the moment our country seems entirely concerned with the problems of Germany and Russia, and the smaller—but perhaps not less difficult in some ways—problems of our relations

with our European Allies. Then we have difficulties in the East—Mesopotamia, India, and elsewhere. America seems to some for the present to be in a sense a negligible quantity. We appear to be concerned with her only as something to reflect and marvel upon, and as excuse for a smile, as when we contemplate her self-imposed trials upon the question of 'wet' or 'dry,' and wonder if she will make a success of her endeavours along the 'Pussyfoot' path. But it will soon be different. After all, America has an immensity of power. She had it before the war; to-day she is an almost immeasurably grand force in the moral and material domain. And she is about to display herself as she is. As between ourselves and the Americans in the near future there are vast questions looming, and they will cause difficulty. We cannot speak to these people as to the Germans, even if we desired—as we do not—or even as to our own most intimate Allies. We must recognise the power. There will be the question of the tolls of the Panamá Canal to arrange, and another question of the terms upon which British shipping shall enter American ports. So much, in brief, for the political view of this selection of Senator Harding as the Republican candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

* * *

Let us glance at the man on the simple human side; we shall probably need to think of him many times in the most serious way during the next four years, and it were well we should have some idea of the character of the raw human material of which this likely President is made. He is what we call a self-made man. In these days in the Senate he carries with him always a rule or measure that in former times he used when working in his newspaper-office. There is in his blood something of the Scot and something of the Dutchman too. His forefathers were Pennsylvanians, who, a hundred years ago, moved into that middle west in which there is such a concentration of American strength and American feeling of the more independent kind. Ohio may be less than a thousand miles in measurement from New York, but it is many thousands farther from Europe than the seaboard states in sentiment and determination. There in that middle west, in Ohio, the Hardings have remained ever since. The senator's father is a doctor—present tense, for, though seventy-six, he is in practice still. The boy was educated at the village school, later proceeding to a local college, where he completed a good education. But the funds in the family were small, and he had to do something himself to furnish the means for this educational equipment. He did a little teaching, worked on a farm, even performed some kind of navvy-work on the roads. But most particularly he found his way into the offices of the local newspaper called the *Star*, which was then a little weekly

sheet of two small pages. He liked the smell of printer's ink; that strange odour has an odd fascination for all such as are truly claimed of the Press or are about to be. It is not to them as the scent of roses or perfumes from the East, but there is a strange, subtle influence about it that stimulates the journalistic intention. The youthful Warren Harding was under its spell from the beginning, and to this day he is in a way keener as a newspaper man than anything else, active as he is as a politician. The *Star* was not a valuable property in those times, and, seeing the bent of his lad, the doctor determined to buy it for him after he had sufficiently mastered the handling of a newspaper. That was in 1884, when he was only nineteen years of age. It is his boast that he has held every position in a newspaper-office from printer's devil to managing editor. Under his control the paper made great advances; his pungent writings were eagerly read by the people of Marion and district; the new editor and proprietor came out into the local public life; he was closely identified with the Baptist church of which he was a member; he joined the Boards of companies; and so he rose upwards until he was a member of the Ohio Legislature, Lieutenant-Governor of the State, senator, and now, at fifty-five, strong candidate for the Presidency. Upon the American standard he is a handsome man. One makes this kind of qualification because his features are of a new type that America has so curiously bred, which seems to have come out of the North American soil, for it is of the Indian form. They are sharply cut, and Harding is clean-shaven. He is big and strong, makes a fine presence of a man, and he is one who knows his mind, and suggests at once that he is of the highly practical kind, which he is, and not a theorist or an idealist, as his predecessor so much has been. He is generous, frank, and sociable, and all who know him say that they like him much, and that nobody who really knows him can help doing so. That is not a recommendation for a Presidency, and there are things said about men who have no enemies; but then we see Mr Harding has enemies, that they are now at work, and so he is saved. The enemies to his candidature have been trying, as is customary for such enemies in America, to find out things about his past and to expose him, but they have drawn blank. A counter-campaign that was set up by his friends for the purpose of ascertaining little things that would assist in the struggle against the Democratic Cox resulted at first in the touching discovery of Miss Abigail Harding, Senator Harding's sister, who is a teacher of the English language in the high school in the neighbourhood of the family home, frying sausages and making the usual preparations for breakfast, while outside was the old doctor, with a huge sponge in his hand and a bucket

of water beside him, washing his little trap and talking friendly-like to his horse the while. To those who came to question him about his son he told stories of his determination and effort in his boyhood, and emphasised that he owed everything to his mother.

* * *

One must take a glance at the Democratic rival for the Presidency, Governor Cox. The election is not yet over, and all America may be wrong in its prognostications. As the Democrats said of the Republican candidate, so the Republicans say of the Democrat choice that it is one of the things that should make them smile. The probability is that the election will be more closely contested than was at first supposed, but still the chances are quite with Mr Harding. His opponent is in some respects a remarkable man, even though a fair proportion of Americans urge against him also that he is mediocre. Fifty years of age, he has been Governor of Ohio three times. In some respects there is a curious similarity between certain points of the careers of the two candidates. They are both of Ohio, and both have risen to eminence through the medium of the newspapers on which they personally worked. Few circumstances of American public life in these present days are more noticeable and significant than the high proportion of public men who are, or have been, journalists. The fact is recognised that the journalist—he who thinks and constructs, as well as merely writes—is by the very nature of his work and study better fitted, if a good journalist, for grappling with public affairs and achieving solutions to difficult public questions than almost any other class of person—indeed, better than any other. Thus we find a remarkable proportion of the ambassadors of the United States in foreign lands being drawn from the journalistic profession, and the example of America has been noticed, and has had a certain effect in other countries. James Middleton Cox was brought up on a farm, he was educated in the public schools, and as a boy, at evenings and during holiday-times, was a printer's devil. He, like Harding, was something of a teacher; he became a newspaper reporter on the staff of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, and then private secretary to a member of Congress. Next he borrowed a sum of money with which he purchased the *Dayton Daily News*, and later he bought the *Springfield Daily News*. He found that his newspaper-work drew him irresistibly to politics, and so he stood for Congress twelve years ago, and was speedily swept into the great political whirlpool. He is a man who is liked, and has the reputation for having been an excellent

governor. His friends, no doubt, during the election period will make some use of the circumstance that he has recently bought the farm on which he was born; and it is his intention to turn it into a model farm-home, where he may pass the evening of his days when the hurly-burly of his political and public life is done.

* * *

Such are the two candidates for what is certainly the highest and most important public office of an elective character in the world. The man who is chosen has, in varying degree, an influence for a time upon the progress of the human race. That is not an exaggeration of an idea. Be it remembered that the power of the President of the United States is far greater than that of the President of the French Republic—which is indeed small. The American President can be something of a dictator in his way during his term of office, a dictator in what is in some respects the most powerful country in the world—that in the West towards which the tide of civilisation, wealth, power, and effort is steadily flowing from the stricken East. So it behoves each and all of us to consider the qualities and the dispositions, the thoughts and the determinations, of these men, and particularly the man upon whom the choice of the Electoral College is likely to fall, and to do it sympathetically, and not in the manner towards which there has been so much tendency in recent years, of high superiority, of an utter disregard for American methods and men. There is no more decisive indication of smallness of mind and complete ignorance of the essential and overwhelming facts of modern politics, circumstances, and values than that superciliousness and affected disregard by a small proportion of British people of even what is good in America, even what is best in her. Such people are self-condemned for envy or ignorance, or both. America is going to matter enormously to Great Britain in the next few years, and there will be no room for such stupidities. Let us give a fair welcome to the man who is elected President, recognising that it is inevitable that he must, by the very circumstances of his election, the most thoroughly sifting process, perhaps, that the world employs to-day, be a great man, even though his countrymen in their own way may insist on his 'mediocrity.' If a spirit of ambition after a season in the shades came back to earth and had its choice of situation of power and distinction in this strange world of to-day, what would it be? I can imagine it considering closely the Presidency of the Republic of the United States of America.



Y V O N N E.

PART III.

IX.

EARLY the next morning I went to see M. Lassenot, the notary, and gave him De Chaumonart's letter. I tried to learn from his countenance the contents, but I could not. He read and re-read it, and asked me many particulars of Pierre's death, and how long I should be in Paris, and said he would write to me. Why he should write to me or want to know my address I could not understand, nor could my uncle when I told him of it.

I was to know a few months later, when, to my utter astonishment, I learned that poor Pierre had left me a fortune of two hundred thousand francs.

I next went on to the Rue Dominique to see the baroness.

'Ah, my dear Henri,' she said, after she had kissed me again and again, 'I have been so ill and so lonely. If you or Julie or Yvonne had been here, I am sure I should never have got so depressed, but God has taken me by this path to show me what an idle, frivolous, useless life I have led;' and she went on to talk of her past imaginary sins and the vanities of the world, &c., till I gradually induced her to speak of more worldly matters, and finally about Julie's wedding. I could not have hit on a better subject.

'Ah, Henri, how can I do justice to that! All Paris was there. I got her dress from Devoyes', the lace at Dargalas'. Both Madame la Maréchale Soult and the Duchesse d'Abrantes (Madame Junot) came. You know what exquisite taste the latter has, and she said Julie's dress was a perfect dream.'

Thus quite forgetting in her enthusiasm all the vanities of the world, in the most naïve way she described the ceremony, the music, and finally the grand ball in the evening, and then came back to the dresses once more.

'But now,' she said, 'tell me about yourself. When did you last hear from my dear Yvonne? Why has she not written to me for such a time? Is she ill?'

Remembering my uncle's instructions, I merely told her that Yvonne was quite well, and I showed her the beautiful embroideries, and told her about the Holbein, which, when it had been cleaned, I begged her to accept.

'I will not accept it, *mon cher*,' she replied; 'I will simply take care of it for you. It shall hang up opposite the other.'

But she soon got fatigued. She had her old charm of manner, but none of the wit and vivacity that had brought her so many admirers and crowded her *salon*. Her chief pleasure was

for me to be near her; then she was happy. Just before my short leave came to an end I told her I intended to see Yvonne, and she gave me many loving messages for her.

'Tell her father,' she said, 'as soon as I am well and the war is over, I shall insist on the marriage taking place at once. You two young people will have to live in this house. It is too large for me. I shall make over to you enough money for the purpose, and take a smaller one near.'

Of course, I promised her to deliver the message. It was not that I wanted the money—with Yvonne beside me I cared little for what I got—but I knew the effect it would have on Martignac. My visit had undoubtedly done my aunt good, and what pleased my uncle Jean was that she never said a single word about going into a convent. This proved, he said, that the mind was getting into a healthier state.

X.

I started for Spain in better spirits than I had left it, though, of course, the chance of seeing Yvonne had a lot to do with that.

It was a beautiful November day when I pulled up at the 'Cheval Blanc' at Préville. I had written to Yvonne to say I was coming, so I knew where to find her. It was nearly four years since I had seen her. Ah! how can I describe her beauty, the perfect *ensemble* of her face and figure!

'You know, *mon chéri*,' she said, after my first transports had a little subsided, as we sat down on a low wall in a quiet lane that leads to the château, 'we shall, of course, be comparatively poor; but what does that matter? I shall be yours and you will be mine. I want to get right away from here. I feel that we Martignacs are only interlopers. I want to have a little cottage in Normandy, covered with roses and honeysuckle, far away from here. You won't mind that, will you?' she continued tenderly, looking up, with her hand resting on my epaulette. 'We can easily get one. Your aunt gave me a lovely pearl necklace when I was twenty-one. I am sorry, but I must sell that; and that beautiful ring you gave me when we were betrothed—that must go too. But we shall be happy—oh, so happy—you and I.'

I had to let her go on. The very sound of her voice was like the most beautiful music. I liked to gaze into the depths of her soft, bright eyes as she looked up at me.

Apart from the 60,000 francs I had received from De Courcy, after my two aunts had had their choice of the vestments and the embroideries, I had sold the remainder for 5000 francs, so

I had 65,000 altogether, and I had placed 40,000 francs in the bank and had the rest with me.

'Now listen to me, *ma chérie*,' I replied; 'I don't see why you should sell my ring, because,' I continued, producing a little box, 'I have brought you another.'

'Oh, how beautiful!' she said, as her eyes fell on the glistening gems. 'But, oh, Henri, what madness! Can't you see how we are placed?'

'You spoke about my being poor. If I were, it would make no difference to me, if you were willing to share my poverty; but I shall not be poor, because'—

'You won't be!' she exclaimed. 'Oh, Henri, I almost wish in one way you were, for I shall be. But, on the other hand, I am glad, oh, my darling, so glad, because in that case father, I am certain, will consent to our marriage. You must know,' she continued, 'that he and some other deputies have lost their money. He and they knew, before any one else, about a new canal to be built. He bought a lot of land with borrowed money. Then, owing to the Russian campaign, the building of the canal was postponed, and instead of victories we have had terrible disasters ever since. You know he went to see your aunt; but she was ill, and so he had no chance of help from her to pay the interest on the land he had bought. Now, M. Morot had always flattered me, and wanted to marry me, though I gave him no encouragement, and told him nothing would make me marry him, much as I respected him. Father had some poor, swampy land, with a small, old farmhouse that wants repairing. At the most it is not worth ten thousand francs, but it was near some land of M. Morot's, and father said he might have it for twenty thousand francs. M. Morot naturally laughed at the price, but said he would give it, and require no *dot*, if I would only marry him; and father consented. I stood firm. I told them both that they would have to drag me to the church. M. Morot, who is a gentleman, said at once, in that case, so far as he was concerned, the matter was ended. But father was furious, for he saw ruin staring him in the face. However, *le bon Dieu* came to my help. M. Morot, being under forty, has had to join the New Compagnie d'Honneur, which was raised from men of good families; so everything is in abeyance. Mother had some very fine rubies. They came, I believe, from distant relatives. I never knew she had them. These have been sold, but still father is in difficulties. Are you going to see him?'

'Yes, *ma chérie*, I am,' I answered, as I kissed her; 'and, what's more, I shall return with a paper that will make your bright eyes sparkle even more than they do now.'

XI.

Under the spell of the young girl's beauty I could think of only her, and I was quite sur-

prised when I found myself at the fine wrought-iron gates of my ancestral home. This brought me back to myself and the purpose of my mission. The man was a rogue, an arrant rogue, but still he was Yvonne's father. Yvonne was mine, and I was determined that she should be nobody else's. I meant to make that clear. Then, just as I had reached the château, an idea came into my head. If he was in such straits that he was practically willing to sell his daughter for twenty thousand francs, why should not I buy the wretched land? I had the money. That, I reckoned, would solve all difficulties.

Delighted with this idea, I rang the bell, and it was not long ere I was ushered into Martignac's presence. I was struck at once with his aged and worried appearance. I could see he was in two moods, and, being taken by surprise, hardly knew what line to adopt. There was defiance in his eye, but a certain warmth in his voice as he inquired about the health of *madame la baronne*, my aunt.

'I have just come from her, and she is getting on slowly, but she insists on my marriage with Yvonne;' and I gave him her message and told him the arrangements she intended to make for our happiness. He gazed at me in amazement.

'But what about the convent?'

'That's all finished. It was only the passing idea of an invalid. It appears,' I continued, 'that you have some swampy land with a tumble-down cottage that you wish to dispose of. Well, I'll give you twenty thousand francs for it, provided you settle it on Yvonne, and that you agree in black and white to our marriage.'

'Is this your aunt's idea?'

'No,' I replied, 'my own; and, what's more, it's my own money, and I have got it in my pocket.'

A look of intense relief came over his worried face. 'I will do it,' he said, shaking my hand warmly. 'I have been mistaken. We will forget the past. Yvonne is yours.'

I wrote out the paper. He signed, and I gave him the money.

'Now I am going to see Yvonne,' I said. At his request I promised to stop the night; and in another moment I hurried off in triumph.

I found Yvonne seated on a fallen tree, with the setting sun behind her. She knew my footsteps in a moment, and sprang up.

'Look, *ma chérie*!' I exclaimed, as I waved the paper before her and kissed her again and again.

'Oh, Henri, it seems too good to be true;' and tears of happiness came into her bright eyes as she read the agreement by the failing light.

There was, perhaps, a certain constraint with us all at first, but soon we were in the highest spirits.

Ah, that was a happy evening. Yvonne was really and truly mine now. All my anxieties were past. She was happy, and therefore I was.

To please me she sang, and never had she sung so divinely. No wonder the best professors in Paris were proud of their pupil.

It was past midnight ere I had finished writing to my uncle Jean, telling him of my good fortune. Early the next morning I took a sad adieu, and then, seeing all things *couleur de rose*, I set off for Spain.

If I had expected to repeat my success in the matter of loot, I was soon to find out that I could not do so, for the Allies with the coming year had begun the invasion of France. The British were driving us out of Spain; Prussians, Austrians, and Russians, like wolves, were closing in on the Emperor; and we received orders to retreat from Spain as fast as we could. I had fondly hoped that we might be placed under Soult—in that case I should have been near Yvonne; but one army of the Austrians was approaching Lyons, and we were sent in that direction.

With all his transcendent abilities, it was impossible for the Emperor to continue the unequal contest against all the Allies at the same time, and, as all the world knows, his capitulation was signed 30th March 1814.

It was but a few days after that event when I received a letter from Yvonne, who was in Marseilles, whither she and her mother had flown for refuge early in the year. After our defeat at Bayonne, Soult had retreated on Toulouse. The old château of my forefathers was in a direct line between those two places, and very bitter was the fighting around it. Martignac had foreseen this and sent his family away, with as many valuables as he could, but nothing would induce him to leave it. Twice it was taken by the British, and twice they were driven out; and it was in the beginning of their third assault that Martignac was killed by a shell that burst in the very room where Yvonne and I had passed such a happy evening. For Yvonne's sake I was sorry for his death, but apart from that I knew that the rogue had only got his deserts. On the other hand, I felt keenly the terrible damage that the château had sustained.

XII.

It was not long before I, like many a better man, received my *congé* from the Bourbons, and as soon as I could I hastened to Marseilles. Martignac's affairs were in such a terrible state that there was nothing for the family to do but to sell the property. Yvonne's only brother, a doctor, and Madame Martignac begged me to ask my aunt, who had now quite recovered her normal health, to buy it; and this she did for a third of its real value. So once more the old château came back to the descendants of its ancient owners.

A small army of workmen were soon employed in making good all the damage done. One wing was specially set aside for the baroness, who sold her splendid *hôtel* in Paris to a Russian

prince. He would have bought, too, all the *objets d'art* and pictures in it; but, while she sold the former, she would not part with the two Holbeins or her old Dutch masters, which she brought to the château. Fine as they were, from the sentimental point of view, so far as I was concerned, they hardly made up for some of the portraits of my ancestors that were lost in the Revolution.

But before the house was dismantled in Paris, our wedding took place in the autumn. To the horror of my wife, on the Emperor's return from Elba I had to serve again; but as my regiment was one of those destined under Marshal Oudinot to watch the Austrians, I saw no real fighting, and my military career was ended.

With a king upon the throne again, and the country bent on peace, in that secluded spot I led very much the quiet, happy, and, I hope I may say, useful life of my ancestors. There was plenty to do replanting trees and renovating the estate—which, however, was wonderfully improved a few years afterwards, without my having much to do with it, by the making of the canal that had proved the ruin of Martignac. This canal simply doubled the value of all the properties it went through.

Now, it had always been the custom of my worthy ancestors that a fête should be given on their own fête-days and on those of their ladies. My aunt Hortense particularly insisted that all the old customs should be kept up. With us her slightest wish was law, for neither Yvonne nor I ever forgot what we owed to her; so a *fête champêtre* was held not only on my fête-day in June, but also on that of the baroness in September, which, fortunately, came just about when the merry vintage-time was over. On these two occasions the tables were spread under the trees, where the whole district, high and low, rich and poor, assembled. They ate and drank to their hearts' content, and finished the day dancing on the sward till the lengthening shadows stopped their revels.

Equal pleasure was derived on Yvonne's fête-day in December. Rows of tables were placed in the great hall, but so large was it that, even with hundreds of candles, there was not too much light. Then, when the meal was over and the tables were taken away, the fiddlers in the gallery began, and my aunt, with the highest noble present as her partner, set the ball rolling with a minuet. In spite of unlimited wine, the *paysans* and *paysannes* were always a little shy at first, till Yvonne, perchance with my steward, and I with some pretty *laitière*, had joined in a country-dance; and then all went as merry as a marriage-bell till the clock struck ten, which was quite late enough, considering the distance some had to go and the state some were in. Of all these festivals it was the winter one on Yvonne's day that gave us, perhaps, the greatest pleasure, and certainly the most amusement.

XIII.

It was five years after we were married. Our guests had gone; the candles had been extinguished, leaving a horrible odour that permeated the whole château. It was an awful night; the wind was howling in the chimneys and the rain was swishing against the panes. I had gone upstairs and thrown myself on a chair before the blazing logs, and not without a smile, being so comfortable myself, I thought of those (some in stately coaches, some in gigs, while some rode or walked) who had left us, after they had all partaken freely of the *coup de l'étrier*, consisting of a very fine punch, the secret of which many had tried to find out.

According to her wont, Yvonne had gone to kiss the children as they slept, and to see if my aunt desired anything. Seldom had I seen her look more beautiful as she entered the room. As a birthday present I had commissioned Gérard to paint her portrait. Like many another celebrated painter, he had known the baroness in Paris, and, indeed, he had done her portrait about the same time that he had painted the well-known picture of the Emperor in his robes. Being in the district, he came to see the baroness, and he was so pleased with his quarters that I had no difficulty in getting him to stay on to paint Yvonne's portrait. And a splendid picture it was, worthy, indeed, of its original. This had been placed in the hall that very day, and she was wearing the same beautiful dress that she had been painted in, so that all could see how true it was.

'What are you smiling at, *mon cher*?' she said merrily, detaching a splendid necklace of diamonds from her throat, and placing it in a box which was to be hidden in one of the secret recesses in the oak panelling of the room.

'I was thinking, for one thing, how beautiful you look,' I replied.

'Oh no; you were smiling at something besides that.'

'Well, I was thinking, as I heard the storm without, how some of our good friends are getting home, and whether Jean Berlot is going to repeat his adventure by falling into the river to-night.'

'Yes,' she laughed, 'you find that an endless source of amusement, but it's a very cruel of you.'

'And I was thinking what a success the picture was, and wondering next year what present I could give you on your birthday. Now, do you remember, *ma chérie*,' I continued, with a smile, 'how you said once that you would like a little cottage in Normandy, with pretty roses and honeysuckle and earwigs and all that sort of thing? Well, you shall have one if you like, and'—

With parted lips she stood motionless for a moment, her bright eyes twinkling with merriment. '*Oh, grand Dieu, quelle folle idée!*' she exclaimed, and the room rang with her merry laughter.

'I don't see anything droll in it.'

'Don't you? Why, it would take ten days to get there! What would aunt say? Oh, *ma foi!*' and she went off into peals of laughter again. 'No, *mon cher*,' she said with decision, placing her hands on my cheeks and stooping down and kissing me, 'I am not going to have a cottage in Normandy, nor, indeed, anywhere. I have got you, and I don't want anything else in this world; and so far as my poor finite brains can tell me—though, of course, you need not tell M. le Pasteur—I cannot imagine anything better in the next.'

THE END.

THE EFFECT OF SLEEP UPON PLANTS.

By A. T. JOHNSON.

ONE of the most interesting chapters in the romance of plant-life is that which tells us how plants go to sleep. Most of us have noticed how the trefoils fold their leaves at evening like a butterfly's wings, how the common nasturtium dips its round discs of green to a vertical poise, and how the rays of the lupine's leaves droop at dusk until they look like green shuttlecocks turned upside-down. These and innumerable other examples, movements which are more noticeable in dry, cold weather than when it is warm and damp, are what one may term voluntary efforts on the part of plants to check a too rapid radiation of heat, which would be liable to occur were the flat surface of the leaves, instead of the edges, exposed to the chilly night-air.

But most plants undergo a sleep which is of a more prolonged and thorough kind. This is that which we are accustomed to call their winter's rest, a period during which vegetation is entirely suspended. This winter repose differs essentially from the foregoing, since it involves, in its most complete form, an actual cessation of all vital activity, a kind of stupor forced upon the plant or the tree by a low temperature. And it is a matter of common observation that this period of rest, especially if it be extended, as by a long spell of frost, has a remarkably stimulating effect upon hardy vegetation, resulting in a more luxurious production of foliage and flower. Indeed, there are plants, such as many alpine, which, if they are not subjected to the stern but kindly influence of frost, remain in a semi-active

state all winter, only to awake to meet the spring too weary to produce a blossom.

It was from a recognition of these facts that observant gardeners adopted the practice known as 'retardation,' a practice which has been and still is the primary factor in the production of beautiful spring flowers at the dead season of the year. It was noticed that plants could not only be put to sleep by frost, but that they were rendered more prolific by the process, for some roots being subjected to the temperature of a refrigerator behaved precisely as if they had endured a long spell of wintry weather. Thus lily-of-the-valley plants, having been prevented from blooming at their natural period in spring by being plunged into cold-storage, are brought out and placed in heat in the summer, when they immediately burst into a wealth of bloom, hastening to meet what they believe to be the spring.

A curious but commonplace example of the invigorating effect of frost upon vegetation is afforded by the rhubarb. The roots of this plant which are selected for forcing are dug up in early autumn. They are not put in a refrigerator, but merely left on the open ground and exposed to frost for a week or so, when they are planted in boxes and brought indoors to a moderate heat. The result, however, is precisely the same as if they had been subjected to cold-storage retardation. The exposure of the roots produces what is known as a 'check,' which is to say, the plant, having been submitted to conditions of temperature so much lower than that to which it is usually accustomed in autumn, is thrust into suspended activity, so that when it suddenly wakes up to the warmth of the forcing-house it feels that the winter is over, that spring has come, and the effort it makes to respond to the effect of this trickery materialises in the familiar pink stems of forced rhubarb. The same treatment will produce a like effect with many other plants whose roots are hardy enough to stand the ordeal.

There are plants, however, which cannot be retarded by cold. These are the spring-flowering bulbs, the gay daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips. Many efforts have been made with the object of 'keeping back' these early bloomers, but they have always scorned the chilling influence of the refrigerator and obstinately refused to depart from their natal custom. Then it was discovered—quite by accident—that if the opposite treatment, that of heating, is bestowed upon these bulbs, they will flower not only earlier, but more generously. It happened in Holland, where bulbs are placed for storage not in cold but in warmed rooms. One day a large consignment of hyacinths was forgotten, and subjected to a temperature which was then considered so dangerous that it was feared the whole lot were ruined. But the bulbs were tested, and, to the surprise of every one, they flowered much sooner

and developed finer blossoms than any of the others. The outcome of the incident was a new method of treating bulbs by heat, and 'super-heated bulbs' soon became, as they are to-day, a feature of the trade lists.

This ripening of bulbs by heat and drought, which ensures their getting a complete rest instead of merely a 'dog's sleep,' is exemplified in some other plants which, having been brought into our gardens from lands where it is nearly always summer, bloom at midwinter. Though they may endure our frost, it has no message for them, nor can it induce them to go into quiescence. The lovely *Iris stylosa* from Algeria flowers at Christmas, and is closely followed by that other little southerner, the violet-scented *Iris reticulata*. Yet, though these come to maturity and brave the rigours of our gray skies when all around them the native plant-world is asleep, they do not flourish without their period of rest. This they enjoy in the fullness of summer, and unless they are planted in a soil which at that season is dusty and baked with the rays of the sun at his height, their rest will be no more than a sleepless vigil for their native conditions, so that when their blossoming period comes round they will be too languid to produce a flower. But here again the thoughtful gardener can induce the violet-scented iris to lapse into that period of inactivity so essential to good blooming, even when soil conditions do not afford sufficient heat to send the plants to sleep. This he does by digging up the bulbs as soon as the growing season is over, when they are dried and put away in paper bags in a warm place for their summer slumber.

The beautiful azaleas, lilacs, and other flowering shrubs which are such an attractive feature in plant-houses in spring are also stimulated by the tonic of a winter sleep. Thus, instead of bringing them indoors in autumn, the gardener puts them against a chilly north wall, where they are submitted to as low a temperature as can be risked without injury for several months. This ensures their getting a thorough rest. Indeed, they are forced into a deeper torpor than they would experience in the ordinary way, and afterwards express their appreciation of the rest by breaking almost spontaneously into flower as soon as they are submitted to more genial conditions.

Having discovered that the date of a plant's blooming is largely dependent upon a period of quiescence, and having succeeded in suspending its vital energies and conserving them by artificial freezing, or the application of heat, experimentalists have gone a step further. They have, in their desire to induce a plant to bloom many months before its appointed time, before those submitted to the ordinary processes of retardation and subsequent forcing are likely to bloom, obtained their ends with some success by the use of anæsthetics. Thus lilac-bushes which were thrown into a deep sleep for twenty-four hours

by the use of chloroform or ether behaved, on awakening from their stupor, very much as if they had been at rest for many months. They bloomed at Christmas instead of in the spring, and showed extraordinary vigour and prolificacy. But interesting as such experiments may be to

scientific horticulture, and instructive as they are in indicating that interdependence which exists in the world of plants between rest and activity, it is doubtful, and perhaps happily so, whether they will ever become a part of practical floriculture.

THE BUSH HAS ITS SECRETS.

By J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

I.

IN the tropical noon solstice we sat on the deck and talked. We were three. For a long time the *Bonny* had been making its way toward the low-lying swamp that marks the entrance of the river. We were all three passengers. Two of us were Europeans; the other was a Lagos negro of undeniable education and refinement.

We had watched the smudgy line of the shore, over a ribbon of glittering silver, until the interminable stumps of mangrove-trees had at last opened out and revealed the delta-reaches beyond.

The sun fell with pitiless intensity upon the water. It seemed to rise from that heaving surface of oily smoothness in a haze of vaporous heat that both hurt the eyes and tired the brain.

Major Ord Brixton was talking. He is a well-known soldier in the 'Waffs,' and a keen collector of West African curios. Perhaps he is proudest of the little series of cotton-wood figures that he secured from Boola City when it was raided by our Government, in punishment of the crimes committed by the king of two decades ago.

He was telling us now, this quiet, middle-aged Englishman, of the life-size effigy of the High Priest of the Boola Secret Society, which said figure is carved from soft wood, and deeply infused with the life-blood of countless victims. Brixton durst never bring it again to West Africa, although the Government afterwards questioned the legality of his claim to its possession. He keeps it in a little private museum, known and valued at its true worth by international enthusiasts, in the purlieus of Hampstead, London.

Our coloured interlocutor was Kali Afuma, the most popular native lawyer in Lagos, a man who was trained at the Inner Temple, and who is wont to visit Europe once in every three years. He nodded his confirmation while Brixton detailed to me the outer aspects of his famous Ju-ju.

'It is most curiously carved,' said my fellow-traveller, 'and, although it must be over a hundred years old, it is in excellent preservation. The hands are elongated, held bent outwards

slightly from the wrists, and curved upwards in such a way that the heart—and other vital organs—of victims could be deposited therein during the ceremony of dedication. The soft cotton-wood is so soaked with blood, congealed to the consistency of copal varnish, that you could almost believe the lower limbs to be made of mahogany. On both forearms are long coils of copper-wire. Afuma is going to tell us soon the native significance of this insulation. But first let me briefly describe how the figure came into my possession. Have a drink! There goes the steward! Let me call for three iced lime-waters.'

We others cordially assented, and the steward soon brought us the refreshing liquid, which we imbibed through straws, while Brixton related how he entered Boola with his troops early in the present century. It was clear that he was not romancing as, in his unimpassioned voice and with his quiet, restrained gestures, he told us of the horrors of that campaign.

He prefaced his narrative by remarking that he had recently seen service both in France and in Mesopotamia, and that he had become hardened to death in all its violent aspects. But it was very clear that his subaltern experiences in the tropics had bitten deepest into his consciousness. His eyes showed his bitter revolt against the revelations of crime in Boola that had stained his first joyous anticipations of the charm that clings to a soldier's life.

I glanced from time to time, with intuitive reading of his nature, at the sun-tanned skin, the clear, straight eyes, the firm mouth, the thin, fine nostrils. I could well imagine that he would be full of buoyant youth as his troops marched towards the West African city. He was then at a period when 'to-day' is everything and 'to-morrow' is of no possible importance, until provision has been made for the present hour.

II.

'The first white man to go down was my sergeant. We were trailing along a bush-path, and had been held up twice, but with only small casualties. It was the ambiguity of the fight that was so terrible. We knew that vague forms of men dogged us in the elephant-grass on either side of the road. Sometimes we

caught glimpses of them running along, bent double. Then would come a sortie—a wild onslaught of leaping, yelling, incoherent figures that seemed, in the blaze of sunlight, like a crazy nightmare. We had to use the Gatling once, and it mowed them down by dozens.

'But my sergeant, good old Robson, went out at my side under the fourth attack—an attack that was direct and venomous. It came from five immense savages armed with cutlasses. I have never forgotten that death—I can see it now, even although I have encountered equally terrible events in Europe and Asia. . . . Robson and I were talking of our hope of reaching a clearing, where we could make a stand, and maybe use our Gatling in enfilade. We had left our men some distance behind. Then, suddenly, I saw five naked figures surround us. Robson threw up his arms as if to protect me. There was a confused rush of blows, and then the negroes disappeared. It was all over in a few seconds, even while I held my sword half-drawn from its scabbard.'

Brixton paused to suck up the iced water. He looked wistfully along the swampy banks of the river. We had crossed the bar, and were now ploughing our way toward the widest stream that lies above the snake-like windings of the delta.

'Poor old Robson! Do you know, he stood and looked at me, swaying slightly, with half his head lopped away; and then he fell—not beside me, but *on* me! I was greatly moved—it was my first white loss, and he was a splendid soldier, keen on discipline, and always cheery and bright. . . . And I had to wait in the awful solitude, with Robson at my feet, till the platoon came up. We carried the body for the rest of the way, and buried it in a shallow grave at the first clearing we came to. But I shall never forget that walk—my feet were worn and wet, and it was dear old Robson's blood that filled my boots. . . .

'The attack eased off for that day; it was as though the natives were satisfied, after having killed one of our leaders. We were only four white men in the whole platoon, and right glad we were to rest in the clearing that night, with the sense that we had the long grass a fairly reasonable distance from our flanks. Warfare in West Africa is nerve-trying, just because of its horrible ingenuity, and the native's snake-like skill in keeping cover.

'There was a tumult of angry and wild yells all through the darkness, and we knew these must come from the city. We were nearing our goal. . . . I'll not burden you with descriptions of the slaughter outside the walls during the morning hours of the next day. We lost fifty of our splendid Hausa soldiers, and we must have accounted for literally hundreds of our enemies. It was at the entrance to the town that I saw for the first time my great

Ju-ju. It was surrounded by the witch-doctors, who were making the most awful din. The figure stood at the gate of the town, right in the middle of the road. The scene was a shambles—there were headless trunks by the dozen piled around it, and the Ju-ju's outstretched hands were filled with human entrails.'

III.

'The tumult of war-like yells was checked abruptly by a gesture from a form that I knew must belong to the principal witch-doctor. This grotesque figure danced its way towards us, the body swathed in dried grasses, the limbs tinkling with scores of talismans: shells, pieces of metal, teeth of animals, and bits of dried leather. I had murder in my heart. I meant to avenge poor old Robson's death whatever the cost! You cannot believe the rage and disgust, the incredible loathing and hatred, that nerved my arm and fired my brain. Remember I was only twenty-five at that time.'

Ord Brixton paused, sighed, shook his head impetuously, and then shrugged his broad shoulders.

'I—yes, I *would*!—I would do the same thing to-day to such a loathsome specimen of debased and degraded humanity. I could see his snake eyes, bemused with bestial religious ecstasy, as he pranced toward me. My sword was drawn—and I took his head clean off! I swung my arm from left to right once—just once—and I was scarcely aware of the concussion. All I knew was that his weird figure collapsed before me, and that his inane head rolled to the side of the road.

'My God! I wish I could make you hear the prolonged and poignant wail of fear and despair that came from the crowds around. It was not anger; it was sheer animal *fear*, and it sounded as though the assembled negroes had lost their last hope on earth. . . . For behind me was a solid phalanx of Hausa soldiers, and my companion officers were in complete command of the Gatling.

'The population stood aside; and I was still so keyed-up with loathing and horror that I made straight for the immense Ju-ju figure in the gateway of the city. There was a great commotion all around, and I saw that the soldiery had opened rank, and that they now lined the road right up to the city wall. The Gatling was in readiness, and suddenly an immense silence (after this rapid series of movements) dropped over the place like a veil. I found myself standing, among a heap of black corpses, looking straight into the face of that hideous Ju-ju! Its expression was diabolical beyond the descriptive power of mere words.

'I used my sword as a rake, and I pulled all the hearts and other horrible sacrifices from those hideously outstretched hands. It was

then that I noticed the copper-wire that encircled the forearms. I had heard dim stories about the power attributed to this metal by the natives of Boola. What impelled me I cannot say; but I used the point of my sword to get a purchase on the ends of the wires, and I began to unwind the coils, deliberately, steadily.

'I saw then that the other witch-doctors, a dozen or more of them, had approached me over the heap of bodies, and I paused in my work to turn swiftly on them.

'I suppose I looked as mad as I felt. Those weird figures appeared less tangible to me than the nightmare dreams of a man sick with malaria. They gibbered and muttered and threatened. But I spat at them! And I was abruptly conscious that I was snarling and raging like a mad dog! They retreated before me, and I returned to my task of uncoiling the wire.

'Then I knew that my fellow-Englishmen were behind me. I heard one of them say, "Oh, he was splendid—he took the town by that action—but he must be utterly demented. What on earth is he after *now*? Those pieces of wire can be of no possible value or significance."

Again Brixton paused to laugh at the reminiscence, a laugh that sounded mirthless and forlorn in the noonday heat.

'I had finished removing the wires by this time, and I put them in my pocket as nonchalantly as if they were a piece of string just removed from a parcel of clothing. I had leisure then to examine the face of the great Ju-ju. D'you know, you fellows—and, of course, it may be sheer fancy on my part—it seemed to me that (as though in response to some invocation that we could neither see nor hear with the ordinary senses) the dark leer on the carved face changed to one of sombre brooding, solemn sadness, infinite regret. That look is there *to-day*, in my little museum at Hampstead. Psychologists have asserted that this immense piece of woodcraft lost its subtle evil power when I unwound those coils of wire, and that from henceforth—even when, for the mere sake of *vraisemblance*, I put on *other* pieces of similar wire—the wood could convey only a message of regret and sorrowful remembrance.'

IV.

Kali Afuma had listened to the narrative of my friend with inscrutable face. But he nodded from time to time, and his introspective gaze showed that he was greatly interested, if not altogether convinced, by the Englishman's arguments.

'I have finished my story,' said Brixton. 'We lost no more lives—the town was utterly subdued, beaten by the weapon of superstition. We shot all the witch-doctors the same sunset.

I remember how morbidly anxious I was for a wash and a change—especially keen on cleaning my shoes and my socks. I have never enjoyed a bath so much in my life as I did that hurried toilet, when we took possession of the king's compound. As you will remember, the aged king Prama-Prama was sent to England, and thence to the Bermudas, where he died ten years later. Since the conquest of the city, Boola has become one of the most progressive of our West Coast possessions, and there are to-day both colleges and hospitals and churches there.'

I looked at my soldier-companion as one might peer at a man who has been at the bottom of a pit, to the obscure depths of which the sun may never penetrate. I remembered the cynical aphorism of Anatole France in which that great thinker demands whether human life has any value. 'We interest ourselves,' he declared coldly, 'in lives that do not concern us one whit. It is just as though we were foolish enough to believe that life has an intrinsic value.'

These thoughts were irksome. I had never killed a man, and dared not even ask myself whether I could afterwards justify the act were fortuitous circumstances to compel me to any such deed of slaughter. I turned to Afuma for relief of my embarrassment.

'Will you explain the wires on the Ju-ju's arms?' I asked him.

The face of Kali Afuma remained impassive. He had the reputation of being more in touch with native tradition and usage than any other educated negro of the colony. But his legal training had made him impersonal and judicious.

'You Englishmen,' he said, 'are so far emotional that you become hysterical when you confront horrors of the kind so eloquently described by Major Ord Brixton. We negroes are different. We are brought up—or should I not use the past tense and say *were* brought up, inasmuch as the younger generation is more European in its culture, and scorns native religion!—we were brought up in a tradition of crime and bloodshed, so long as that bloodshed was justified by religious protection. We looked to our priestcraft as you Englishmen look to your king, your state, your constitution. Without the British Constitution your society would be in a state of chaos. Without our priestcraft, a generation or two generations ago, we negroes would have had to submit to the indignity of slavery from surrounding tribes. The strongest and most formidable peoples were those who possessed the most powerful and forbidding of Ju-jus. Major Ord Brixton, in first killing the high-priest of the Boola Secret Society, and then despoiling the Ju-ju of the tribe, robbed Boola, from king to scullion, of its strength. Had I been present myself it is probable I

should have expected the valiant officer to be shattered by a thunderbolt for such an affront to our witchcraft. That he survived was proof, damning, startling, soul-shaking, to all those Boola natives that their cause was irrevocably lost.'

I was watching Afuma's face. Anything approaching the change that had come over his features I have never seen before. His eyes were gleaming; his wide nostrils quivered; his thick lips shook—he looked ten years younger; and his very voice was more resonant and far clearer. It was evident that, despite his European training and his deep knowledge of British jurisprudence, he still believed in witchcraft and the powers of the supernatural world.

Was he living again, in mental retrospect, his childhood and youth at Leko—a town not many miles removed from Boola—where his plastic will had been resigned to every little detail of his tribal witchcraft? Who could say?

He had ceased to speak, but in a low voice, as though he were addressing some vision, he said, 'Ask me no more—the wires on the wrists had received the most dreadful conceivable form of insulation, a spiritual or a demoniacal insulation, that was known only to the Boola people. The removal of these talismans from the arms of the Ju-ju, coupled with the death of the high-priest of the image, meant the absolute end of King Prama-Prama's hopes.'

And then, in a whisper, he said, in his own tongue, 'Inyena—inyena!'

I knew enough of his language to guess at the meaning of the cry: 'The Unknown! The Unknown!'

Ord Brixton laid down his tumbler, and spoke in a commonplace voice, as he turned to me. 'There goes eight bells! Time we had a wash in readiness for lunch. Come along, old bird; for I have quite an appetite on me after all this pow-wow.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

LOCK-JAW IN THE WAR.

'TETANUS [lock-jaw] is one of the most dreadful diseases which have been produced in nature to torment mankind. No one who has seen a severe case can ever forget it.' Thus begins the introduction to a pamphlet on *The Prevention of Tetanus during the Great War by the Use of Antitetanic Serum*, written by Major-General Sir David Bruce, K.C.B., F.R.S., Chairman of the War Office Committee for the Study of Tetanus, 1914–1918. The results given in the pamphlet are confined to 1458 cases which occurred among the wounded in our home hospitals, out of roughly 1,242,000 men sent home for treatment. A diagram is given showing the number of cases of tetanus throughout the war. For September 1914 this figure was 9 per 1000 wounded men, with a fall to 7·3 in October. In the middle of the latter month systematic preventive inoculations of antitetanic serum were begun, with the result that the number of cases fell to 2·3 per 1000—a figure which was exceeded for only two months, and that merely to a slight extent, during the remainder of the war. Similar evidence is quoted as being given by Bazy in the *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Sciences*. He states that preventive injections to all wounded at the moment of entry resulted in 4·18 cases per 1000, whereas when injections were given only to cases thought to be suspicious the figure was 12·79 per 1000. This authority also cites the case of 200 wounded, 100 of whom were given injections, with the result that there was only one case of tetanus; while among the remainder, who received no

injections, 18 cases occurred. Sir David shows, too, that the longer the period of incubation the lower the death-rate, and that the use of the antitetanic serum greatly lengthens this period. The chances of recovery are also considerably increased by the fact that the administration of the serum renders the disease milder in character. Dealing with the number of deaths, Sir David puts the pre-serum death-rate at 85 per cent., while out of 879 cases treated in England who were known to be protected by the serum only 203 died, or 23 per cent.

THE 'SHOCK-SHIFTER' HUB.

Few more remarkable inventions have been brought out in recent years than the 'shock-shifter' hub for motor road vehicles. This device consists of an annular space between the axle and the hub nearly filled with steel balls. Naturally, if the space were packed with balls as tightly as it would hold, there would be no play between the axle and the wheel, and the device would become an ordinary ball bearing. A few balls being left out makes all the difference, as this allows a certain amount of give and take. As the wheel revolves the balls turn, and, aided by centrifugal force, they tend to arrange themselves symmetrically round the hub, with the axle in the middle. When the wheel passes over a lump in the road the jar is taken up in squeezing the balls out of place, the tendency being to force them round from the bottom towards the top, while the axle drops slightly below the centre. To enable this action to take place, the connection between the wheel and the hub allows of sufficient vertical movement. Owing

to the war the development of this invention was suspended for several years, and recently the patent was extended for a term of seven years by judicial decision. The case for the inventor was supported by Colonel Crompton, C.B., president of the Commercial Vehicle Users' Association, who stated that the device overcame the ruinous disadvantages of road shock, and that by its use solid rubber tires were made as serviceable as very good pneumatic tires. General Searle, managing director of the Daimler Company, speaking of his twelve months' test of it, said that the 'shock-shifter' device gave every satisfaction; while Major Sharp, of the Transport Service, testified to having run with every comfort thousands of miles, on rough roads at high speeds, in a heavy touring-car fitted with solid rubber tires and this invention. The inventor claims that the device reduces both friction and vibration, with a consequent saving in petrol and lubricating oil. It is suggested also that damage to the roads by heavy motor-vehicles will be much reduced by the advent of the 'shock-shifter' hub.

AN AERIAL 'LORRY.'

Those best able to judge are of opinion that until the transport of *goods* by air can be made to pay, commercial aircraft will enjoy only a very limited field of usefulness. At present the high freights for aerial transport limit the goods carried to express mail matter and light, valuable parcels for which the senders are prepared to pay high rates to ensure speedy and safe delivery. Commercial aircraft can only be placed on a sound basis by rendering aerial transport practical and profitable at a *moderate speed*, high velocities being achieved only at an enormously disproportionate cost. With the usual form of wing heavy loads cannot be carried at a moderate speed, owing to low lifting-power. At high speeds it is done at the cost of great resistance, which obviously entails high engine-power, and consequently high freights. After years of research-work, costing many thousands of pounds, a new type of aeroplane-wing, known as the 'Alula,' has been evolved, and tried out on an experimental machine. The most advantageous speed for the transport of goods, having regard to prevailing weather conditions, is, according to the inventors, from sixty to seventy-five miles an hour, and they contend that the wings now in common use would have to be of unwieldy dimensions to lift any load worth considering at seventy-five miles an hour. It is admitted, however, that what are known as 'high-lift' wings are capable of sustaining considerable loads at comparatively low speeds, but they have a high resistance, involving an amount of engine-power which is prohibitive for the profitable transport of goods. The crux of the matter is high lifting-power coupled with low resistance. Based on the experience gained

with the experimental machine, fitted with 'Alula' wings, designs have been prepared for what the inventors have named the 'Pelican' four-ton lorry. This machine is a monoplane having both the wings and the body constructed of mahogany planking on the principle adopted in modern flying-boat hulls. The wings do not fold, the intention being to do without sheds. Only two men are carried as crew—a pilot right forward and a mechanic in charge of the engine-room aft. The engines are twin 'Lions,' and the machine is designed to fly and climb even if one engine breaks down. Some idea of the size of the machine will be gathered from the following dimensions and weights: span, 146 feet; length, 84 feet; height, 22 feet; diameter of body or fuselage, 14 feet; weight when empty, 13,440 lb.; weight with four tons of cargo and fuel for a trip from London to Paris, 24,100 lb. The cruising-speed is seventy-two miles an hour, and the landing-speed fifty-five miles an hour. The engines together develop 920 horse-power, but only about half is used under normal cruising conditions. With both engines the climbing-speed is 410 feet a minute, and 40 feet with one engine. The cargo space measures 1700 cubic feet. Reckoning a working life of three years as a basis for depreciation, the annual cost of running is calculated at £21,400, which, for three hundred and twelve single journeys a year, with four tons of cargo, works out at 1s. 5d. a ton-mile. Cargo is carried in the front end of the fuselage, the nose of which is hinged, and swings open to give access to the 'hold,' in which a container may be placed.

POWER FROM VEGETABLE REFUSE.

Apart from the enormous tracts of land in Egypt irrigated by the operation of the Nile dams, water is pumped from the river to large numbers of small farms along the banks. Gas-engines are mainly used to work these pumps, the gas being generated in suction-producers from anthracite. During the war this fuel became so scarce and costly that the pumping-plants were in danger of having to shut down, with the consequent loss of valuable crops. Realising the danger, the Egyptian Government caused investigations to be made under the supervision of its former Inspector-General of Mines, Mr John Wells, with a view to utilising waste vegetable matter as an alternative source of gas for the pumping-engines. So successful were these efforts that by the end of 1918 no fewer than three hundred and sixty producers were making gas from vegetable refuse. The experience gained with these plants has resulted in the design of standard producers for the generation of power-gas in countries where coal and oil are costly and vegetable matter is abundant and cheap. These producers, which were recently described in *The Times Engineering Supplement*, are far more bulky than those used with anthra-

cite, while it has been found advantageous to make them rectangular in form instead of circular. In many respects they closely resemble the domestic slow-combustion stove, a large volume of fuel being carried above the flue, whence it gradually works down. It is important that air should not be allowed to enter with the fuel. The latter is, therefore, introduced through a separate receptacle, this being filled and closed at the top, while the outlet at the bottom rests on the flat top of the producer. When full, the receptacle is slid round until this outlet coincides with a hole in the top of the producer, previously closed by a plate attached to the bottom of the receptacle, which therefore moves round with it. The grate at the bottom of the producer is in the form of a ladder, this design being found the best for the large amount of ash to be dealt with, the grate being easily cleared through poke-holes when the plant is in operation. A water-seal prevents the entry of air at the bottom. Each producer is built up of standard cast-iron plates, measuring 2 feet by 1 foot, which are bolted together at their edges. Various sizes of producers can be made from these plates, the requisite number being despatched against orders with the necessary fittings. Before the gas can be used in an engine, it is passed upwards through water dripping from a series of baffle-plates in chambers known as scrubbers. Here most of the tarry matter is extracted, the remainder being removed by a rotary extractor and a dry scrubber. The cleaned gas is nearly as rich as that from anthracite, and it gives equally good results in the engines. In Egypt cotton-stalks are largely used as fuel, these being cut in a machine similar to a chaff-cutter into 2-inch lengths, whereby their bulk is reduced to less than a fifth of the original volume.

A VISIBLE SPARKING-PLUG.

Almost every motorist knows that although a sparking-plug may give a 'fat' spark when taken out of the cylinder, it by no means follows that equally good results will be obtained under compression in the combustion-chamber. Several devices have been invented for showing whether or not sparking is taking place in the cylinder. Among these is the 'Periscope View Plug,' with which one can actually see the sparks. The essence of the invention is a tubular, high-tension electrode passing right up through the plug and connected with the wire from the magneto. At the top and above this connection is a silica lens, through which the sparks can be observed between the 'earthed' electrode and the bottom of the tube. The lens is carried in a cap, which can be easily removed for cleaning. Not only can the sparking be seen, but also the flame from the explosion, the colour of which forms a good indication of the correctness of the mixture. The lens never comes in contact with

the flame, as the inert gas in the tube cushions the explosion. It therefore keeps clean in the dirtiest of engines. No inconsiderable advantage of the device is that the lens can be quickly removed for injecting petrol before starting.

A NEW LIQUID FUEL.

The getting of coal at the working-faces in the pits and the various handlings it receives on its way to the consumer produce large quantities of dust, which, although having the same thermal value as coal in lumps, is extremely difficult to use. Many attempts have been made to burn coal-dust by blowing it, in the form of jets, into boiler-furnaces along with compressed air. The jets burn with a roaring flame, producing considerable heat; and this system has been adopted to a limited extent. Coal-dust is also made up into briquettes, after being mixed with tar or some other 'binder.' In spite of these demands for it, however, coal-dust is more or less of a waste product, and can be bought at a comparatively low price. With a view to utilising it in a more effective manner, Mr G. C. Calvert has invented and patented a process of mixing it with fuel-oil in such a way that the mixture can be used in liquid-fuel burners without their being altered, and even in oil-engines of the Diesel type. 'Colloil,' as the new fuel is called, produces a minimum of ash, and the full heat value of the coal-dust constituent is utilised. In order to mix in the coal-dust and produce homogeneity in the fuel, the mixture is agitated in the storage tanks by compressed air, by gas, or by mechanical means. (In the case of plant which is at present being run on oil-fuel, the existing storage tanks would serve for this purpose quite well.) Coke-dust can be treated in a similar manner. Gas or tar oils, charcoal from peat, sawdust, rice or coffee husks, may form other components in addition to the coal-dust, or as substitutes therefor. The liquid carrier may be oil, alcohol, water, or a mixture thereof. If more convenient for transit, the substance may be prepared in concentrated paste form, consisting of five parts of coal to one of oil, and the balance of the oil (four parts) can be added by simple stirring at the place where the fuel is to be used. Vast quantities of coke-dust are available in the coke-oven districts at almost nominal prices. In India and South America powdered rice and coffee husks can be used, either with or without previous carbonisation to charcoal. In Norway and Sweden large supplies of sawdust and wood waste are available, which it has not hitherto paid to distil for wood-alcohol and other products, but which could now be treated remuneratively, as the powdered charcoal produced could be readily used in the manufacture of the new liquid fuel; the brown lignite found in South Africa and Germany can also be employed to form colloil. Water has been mentioned as an alternative carrier to oil. This

is used in a 50-per-cent. mixture, and is filtered away before burning. During a ten-hour test with four tons of colloil burnt under a large marine boiler, water was evaporated into steam at a cost of 10s. 6d. a ton, against 14s. 6d. for fuel-oil, and no difficulty was experienced in handling and burning the colloil by means of the pumps and burners designed for ordinary oil-fuel.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST WIRELESS-STATION.

When completed, what is to be known as the New York Radio Central Station, on Long Island, will be easily the largest wireless-station in existence. With the power-house as a centre, six aerials will be arranged in the form of a gigantic star, each extending more than a mile from the middle point. Each aerial will be supported by twelve steel towers 400 feet in height, the actual wires being suspended from 150-foot cross-bars. Five aerials are to be used for regular service, the sixth being held in reserve. By employing what are termed multiple-tuned aerials only one-sixth of the power required at other stations will be needed to give an equal range. Two 200-kilowatt alternators of an especially effective type are to be installed for transmitting from each aerial, and these can be used in combination for signalling, if desired, giving a total power of 2000 kilowatts (approximately 3000 horsepower). A new type of receiving-aerial to be adopted will allow of the uninterrupted receipt of messages under all weather conditions. According to Mr Edward J. Nally, president of the Radio Corporation of America, as recently quoted in the *Scientific American*, 'we break away from a precedent once again in locating our receiving-units only eighteen miles from the multiplex transmitting equipment, instead of following the former practice of establishing one transmitter and one receiver in one locality, and restricting the service of the circuit to one overseas destination.' In many cases only one-half of each aerial will be used for transmission to certain points, so that messages may be sent to ten stations in different parts of the world simultaneously, thus doubling the facilities originally planned. Wireless-telephony has already proved practicable over distances up to 2500 miles, and it is expected that the new station will enable a direct wireless-telephone service to be established with foreign countries. The range of the transmitting and receiving apparatus will embrace France, Germany, and other European countries, as well as Buenos Aires and various other stations in South America. Although the station is to be located on Long Island, it is to be controlled from the company's offices in the financial centre of New York, where messages will be received and despatched direct by a series of operators' keys and relays which will control the transmitting and receiving apparatus already described.

A NOVEL RESEARCH-STATION.

Probably the evil most dreaded by a stock-raiser is an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease among the animals under his care. An epidemic of this highly contagious and infectious febrile disorder recently occurred in Norfolk, in which the disease was carried over a distance of fifty miles, and spread dismay throughout a wide area of rich stock-raising country, nearly ten thousand head of cattle, sheep, and pigs having to be sacrificed. The origin of the outbreak was a mystery, but some of the officials of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries were suspicious that the contagion came from America, the channel of communication being the hay and straw used in the packing of goods imported from that country. A large proportion of this packing-material ultimately reaches British farmers as manure, and is regarded with grave suspicion as a probable germ-carrier; but in view of the trading complications that would ensue, the Government is not prepared to prohibit its entry into this country, until the necessity for such a step is clearly demonstrated. With a view to ascertaining whether the necessity has arisen, and, if possible, to solve other problems in connection with this disease, the Ministry of Agriculture has entered upon a campaign of exhaustive research, and because of the highly contagious character of the complaint, has arranged for all the work of investigation being carried on at sea. The necessary vessels have been supplied by the Admiralty, and when they are equipped with the laboratories needed, and with suitable accommodation for the British and Continental scientific experts chosen to form the investigating party, the ships will proceed to some point the location of which will, so far as is possible, be kept secret, and there the investigators will begin their work. It is sincerely to be hoped that their researches will throw light upon a problem which has almost completely baffled veterinary science for more than a generation, and has cost the country enormous sums of money paid as compensation for animals slaughtered to prevent the spread of the disease.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, Chambers's Journal, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

HOW THE PRINCESS HORATIA CAME TO HER KINGDOM.

By LETTICE MILNE RAE.

PART I.

I.

'AS you say, count, I am a woman now,' observed the Princess Horatia, resting her elbows upon the table and her determined little chin upon her hands, while she surveyed her companion with bright eyes.

Count Wenceslaus darted a keen glance across the table at the lovely face opposite him, but made no reply. There was more to follow this remark, he felt sure.

It was exactly eighteen years ago this very day that he had first made the acquaintance of the Princess Horatia. Her face then had been very round and red, and not at all lovely to his eyes—though her attendants had loyally assured him that she was the most beautiful baby ever seen. He had been thinking of that occasion a good deal to-day; so much had happened since. Then he had been Lord High Chancellor of the kingdom of Promethea. Now he was an exile in a strange, though hospitable, land, and guardian of the Princess Horatia, whom he had carried to safety when the lawless soldiery of Duke Conrad of Rosencrantz had taken possession of the palace at Ghetalia on behalf of their master.

It cannot be denied that Duke Conrad's claim was (or, rather, had been) legal and righteous. Twelve months earlier he had been the acknowledged heir and successor of King Alexis, who, at the age of sixty-six, was a widower and childless—an easy-going, peaceable man, and a great lover of the chase. The fascinations of the Countess Horatia Fiorenzoli, however, during a brief visit of King Alexis to her brother's shooting-lodge, had made everything 'gang agley.' Within three months the Countess Horatia was Queen of Promethea. But her reign was of short duration. Scarcely a twelve-month later the king was again a widower, though no longer childless. The Princess Horatia had made her appearance.

Duke Conrad of Rosencrantz had from the first refused to recognise his cousin's marriage with the Fiorenzoli. The countess had never made any pretension to royal blood. And as this fact did not weigh at all with King Alexis,

he could never understand why it should affect others. A certain proportion of his subjects, however, agreed with Duke Conrad, and supported his claim, when, about eighteen months later, King Alexis followed his bride, leaving his infant daughter to be fended for as best might.

Duke Conrad's declaration that he would maintain his right to the throne by force of arms made a strong appeal to the imaginations of the turbulent Prometheans. A warrior king was much more to their minds than a helpless baby girl, who would become the pivot of warring factions and would-be regents; and accordingly they transferred their allegiance.

But Count Wenceslaus remained true to the daughter of Alexis, whom he regarded as the rightful queen, and had borne her in his own arms from the palace by a private doorway when the soldiery, aided by the mob, had burst into the royal apartments.

As Promethea was no longer 'healthy' for the young princess, or for the man who had so gallantly defended her rights, Count Wenceslaus and his lady had brought the child to England—the paradise of exiles and dethroned monarchs.

II.

To-day being the Princess Horatia's eighteenth birthday, the count had taken it upon himself to remind her that she was no longer an infant in the eyes of the law, and that it was time she should think of selecting a husband—for even a throneless queen must have a consort.

On this matter the Princess Horatia had views of her own. They began to take clearer shape when Count Wenceslaus suggested the second son of the Emperor Hildebrand as a suitable suitor, and assumed definite opposition when he presently announced that it had been arranged that Prince Ajax should pay her a visit in strict incognito to sue for her hand. She was a woman now, as she informed the count, and no longer the Queen of Promethea; and as England had become the land of her adoption, she intended to follow English customs, and not be given away as if she were the daughter of a Turk.

Count Wenceslaus bowed meekly beneath

this forcible expression of her intention, but begged her to keep an open mind until she had at least seen Prince Ajax, who was reputed entirely worthy of his renowned namesake, and professed himself full of ardour to make the acquaintance of the most gracious and highly desirable Princess Horatia.

But the highly desirable Princess Horatia was by no means so anxious to pursue acquaintance with Prince Ajax as he, in all sincerity, appeared to be with her after passing a week in her society.

In the first place, he was fat and pink—and her taste inclined towards men who were lean and bronzed. He was swollen with martial ardour and the pomp of war, while she had a preference for sportsmen, and thought cricket more admirable than sword-play. Moreover, she soon discerned that his dearest ambition was not so much the hand and the heart of the Princess Horatia, as the kingdom of Promethea, which, he suggested not too subtly, should be regained by force of arms.

Now, the Princess Horatia was not devoid of ambition herself, and in the secret recesses of her heart she also cherished a hope—a faint, romantic hope—that one day she might be restored to the throne of her fathers. But that this wish should be gratified by the rattling of Prince Ajax's sabre was utterly repellent to her. Rather would she be a throneless queen all her days than accept her crown as his spoil of war.

When, therefore, he pressed his suit and would not be gainsaid, she begged for delay. The prince was royally magnanimous. He would wait, he declared, and repeat his offer a year later, when, in all probability, he might present himself as the conqueror of Promethea. The emperor and his myrmidons were already at work burrowing subterraneously, and fanning the combustible elements that were smouldering in turbulent Promethea, until at the propitious moment a well-set fuse would ignite the inflammable material carefully collected by the imperial forethought, and Prince Ajax would then lead forth his army in the name of the rightful Queen Horatia, and fighting his way victoriously to the capital, would drive out the usurping king and take possession.

She listened in silence to his boast, then waved him farewell with a smile upon her lips and a guileful design in her heart.

This design she presently made known to Count Wenceslaus. It was nothing short of a project to visit Promethea in the guise of an English tourist, to make acquaintance with her kingdom and discover for herself, if possible, what her chances might be against the reigning monarch without recourse to arms or to Prince Ajax.

King Conrad, who had seized the crown from her infant brow, had been gathered to his fathers more than a year ago, and his son reigned in his stead. Of him Princess Horatia was able to

learn but little. According to Count Wenceslaus he was all that was detestable, as his father had been before him; and certainly the portrait the count had always drawn of the late king presented the son in no favourable light to the imagination of the princess.

The suggestion that she should even set foot in his ill-gotten kingdom filled the faithful guardian with dismay. It had become a hot-bed of anarchy and lawlessness under the wrongful sovereignty of the Rosencrantz, he asserted. But as his hatred of the usurpers of the throne of Promethea was the strongest and most unrelenting trait in the good man's character, his objections were soon successfully combated by his wilful young ward, and she proceeded to unfold her plans. They were simplicity itself: merely that, while the count and his lady were enjoying their usual course of baths at Buxton, she, the princess, accompanied by 'Pinkie,' as she familiarly dubbed her former governess, Miss Pinkerton, whose services she still retained as *dame de compagnie*, should take the trans-Europe express straight to Ghetalia, the Promethean capital, and from there make the usual tour of the beautiful little kingdom as directed by the famous 'Cook.'

The mere mention of this world-renowned personage, who smoothed the path of travellers with courtier-like discretion, had the effect of restoring the count's disturbed confidence, and he set about making the necessary arrangements for the journey of the princess to her native land.

III.

Now, if the Princess Horatia had adhered to her declaration that she would follow the route approved by Cook, her visit to Promethea might have had a very different ending. But after spending a fortnight in Ghetalia visiting churches and picture-galleries, and gazing with fascinated eyes upon the palace looking down upon the capital from its royal height, she declared that she could see the like in any other country in Europe, that she had come to probe the heart of Promethea, and not do sight-seeing in a diminutive quasi-Paris or Brussels. Even Count Wenceslaus's carefully arranged tour to places of interest or beauty at various points of the little kingdom did not satisfy her. She might as well visit Buxton or Brighton, Trouville or Aix; such places were not typical of the real Promethea. She must strike off the beaten track, she proclaimed, and come in touch with the true spirit of the country. To do this she intended to make an expedition to Hesione, the remote and inaccessible mountain fortress that had, across the centuries, been the cradle of her race, and the stronghold of the ancient kingdom of Promethea.

Miss Pinkerton's white cheeks grew whiter at this proposal. She had no liking for heroic adventures; the Brightons and the Buxtons of

Promethea were much more to her mind than mountain fortresses, whatever their historic association or romantic interest. But the will of the Princess Horatia was not easy to thwart, and poor Miss Pinkerton had to taste the bitterness of those that 'tread another's stairs,' and make ready for the distasteful expedition.

To arrive at dead of night at a dilapidated and cut-throat-looking inn on the crest of a precipitous height, that appeared all the more sinister under the ghostly light of the moon, was not at all to her fastidious mind; while to pass the hours that remained till daylight in a rude box-bed, half-smothered between two ill-smelling *duvets*, and closed in by rough homespun curtains coloured with a crude native dye of pungent odour, was still less so. Not even the unaffected delight of the princess at having at last escaped from the commonplace amenities of civilised life could cheer 'Pinkie's' drooping spirits or calm her apprehensions.

It was no doubt her nervous anxiety for the welfare of her charge, combined with her own exceeding dislike of her comfortless surroundings, that made her so far depart from her usually unimpeachably decorous behaviour next morning.

IV.

They had breakfasted—if a bowl of goat's milk and a hunk of dark-looking, sour-tasting home-made bread with sourer cheese could be honoured by the name given to that good English repast dear to Miss Pinkerton's heart—in their sleeping-apartment, and the princess was bent on seeing something of the primitive little hill-town before they pursued their mad career up to Hesione. The conscientious duenna duly followed in the footsteps of her charge, though her apprehensions were by no means allayed by the uncouth and brigand-like appearance of the inhabitants, who, it seemed to her, eyed them with hostile intent.

So uneasy was she in her mind that the sight of a man's figure a little distance off, clad in the approved and unmistakable dress of an Englishman travelling abroad, and wearing a field-glass case slung upon his shoulder, made her so far forget her English manners and traditions as to give him chase.

He had taken up his position on a ledge of rock that formed a small, natural overhanging terrace on the hillside, and was intent upon surveying through his glasses the splendid panoramic view of the valley.

'Excuse me, sir,' panted Miss Pinkerton on reaching his side, 'but it's such a relief to see an Englishman in this outlandish place that I simply must speak to you.'

He lowered his glasses, turned a pair of amused brown eyes upon her, and raised his hat.

'I want to ask you,' she continued breathlessly, 'if you think this is a safe place for two English ladies to be alone.'

'Not particularly comfortable, I'm afraid,' was the non-committal reply. 'Making a long stay!'

'Oh no, not here; but I'm sure these people up here are not to be trusted. They may be murderers or robbers—one hears such dreadful tales of things happening'—

'The question is, are they true?' he remarked, and laughed in the nonchalant fashion of the English. His laughter somewhat restored Miss Pinkerton's failing courage.

'How like an Englishman!' she exclaimed, with a faint but relieved smile. 'Leaning to justice, but always refusing to look facts in the face!'

'But what facts do I overlook?' he asked, a gleam of amusement still lighting his dark eyes and playing over his pleasant, sun-tanned face.

But Miss Pinkerton's attention was now turned upon the approaching figure of the Princess Horatia.

'Do please tell the—um—my companion what you think,' she urged in a confidential undertone. 'She inclines to be imprudent and venturesome.'

His gay, smiling eyes fell now upon the equally gay and smiling face of that young lady as she joined her duenna, who at once informed her, 'This gentleman is not at all sure that we are wise in coming here.'

But no sooner had she made the remark than she began to be very doubtful as to the wisdom of having thus picked up acquaintance with an entire stranger—Englishman though he might be, and pleasing. The princess was of royal blood. Miss Pinkerton was deeply sensible of the gulf which must lie between even the ex-Queen of Promethea and an ordinary English gentleman totally ignorant of the barrier which divided him from one who must appear to his eye to be an ordinary English girl. She would have tried there and then to retrieve her mistake had he not taken up the conversation.

'That depends on what you're out for,' said he in reply to Miss Pinkerton's admonition. 'If it's English comfort or the best hotels of Promethea, then I think you have been very unwise in your choice. But'—

'If we want the very opposite,' put in the princess.

'Then you've struck it, I should say.'

'No, not quite. I'm going to Hesione,' she laughed, with a triumphant glance at Miss Pinkerton, whose spirits drooped lower than ever.

'Hesione!' repeated the stranger, with the faintest lift of his well-marked eyebrows. He seemed about to say more, but refrained.

'You think it a very dangerous place for two ladies?' questioned Miss Pinkerton with a despairing appeal for affirmation.

'It's not a place frequented by ladies, I believe,' he ventured cautiously. 'In fact, it's not much frequented by any one.'

'So I know,' chirruped the princess delightedly. 'That's exactly why I'm going there. It's the heart of Promethea!'

The stranger looked at her keenly as he fingered the strap of his field-glass case. 'The fact is,' he said presently, 'I'm bound for there myself. If there's anything I can do'—He glanced suggestively at Miss Pinkerton, who now deeply regretted the indiscretion of ever having addressed him, or permitted him to address the princess, who, metaphorically, was throwing herself upon his neck in the exuberance of her spirits.

'Are you really?' she exclaimed. 'How are you going?'

'Mules.'

'How glorious!' laughed the princess, clasping her hands in an ecstasy of glee. 'I don't want to be rude, Pinkie dear,' she added, seeing the deepening horror and disapproval on her companion's face, 'but a donkey's the very thing for you.'

'Sure-footed,' put in the stranger encouragingly, 'and the best mode of reaching Hesione. It's some road!'

There was a mischievous sparkle in his dark eyes that attracted the Princess Horatia. He was evidently a sportsman. 'When do you start?' she asked him.

'My mule is ordered for noon, but when it may appear is a different matter. One hour is as good as another, I find, in these parts.'

'Then we shall order ours for noon too,' decided the princess.

'Good! I'll fix it up for you, if you like,' offered the stranger obligingly. 'I have a slight acquaintance with the Promethean dialect.'

'Do!' responded the princess with enthusiasm, although she was not altogether ignorant of the Promethean dialect herself. Count Wenceslaus, being a patriot, had seen to it that the rightful queen should know something of her subjects' tongue, but she did not wish to disclose the fact to this amiable young Englishman.

V.

Miss Pinkerton's spirits dropped to zero when she saw the turn of events to which her unfortunate indiscretion had led—the Princess Horatia actually travelling to Hesione in company with a strange young man, to whom she was now presenting her card, which bore the name she had adopted for her travels.

'*Miss L'Estrange*,' read he, glancing from the card to the bearer of the pseudonym with undisguised interest. 'Of French origin? Came over with the Conqueror, I suppose?'

'No; we were later than that,' replied the princess, with a smile.

'I'm sorry I haven't a card with me,' he returned. 'But mine is quite a commonplace name. It's John King.'

Miss Pinkerton groaned in spirit. It was a commonplace name—plebeian, indeed! What would Count Wenceslaus say to such an acquaintance for his august ward?

The Princess Horatia was untroubled by any such fears. John King appeared to be all that was pleasing to her in a man, even as Prince Ajax was all that was odious.

The mere thought of Prince Ajax, swollen with imperial arrogance and the lust of war, sharply recalled to her mind the real reason why she was here in Promethea—namely, to outwit the machinations of the emperor and his myrmidons, as well as to test the loyalty of the Prometheans to the usurping king. But in neither of these quests had she been able to accomplish much or anything. Of the king she had learned little. He was a young man, and lately come to the throne. He did not trouble his subjects, and his subjects apparently did not trouble him. He performed the duties required of him, and, for the rest, enjoyed life as he chose. He had been absent from the capital during the Princess Horatia's visit to Ghetalia, on a yachting cruise on the Ægean Sea. The date of his return was unknown to any she had questioned on the matter; nor had her probings as to the depth of their loyalty met with more than a smile or a gesture which might have betokened entire satisfaction or sheer apathy—the Princess Horatia was at a loss to divine which.

One thing she did perceive, and that was, be their feelings towards their ruler lukewarm or otherwise, their awe of the emperor was unmistakable. But here, again, she was somewhat uncertain whether it was the awe of true reverence, or that which is produced by the proximity of a bully. Sometimes she felt as if it were a measure of both—that the country was divided into factions, some in favour of the bully, others against him, but ready to lie down beneath his bullying if delivered with impressively imperial pomp. The Prometheans, like the Romans of old, had an innate respect for brawn and muscle, combined with a passion for pageantry. Now, the Emperor Hildebrand was nothing if not spectacular.

Was the present King of Promethea also a royal mountebank? the princess wondered. As she had never set eyes upon him either in the flesh or even in pictured form, she had had no means of judging. According to an ancient law of Promethea, it was forbidden to portray the form or features of the sovereign in any manner whatsoever. The figure of Prometheus with his fire-brand—from whom the Prometheans claimed descent—took the place of the king's effigy on all the stamps and the coinage of the kingdom, as well as figuring on articles of popular use and fancy where the royal portrait might have been expected.

(Continued on page 787.)

THE MARK OF JERUSALEM.

By DAVID MACRITCHIE.

ONE doesn't generally think of the author of *Vanity Fair* in connection with descriptions of life and scenery in the Levant, although it is a matter of common knowledge that Mr Michael Angelo Titmarsh published, in 1846, his *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo*, undertaken in the late summer of 1844. These *Notes*, however, have acquired a fresh interest, owing to recent developments in European politics, undreamt of by Thackeray. For example, he tells his readers of an American fellow-traveller who had been appointed U.S. Consul-General for Syria. This worthy was a good deal of a crank, who expected the Millennium to begin soon after his arrival in the Holy Land, and he had brought with him a dove as a symbol of that great event. Without loss of time, on arriving at Jerusalem, this unique consul 'sent and demanded an interview with the Pasha; explained to him his interpretation of the Apocalypse, in which he has discovered that the Five Powers and America are about to intervene in Syrian affairs, and the infallible return of the Jews to Palestine.' The news, observes Thackeray, 'must have astonished the Lieutenant of the Sublime Porte.' The consul was some seventy or eighty years out in his reckoning, but his anticipations were not so foolish as Thackeray assumed them to be—so far as regards the intervention of American and European Powers in Syrian affairs, and the return of Jews to Palestine. But he showed himself the poorest kind of a prophet when he asserted that the Millennium was at hand in 1844.

This, however, has little to do with the Mark of Jerusalem, an emblem which Mr Titmarsh thus refers to: 'Some worthies there are who drive a good trade by tattooing pilgrims with the five crosses, the arms of Jerusalem, under which the name of the city is punctured in Hebrew, with the auspicious year of the *Hadjj's* visit. Several of our fellow-travellers submitted to this queer operation, and will carry to their grave this relic of their journey. Some of them had engaged a servant, a man, at Beyrout, who had served as a lad on board an English ship in the Mediterranean. Above his tattooage of the five crosses, the fellow had a picture of two hearts united, and the pathetic motto, "Betsy, my dear." He had parted with Betsy, my dear, five years before at Malta. He had known a little English there, but had forgotten it. Betsy, my dear, was forgotten too. Only her name remained engraved with a vain simulacrum of constancy on the faithless rogue's skin, on which was now printed another token of equally effectual devotion. The beads [which were then offered for sale as relics] and the tattooing seem essential

ceremonies attendant on the Christian pilgrim's visit; for many hundreds of years, doubtless, the palmers have carried off with them these simple reminiscences of the sacred city. That symbol has been engraved upon the arms of how many princes, knights, and crusaders!' The soundness of this deduction is manifest, yet it does not seem to have occurred to other popular writers of the nineteenth century. Scott, for example, makes no reference to this practice, so far as I can remember.

Two hundred and thirty years before Thackeray, another British pilgrim had recorded the same custom. This was the Scottish traveller Lithgow, a native of Lanark, who visited Jerusalem in 1612, in the company of ten other Franks. 'The last day of our staying there,' he writes, 'we went all of us Friars and Pilgrimes in againe to the Holy Grave, where we remained all night. Early on the morrow there came a fellow to us, one Elias Areacheros, a Christian inhabitant at Bethleem, and purveyor for the Friars, who did engrave on our severall Armes upon Christ's Sepulcher the name of Jesus, and the Holy Crosse; being our owne option, and desire: and here is the Modell thereof.' Lithgow's 'Modell' shows a rectangular cross, with limbs of equal length, except that the lowest is slightly prolonged into the H of the letters IHS placed beneath. Below these letters is the word IERUSALEM, in Roman characters, not in Hebrew, as in Thackeray's time. The ends of the three upper limbs terminate in a crutch, something like that of the *cross potent* or of the *cross moline*. Within the four angles of the cross are four little crosses, akin to the Maltese—these four, together with the large cross, constituting Thackeray's 'five crosses, the arms of Jerusalem.' Lithgow also prints 'The Armes of Jerusalem' beneath his 'Modell.' The correct heraldic designation seems to have been 'The Arms of the Holy Sepulchre.'

Lithgow was not content with the conventional emblem alone. 'But I decyphered,' he adds, 'and subjoynd below mine, the four incorporate Crowns of King James, with this Inscription, in the lower circle of the Crowne, *Vivat Jacobus Rex*: returning to the fellow two Piasters for his reward.' Lithgow carefully portrays 'King James his foure Crownes' underneath his sketch or 'Modell' of the Jerusalem arms. It is something of a coincidence that in each of these recorded instances of 1612 and 1844 a secular addition to the emblem appears. In the earlier case the motive was loyal and patriotic; but 'Betsy, my dear,' and the two united hearts merely represented the ashes of a flame long extinguished.

Little did Lithgow know, however, when he indulged in this loyal outburst at Jerusalem, that he was laying up serious trouble for himself in the near future. This he painfully realised when, on his homeward journey, he was arrested at Malaga on suspicion of being a spy, and was cast into the dungeons of the Inquisition, there to undergo the most fiendish tortures. The discovery of the loyal emblems tattooed on his arm only furnished his persecutors with a fresh form of cruelty. For Lithgow tells us that 'the Encarnador [or Tormentor] informing the Governor that I had the marke of Jerusalem on my right arme, joyned with the name and Crowne of King James, and done upon the Holy Grave, the Corregidor came out of his adjoining stance and gave direction to teare asunder the name and Crowne (as hee sayd) of that Hereticke King and arch-enemy to the Holy Catholicke Church.' By the process of 'cutting the Crowne, sinews, and flesh to the bare bones,' by means of tightened cords, the servants of the Inquisition apparently succeeded in obliterating the design—although their victim would carry to his grave the traces of their cruelty.

Had Lithgow not made this superfluous addition to 'the mark of Jerusalem,' it is clear that that emblem would have constituted an appeal that the Inquisitors could not disregard, since it asserted that the pilgrim had made the *hadj* to

the Holy Sepulchre. Yet even here some reservation must be made. There were many fraudulent pilgrims wandering about Europe during the Middle Ages and in later times, who could not be accepted at their own valuation. There were, for example, the *coquillards*, who professed to have visited the shrines of St James and St Michael, in testimony whereof they wore in their hats the scallop-shell, or *coquille de Saint Jacques*. But this hardly amounted to proof of their having made the pilgrimage. It would be so easy to assume the scallop-shell, or to have the five crosses tattooed on one's arm, without ever visiting the shrines at Compostella or Jerusalem. Such a practice is not unknown in Switzerland to-day, where tourists sometimes have their alpenstocks branded with the names of summits that they *meant* to ascend; only, they found it so much more restful to remain at the base.

Legitimate or fraudulent, this ancient symbol must have been tattooed upon the arms of innumerable pilgrims, not only princes, knights, and crusaders, as Thackeray suggests, but men of lesser note. Many other references must exist besides the two I am able to quote. The practice of tattooing was at one time widespread in Europe, and it seems extremely probable that 'the mark of Jerusalem' was first impressed by a people to whom that practice was familiar.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

V.—CAPE AND WEST AFRICA, 1882-85.

By C. E. GIFFORD, C.B., R.N.

I.

AS recorded in earlier instalments of these Recollections, I joined the Royal Navy as assistant-clerk in March 1861, and served my first five years in the *Marlborough* and the *Victoria*, three-deckers, flagships of the Commanders-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, to whose offices I was attached.

After a commission in the Commander-in-Chief's office at Devonport, I went to Halifax, in the office of the Commander-in-Chief on the North American and West Indian station.

War between Germany and France brought us home for service in the Channel Fleet.

After three years' service in China and Japan, and further commissions at Devonport and in the Channel Fleet, I was invited by Admiral Sir Nowell Salmon, V.C., K.C.B., to accompany him as secretary to the Cape of Good Hope. We sailed from Devonport in February 1882, in H.M.S. *Thalia*, with a new crew for the *Boadicea*, to be recommissioned as the Cape flagship.

The *Thalia* was not calculated to accommodate the crew of a ship of the *Boadicea* class for so

long a sea trip, and there were doubts expressed as to whether our provisions would hold out.

While steaming slowly across the 'doldrums'—the calm belt on each side of the equator—we fell in with the clipper *Cutty Sark*, flying a signal of distress. We closed her, and her captain came on board us. She was bound from San Francisco to New York, and had been so long becalmed on the line that the crew were reduced almost to the lowest extremity for food. The admiral invited the captain to breakfast, whilst a supply of beef, biscuit, &c. was being put into his boat; but he could not face our luxuries of bacon and sausages, having tasted nothing but coffee and biscuit for a long time. He left us confident that he had now enough food to take the ship to the nearest port—Pernambuco. The way in which the half-famished crew, especially the apprentices on the mizzen, handled the sails was the admiration of our crew. A more beautiful model could scarcely be seen.

We crossed the line, with the usual ceremonies, on the 10th March, and reached Simon's Bay on the 10th April, having, since All-Fools' Day, been very doubtful whether either our coal or our food would last. The 'sweet little cherub,'

however, stood our friend; the south-easter, which blows constantly in these seas in the early months of the year—the height of summer, that is, for we are in the southern hemisphere—died away, and we slipped round Cape Point without having been obliged to burn mess tables and stools as fuel, or to grill the admiral's dove for breakfast, both possible contingencies.

The Cape and West Coast of Africa station at this time extended from the river Gambia on the west, round the Cape of Good Hope to Delagoa Bay on the east, some five thousand miles of coast-line. The headquarters in Simon's Bay, with its old Dutch-built admiralty house and pleasant cottage on the beach for the secretary, were very attractive. Fortunately residence there for a considerable part of the year was the rule of the station, so that we had the happiness of home-life combined with the benefits of foreign service.

Each year we left the Cape immediately after Christmas, called at St Helena and Ascension, crossed thence to the Gambia settlement, worked our way round the coast, visiting Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Gold Coast, Lagos, the Oil Rivers, Fernando Po, the Congo, and Portuguese Angola, returning to Simon's Bay in April. Then, in the winter or spring months, we visited the eastern ports of Cape Colony—Mossel Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban in Natal, and occasionally Delagoa Bay.

II.

The period 1881 to 1885 was one of great interest and activity in Africa. The game of land-grab was being vigorously played by the European nations, the doctrine of Hinterland was being preached, and new atlases were constantly needed to keep pace with the changes.

The vast Congo Free State had already been formed by the king of the Belgians as a memorial to his son and as a philanthropic measure (*œuvre civilisatrice*). Lieutenant de Brazza, of the French Navy, was busily engaged in annexing, to the north of the Congo, the territory now known as the French Congo; the French were also planting their flag in Dahomey. Germany annexed Togoland, Cameroons, and the territory on the Atlantic seaboard lying between Portuguese Angola and the Cape, which was named German South-West Africa. Britain was extending her borders in the Niger district, which developed into North and South Nigeria; and Cecil Rhodes, then absorbed in making Bechuanaland a British Protectorate, doubtless had his eyes on the magnificent vacant lot farther north which now forms Rhodesia, though we did not suspect him of it.

The rules of grab were pretty much the same when played with land as with cards: he who got his hand in first was the winner.

Mr Hewett, British Consul at Fernando Po, assisted by the officers of the West Coast naval

squadron, was active in making treaties with the native chiefs in the Oil Rivers, just at the time that Germany annexed Cameroons. In connection with the latter I have a story to tell, which may be taken as a sequel to the account of this annexation given by Major-General Sir Ivor Maxse in his interesting life of Colonel Seymour Vandeleur. I was walking with Sir Nowell Salmon one Sunday afternoon in Cameroons, when we met the king of Bell Town, a well-dressed negro. He had evidently seen the admiral's flag flying in the *Alecto*, and was on the look-out. Coming up to us, he said in fluent English, 'Admiral, I want to sell my country to the white man. I write one letter to Lord Clarendon, one letter to Lord Granville, and I get no answer. So I write to Queen Victoria and say I want to sell my country. Suppose I not get answer very soon, I ask the Germans; perhaps they like to buy it.'

Well, shortly after this, and apparently before the king had received an answer to his letter to Queen Victoria, Dr Nachtigall, the German explorer, who had been given by his Government considerable powers of annexation, arrived at Cameroons in the gunboat *Moewe*; the king of Bell Town went on board, a bargain was struck on the spot, and the purchase-money paid. The German flag was hoisted, and Bell retired into the bush with the proceeds of the deal.

Kings were at this date as plentiful as huckleberries on the West Coast of Africa; they were in reality the chief traders. On Cameroons River, and in near proximity to each other, were five towns—Joss, Bell, Acqua, and Dido on the left bank, Hickory on the right, each owing allegiance to its own 'king.' The Germans had negotiated for the purchase of the district with Bell only, and refused to recognise any other claimants, saying they must get their fair share from Bell. As they could not succeed in this, Joss and Hickory burned Bell Town for selling them, whilst Dido gave Acqua four dozen for supposed connivance with Bell. Dido murdered a British subject, but escaped all punishment.

Later a German admiral, who had been sent out to the colony, was held prisoner for four days by natives; whilst a German consul died of fever—a somewhat disastrous opening to the German occupation of the great and rich province of Cameroons. This occupation, it will be remembered, ended in the early part of the recent war, Cameroons being captured by Franco-British forces.

Ambas Bay lies opposite Fernando Po, in the angle formed by the great southward bend which the coast here makes. A glance at a map will show that it is a veritable 'corner of the earth,' and that here rises almost from the bay to a height of nearly fourteen thousand feet the Grand Cameroons Mountain. I never hear in our Church's morning service the verse of the Venite, 'In His hands are all the corners of the

earth, and the strength of the hills is His also,' without being taken back in my mind to that scorching Sunday morning when the crew of the *Boadicea*, lying in Ambas Bay, almost under the shadow of the mountain, sang this verse at their morning service. This magnificent mountain, and a strip of territory extending as far as Lake Chad, have, under the peace arrangements, been assigned to Great Britain.

I had an amusing experience during a walk with the admiral in Cameroons. A woman carrying a baby held it out to me, and as a joke I offered her a fourpenny-bit for it. To my astonishment, she promptly accepted the coin and walked away, leaving me with the baby in my arms, to bear as best I could the loud laugh at my expense from a crowd of men and women. No doubt I might have stuck to my bargain had I so wished, but being the proud father of two white babies, I had no real desire for a black one, and eventually I found a local Miriam who, for another small coin, agreed to take the baby back to its mother.

III.

After our return to the Cape, a German cruiser anchored in Simon's Bay. In the course of conversation with Admiral Salmon, her captain, who was paying his official visit on arrival, mentioned that he had annexed all the coast of Damaraland and Namaqualand lying between Cape Frio and the Orange River—that is to say, some seven hundred miles of territory separating Portuguese Angola from Cape Colony. 'What about Plum Pudding Island, Roast Beef, Ichaboe, and the other guano islands, for which my friend Captain Spence is paying rent to the Cape Government?' said the admiral. 'Oh, I suppose all islands within three miles of the coast go with it,' replied the captain. 'But the diplomatists can easily settle that.' I observe even in pre-war atlases the letters (Br.) against the names of these rocks—for they are little more—showing that they remained ours.

It is to be regretted that this enormous territory—some 330,000 square miles—thus acquired by Germany, but now attached to the Union of South Africa, should consist largely of barren desert. The lack of water on this part of the coast is no doubt mainly due to the absence of trees, and, to complete the vicious circle, one might add that the absence of trees is due to the lack of water. An Admiralty chart of this coast has a notation: 'First tree visible since passing the Orange River.'

I remember seeing in a German illustrated newspaper a picture of Angra Pequena in their newly acquired province, showing a navigable river with ships alongside wharves. Unfortunately the sketch was purely imaginary, and the settlement consisted in reality of two or three buildings. One of them was a kind of tower, in which at the time of our visit a prisoner was waiting till a judge should come from the

Cape to try his case. While the *Boadicea* was at Angra Pequena, previous to its occupation by Germany, we asked the only English resident what we could do for him. 'Let every boat which lands from the *Boadicea* bring me a beaker or two of drinking-water, and I shall be very grateful,' said he.

Farther north, at Elephant Bay, there is practically no rain from year's end to year's end. It was one of the ports of call of our West Coast squadron, and, for want of a more lively amusement, the crews were accustomed to bivouac for a day or two on a high hill near the coast. In the adjoining bay (where, I was told, were both trees and water!) a Portuguese settler had built a lime-kiln. The bluejackets, having carried up the hill a load of lime, and water from a 'fountain' near the beach, would fill up their time by marking out, in great whitewashed stones, the name of their ship. When we were some miles out at sea we could distinctly read the name *Avon*. The ship had left the station several years before, but no rain had come to obliterate the work of her crew, and on visiting the hill we found the whitewash on the letters still quite fresh, the letter 'O' being twenty yards wide.

The so-called 'fountain' was really a small spring forming a water-hole, and was visited every night by droves of wild zebra, which we could hear galloping across the plain.

Cape Colony had at this time established Government nurseries for trees of all sorts, which they supplied free of charge to any one who would plant them. Reafforestation was becoming very necessary, since, owing to the lack of coal, all the trees had been cut down for firewood. I remember driving across an arid plain near Port Elizabeth, where our host, Mr Campbell, told us that as a boy he had shot duck in the marshes; these had entirely dried up owing to the destruction of the trees.

On our return to Simon's Bay from one of our West Coast cruises, we, as we supposed harmlessly, brought with us a sprouting coco-nut and a bag of pea-nuts—and narrowly escaped a very heavy fine. It seems that travellers from Australia had brought in a spray of the Port Jackson Willow—a mimosa—which had blight on it. The blight spread, and eventually destroyed all the orange-trees in the Eastern Province. The Cape Parliament accordingly passed a law inflicting severe penalties on any one importing plants of any description. We burned our palm, already moribund, and ate our pea-nuts without loss of time!

IV.

The fighting in Zululand, which ended in the capture of Cetewayo and his confinement at De Renske's farm near Cape Town, was over before our arrival. Our only dealing with that troublesome chief was the provision of a passage for him and his many wives in a man-of-war from

Simon's Bay to Zululand. He had recently returned from England, where terms had been arranged with him, under which a part of his former dominions was to be restored to him.

He arrived at Simon's Bay in a very bad temper, accompanied by his English interpreter, Mr John Dunn, and it was not until he had drunk two or three glasses of champagne that he vouchsafed any reply to the admiral's remarks. Another glass led him to propose to write to Queen Victoria. Accordingly he dictated to Mr Dunn a letter, which that gentleman translated, and I wrote as follows :

'ADMIRALTY HOUSE, SIMON'S BAY,
January 4th, 1883.

'I am writing to you, Queen Victoria, to thank you for releasing me from the cruel bondage I was recently kept in, and to say that I am this day leaving the shores of South Africa for my native land. I thank you for your kindness, and hope that I will be able to sleep safely in my country. Keep my feet off the ground, as a mother would do her infant. I do not want to get into trouble any more. Do not think that Cetewayo will ever neglect you, and if you ever again hear idle reports of me, ask me to come to you and explain all myself. I am the child of the White House; keep me and watch over me always. I conclude by thanking you for your kindness to me, and, when I leave this place, trust to prosper in your name. As long as I am alive I will always want to hear of you.

(Signed) CETEWAYO.'

The 'Child of the White House,' I may add, must have weighed some twenty stone at least, so that Queen Victoria's task in 'keeping his feet off the ground' was to be no light one.

Cetewayo was, so Mr Dunn said, very proud of being able to write his name in English, and in his best style he laboriously printed 'CETEWAYO' at the foot of the letter, Mr Dunn giving him occasional hints that he was running uphill, instead of sticking to the lines which he had ruled for him.

After this picturesque expression of his gratitude to the Queen, it was sad that the forecasts of those who, knowing the character of Cetewayo, declared that the truth was not in him should receive immediate confirmation. No sooner had he set foot on the shore of his native land than he despatched scouts in all directions with lying messages to his people concerning the arrangement come to with the British authorities, and followed this up by breaking all the promises which he had made.

v.

So far I have attempted to give some general idea of the Cape station in the 'eighties; I propose now to give a short description of our visits to the West Coast of Africa settlements and the Oil Rivers.

On our first tour of the station we visited the Congo, a grand river, some six or seven miles wide at its mouth, and enormously deep. On approaching it we met, out in the open sea, little green islands, which had been torn off the banks by the rapid current, and carried out. Unfortunately the sheltered anchorage in Banana Creek was so fever-stricken that Her Majesty's ships were not allowed to lie there at night, and we accordingly anchored off the unsociable Sharks' Point.

We also visited Mossamedes, a somewhat dreary-looking town in Portuguese Angola. On some rocks to the south of the town a weary Frenchman had carved in deep letters: '*Mes chagrins m'ont conduit ici.*'

Our northernmost point, the Gambia River, had a bad reputation as a nest of fever. So bad was it that Her Majesty's ships were forbidden to make any prolonged stay there, except in the early months of the year.

We visited it in February 1884, and were pleasantly surprised to find that the climate was perfect; the days were fine and hot, and at night a thick blanket was a comfort.

Sierra Leone, beautiful as we found it, was also very unhealthy at that time. On one of our visits we learned that all the chief officials were absent on sick leave, and that a young barrister was acting-governor. He told me that people did not know how to live in Sierra Leone, and that if one took proper care, plenty of exercise, and suitable food, it was not a bad climate. Alas! on our next visit we learned that he had died of fever.

The ships of the West Coast squadron were allowed, in addition to their ordinary fighting complement, a certain number of Kroomen. These are a fine race of negroes from the neighbourhood of Cape Palmas, and are the working-bees of the West Coast. They could be employed on any ship's work in the tropical sun, which would be fatal to the health of the white members of the crew.

There was in Sierra Leone a large colony of Kroomen, from which the naval agent selected the numbers needed for shipment, and on our first visit there we completed to the number of forty allowed to a ship of the *Boadicea* class.

Their native names being unpronounceable and quite unspellable, it is the practice to give them English names. The happy thought occurred to Mr Rigby, assistant-paymaster, to give our new-comers Pickwickian *aliases*, and for the next three years Mr Pickwick, Sam Weller, Tracy Tupman, and their friends answered their names at the musters of the ship's company. This was a great improvement on the plan adopted in the previous commission, when very frivolous nicknames had been given the Kroomen. On a brass plate erected in Simon's Town church to the memory of those

officers and men who had died during the commission (the list is headed by the name of my old messmate Commander Francis Romilly, who fell at Majuba) there may, no doubt, still be seen the names 'Flying Jib,' 'Prince of Wales,' 'Bottle of Beer,' and others equally ill-chosen.

VI.

From Sierra Leone we went on to Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, the negro republic built up by the United States of America as a philanthropic experiment for the benefit of West Africans returning to their native country.

The admiral was received on landing by three officers, negroes of course, who were dressed in full naval uniform with epaulettes and cocked hats, but who told us they served equally in the navy and the army. They escorted us to the White House, where we found the newly elected president of the republic, Mr Johnson, the first native-born occupant of that post. He was surrounded by the Government officials, all of them as black as himself. We were regaled with champagne and sponge-cake, followed, after a short interval, by a glass of port.

So far as we could judge from our talk with the officials, the experiment in self-government was not proving very satisfactory. The state was bankrupt; Monrovia, the capital, showed signs of decay and neglect—so much so that weeds were growing luxuriantly in the main street; and the officials said that nothing could be done for want of money. The people appeared to be well educated, and they showed regard for their benefactors by speaking English, the official language of the state, with a strong American accent. Nor were some of them deficient in the keen American sense of business. One of the smartly dressed officers, who escorted us to our steam-barge, anxious not to lose the chance of

doing a deal, invited us to buy some coffee from him. We accepted his invitation, and found his coffee excellent.

An old resident in West Africa, speaking of Liberia, summed up the situation in this way: 'They are trying to make asses into horses, whereas they are only fit to be mules.' It must, however, be admitted that Monrovia was infinitely superior to the native towns in the adjoining districts under negro rule.

From Monrovia we coasted along to Cape Coast Castle and Accra.

Landing in a surf-boat at Accra was a new experience for me. These boats—built after the fashion of whale-boats—are wonderfully well handled by their native crews. A dozen sturdy blacks sit round on the gunwale, and work their paddles most vigorously to a monotonous chant of 'Flagship, he come again, he come again, he come again; flagship he come again,' repeated all the way from the ship to the beach. The coxswain, keeping the boat's bows on to the huge rollers, watches for a lull, and takes instant advantage of it to turn the boat round towards the shore; whereupon the crew 'dig out' madly for the landing, until the coming of more rollers necessitates another complete turn to face them again.

(To any one who would like to read a scientific description of the handling of a boat in the surf, I would say read Admiral Fitzgerald's book on the subject.)

We lunched at Christiansborg Castle, two miles from Accra, with the governor-in-chief of the Gold Coast, Sir Samuel Rowe. This old Dutch fort was then the residence of Gold Coast officials. It is close to the sea, and the never-ending roar of the surf is so depressing that the quarters in the front are at a discount.

(Continued on page 797.)

THE MINERAL WEALTH OF COLOMBIA.

By REGINALD B. SPAN.

GOLD-MINING has always been a fascinating subject, and the life of the prospector for gold and other precious minerals is full of romance and adventure, as well as hardship and toil, which is particularly attractive to the hardy, adventurous Anglo-Saxon.

The great gold-rushes of the world have generally been led by the British, Scotsmen being particularly prominent as discoverers of new auriferous regions. It is a noticeable fact that the reliable, canny Scot makes the best mining engineer and mine manager; and on the gold-fields of Africa, Australia, and America you will find Scotsmen holding the most prominent positions.

The recent important discovery of gold in Western Australia reminds us that there are still

vast mineral treasures in the bosom of Mother Earth awaiting the adventurous seeker. For years the goldfields of Western Australia had been in a more or less lifeless condition, when suddenly the prospector's pick opened up a lode some twenty-five feet wide, running two ounces (and more) to the ton, on the Hampton Plains, which hitherto had proved so barren. In a week the shares of the Hampton Properties Company rose from 3d. to £2, 10s., whilst a 'rush' set in from all parts of Australia to the new El Dorado. The daily papers, as well as the financial press, were at once full of this new gold discovery, with its consequent wild speculating on the Stock Exchange in shares of companies interested in the district.

The whole thing is a gamble—the gold-reefs

of West Australia (unlike those of the Transvaal) are proverbially uncertain and erratic, as the writer pointed out in a letter to the *Financial Times* at the time.

Enormously rich lodes have frequently been known to 'peter out' at comparatively small depth in West Australia. These discoveries cannot be relied upon from one week to another.

For the gold-seeker, perhaps the most promising country in the world is Colombia, in South America—which is too little known to the British—with vast auriferous regions still untouched. Of late years a few British companies have started work there on concessions obtained from the Government of Colombia, and dredges are now in full operation on the rich deposits of gold and platinum which line the river-beds and valleys in the districts of Cauca, Antioquia, Choco, &c. The richness of these gravels is stated to be enormous. In some river-beds there is far more platinum than gold, and when one considers the present value of platinum, about £28 an ounce, it is easy to judge how very profitable these operations may prove.

The oldest mining district in Colombia is Antioquia, where the quartz and placer deposits have been worked since the days of the Spaniards, but show no sign of diminution. The French expert and mining engineer, M. Demangeon, in his work *L'Industrie Aurifère en Colombie* (Paris, 1907), states: 'The massif of Antioquia alone is perhaps the richest gold-deposit in the world, and only awaits labour, properly organised, and capital, to show its immense value. The great mountains in this auriferous region are full of ravines, where one may see the outcroppings of lodes in all directions, most of which are gold-bearing, but at present, to a great extent, inaccessible for lack of roads or means of transport. There are rich alluvial-deposits in the Cauca, Porce, and Nechi rivers, and the many *quebradas* which flow down the mountain ravines, where a good deal of gold has been obtained by the natives; but the auriferous sands appear inexhaustible, and with proper machinery very profitable yields could be obtained.' Mr Robert White, the well-known Scottish engineer, in referring to these deposits, observed: 'I do not know any rivers in any country outside of Colombia where such favourable conditions exist for the extraction of gold.'

All the same, it is as well to point out that Colombia is not a poor man's country. It is a difficult country to prospect, and capital is absolutely necessary. Mr I. A. Manning, the American Consul, in his *Daily Consular Reports*, October 31, 1912, writes: 'This is not a poor man's country. Scientific prospecting only will pay in Colombia. The placer and quartz deposits both require up-to-date machinery to prove profitable, and then they will pay handsomely.'

In no country in the world are the mining laws so liberal as in Colombia, and every facility is given to the prospector to explore and take up mining property. No annual work (generally known as assessment-work in America and Australia) is necessary to hold property, and therefore there is no fear of one's claim being 'jumped' by others, as is so often the case in other countries if the assessment-work is not done in the required time.

(The writer had a valuable gold-claim jumped at Cripple Creek, Colorado, U.S.A., as he was taken ill, and was unable to have the necessary assessment-work done in the stipulated time.)

A prospector in Colombia who has not the means or ability to develop his mining property takes up as much land as the law entitles him to, and then waits until he can find some capitalist or syndicate to buy him out. Sometimes he parts with his claims at a very high figure. A man with sufficient means to 'keep him going' in the way of supplies and food—which can only be obtained at high prices in the mining regions—and a good constitution to stand the extremes of heat and cold met with on plains and mountains, could do very well as a prospector in Colombia, and might make a fortune in a comparatively short time. Public attention in this country and America is being directed to the vast possibilities and wealth of Colombia, and more and more companies are forming now, and will be formed in the near future, to exploit the rich deposits of gold and platinum which were so lavishly distributed in the rivers and the mountains by the hidden forces of Nature.

The rivers of the Pacific coast are all auriferous, some being extremely rich; but there is one great drawback, and that is the climate, which is very warm and damp near the sea-level, on the plains, and in the deeper valleys amongst the mountains, where malaria claims many victims amongst those who do not take the necessary precautions.

Colombia has now taken first place amongst the countries of the world as a producer of platinum—that most rare and valuable of minerals, so indispensable in important industries. Until a few years ago Russia was the principal producer of platinum; but the deposits there, worked for so long a period, are rapidly approaching depletion, whilst in Colombia fresh discoveries of the metal are constantly being made, the last extensive deposit found being in the Opogodo River (a tributary of the San Juan), which is soon to be dredged by the British Platinum and Gold Corporation, the machinery being now erected on the property.

Platinum was first discovered in Colombia as long ago as 1737, by Antonio de Ulloa, a Spanish scientist. To-day it is chiefly found in the San Juan River and its tributaries, such as the Tamana, Iro, Opogodo, and Jujiado, where it far outvalues the gold. In the other district

where it is found—namely, the Barbacoas, extending from the frontier of Ecuador to the Micay River—the gold-deposit predominates over the platinum. (Platinum is always found with gold—never alone.)

The British companies now operating in Colombia are extracting gold and platinum at the same time, with the same machinery. One of these companies has discovered profitable petroleum-wells on its property, as well as precious minerals.

The gold and platinum fields of the Choco district are reached by steamer up the San Juan River, the nearest seaport being Buenaventura, about fifty miles south of the San Juan River mouth. Concerning this region Mr R. B. White writes: 'The western chain of the Andes, the source of the San Juan and its affluents, is extremely auriferous. The formation of the valleys of the Atrato, of the San Juan, and some other rivers of the Pacific coast dates from a later epoch than the high lands, and we can conclude that these rivers, the Atrato, the San Juan, and their affluents, hold and confine enormous quantities of gold in their beds. . . . I have examined the gravels of the San Juan and Tamana in many places, and have always found them sufficiently rich to pay for washing, even by the most primitive methods. In the better parts of these two rivers I have proved that the gravel contains over an ounce of gold to the ton, but it is natural that in these gravels the gold does not remain long on the surface. My observations, and the results obtained by natives, warrant me in saying that the layer resting on bed-rock will produce, on the average, *ten ounces of gold per square yard.*'

The principal deposits, where British syndicates are now working, are about a hundred miles from the coast, and transport is effected by river steamers up the San Juan and its tributaries, which connect with ocean steamers at the mouth of the river.

The climate is a severe tropical one, but a European can perform his regular duties there, provided the usual precautions are taken. The great thing is to be careful in the matter of food and drink. Take doses of quinine every day, avoid exposure to wet and extreme heat, and keep the mosquitoes at bay by a good mosquito-net—the best that can be obtained, as mosquitoes cause more disease than anything else. The rains are very heavy, and the climate a damp one, so good waterproof clothing and waterproof sheeting is essential.

Railways are few and far between in Colombia, and travelling is chiefly done by river steamers along the numerous palm-fringed waterways of that beautiful country. Prospectors go from one goldfield to another by boat. Journeying in this fashion is generally rather slow.

A trip up the Magdalena River by steamer from Barranquilla to La Doranda—a distance of

600 miles—takes ten days. There are numerous halts and delays on such a journey, and, on account of constantly changing shoals and sand-banks in the river's course, boats can travel by day only.

Unfortunately the richest gold-mines are in the remote interior, away from the rivers, so they are difficult of access, being without means of transportation; consequently few of them have been worked by modern machinery. A native writer has said that 'in Colombia one walks on gold, lives without effort on the indigenous products of the soil, and is never anxious about a place in which to sleep.' On the higher lands, away from the rivers, sleeping out would no doubt be very pleasant, as the climate is warm and not damp, and there are no mosquitoes or malaria; but black bears abound in many of the cordilleras, just as tigers inhabit the jungles of the lower valleys, and panthers the forests on mountain-sides, so one would need to exercise some caution as to one's sleeping-berth.

The greater part of Colombia is still an unbroken wilderness, with vast mineral wealth and exceedingly rich and varied undeveloped resources. There are few countries in the world more picturesque and beautiful, and its commercial possibilities are almost incalculable. Besides gold and platinum, Colombia produces silver in abundance, diamonds in small quantities, emeralds from the celebrated emerald-mines of Muzo, and rich iron ore from the plains of Bogotá. Near Rio Hache, on the coast, are seemingly inexhaustible coalfields; and asphaltum, sulphur, magnesia, and alum are found in many parts of the country.

The north coast of Colombia was part of the old Spanish Main, with which Spanish treasure-ships, pirates, and romance are indissolubly associated. In the adjoining state of Venezuela was the original and far-famed El Dorado, the scene of so many legends of fabulous wealth and romantic deeds. In El Dorado ('The Golden') gold, diamonds, and precious stones were said to be as plentiful as the sands and pebbles of the sea-shore; and the streets of Manoa, the gorgeous capital of this wonderful country, were reported to be paved with solid gold.

Many adventurers sailed up the Orinoco in search of El Dorado, the chief of them being Sir Walter Raleigh, who in 1595 brought his frigate up the great waterway of the tropics as far as Caroni. Whether El Dorado existed or not, it is certain that Spanish adventurers brought back fabulous wealth from the mountains and inland recesses of Colombia and Venezuela, and their treasure-galleons were laden to the brim with gold and silver and precious stones.

These two countries were, and are, a veritable storehouse of precious minerals, surpassing in wealth any other country in the world—but riches, alas! so difficult to reach and extract. There is, we are told, a region in Venezuela where gold

lies on the surface in nuggets and gold dust, and the rocks glitter with the precious metal—millions of pounds worth—but it is a place of death, guarded by a deadly malaria and myriads of mosquitoes of unusual size and ferocity.

Only three men lived to tell the tale of what that golden valley contained, and they died on reaching civilisation from the effects of malaria and the terrible hardships they had been through. Others, at various times, have gone in search of this place, but none of them ever returned. The way to it lies over vast swamps, through dense

jungle, and over precipitous mountains, where one has to face every kind of hardship and danger, infinitely worse than the terrible snow-bound trail to the Klondike in the early days of that famous goldfield, or the scorching, waterless deserts of West Australia. Nature has a way of safeguarding her treasures, and it is only the strongest and bravest and most determined who can wrest her secrets from her, and become possessed of the precious metals and gems which lie concealed in her wildest and most formidable solitudes.

A STRAIGHT FLUSH.

By JOHNSTON SMITH.

I.

CAPTAIN TIMOTHY REILLY of the tramp steamer *Orion* rang his engines down to 'dead slow,' and then 'stand by.' Leaning over the bridge-dodger, he eyed the pilot cutter wallowing to windward in the swell. Just ahead, with the long Pacific rollers booming at their base, sheered the dark purple cliff walls of Sydney Heads.

A boat dropped smartly from the cutter's davits, and working briskly down in her lee, pulled alongside the *Orion*. Waiting for the exact moment when a roller lifted the cockleshell high up towards the tramp's rusty side, the pilot sprang for the Jacob's ladder and clambered monkey-like aboard.

The engine-telegraph clanged again, and the *Orion*, rolling and creaking, moved slowly ahead into the harbour.

'Back again, captain?' began the pilot conversationally, as he swung her over to take the outer passage.

'Aye, aye,' agreed the skipper cheerfully. 'It's back again I am, like the "southerly buster" after a heat-spell.'

For a young man Captain Tim Reilly had done well by the sea, and if not yet the owner of the old *Orion*, he already held the controlling interest in her. A good seaman, he was a better business man; but even so, adventurer, in the old sense of those merchant-seamen in Queen Elizabeth's time, would be nearer the mark. And if he could not go forth to plunder the Spanish Dons in the Indies, he had to display the greater ingenuity in his ventures on that account. Unlike most of his countrymen, he never nursed a grievance, preferring, to his great popularity, to seek the joke that ever lies hidden—even in tragedy. He made a jest, too, of his old tramp, and, to make her the more truly Irish, had the sign of the great constellation painted on her bows in emerald-green, and if the Board of Trade had permitted, he would have had the name itself

spelled in the Hibernian manner, *O'Rion* or even *O'Ryan*.

And now, if Captain Reilly had required an added incentive to get rich quick, he had discovered it in the bright eyes of Flossie Mortimer. Always welcomed heartily by old 'Malay' Mortimer and his daughter when he reported himself each trip at the old house on the slopes of Neutral Bay, he had made up his mind that the fair and charming Flossie would be even more charming as Mrs Reilly. The only fly in the ointment was Josiah Shine, a highly respected officer in the Sydney Customs. Mr Shine also desired to win Miss Mortimer for his own, and Captain Reilly did not make the mistake of underrating the solid weight of the opposition. Mr Shine's reputation had been built up on his unerring and uncanny instinct for the detection of smuggling, and what he did not know of the tricks and devices for introducing opium and other contraband into the Commonwealth without the formality of paying duty was not worth knowing. Likewise, Josiah Shine was a presentable enough fellow, with a shore job as steady as Captain Reilly's was hazardous and uncertain.

Now, partly by the accident of a sporting bet taken and offered in the bar of the Australia Hotel, and partly out of sheer love of a joke, Captain Reilly had seized the opportunity, ably assisted and abetted by his Chinese boy, Wong Ping, to turn a dishonest penny (and incidentally to put a spoke in Shine's wheel) by a bit of opium-smuggling.

Success meant not only an exceptionally nice little profit—and Captain Reilly was a keen judge of the improper percentage due to him—but a personal score over Shine, such as might seem good in Flossie Mortimer's forget-me-not blue eyes.

II.

But, as in all matters of high enterprise, if the prospective reward was great, so also was the risk, and now, as the *Orion* rattled her wheezy way up the harbour, it is not wholly

surprising that her skipper showed signs of pre-occupation. True, he had not left the laying of his plans to chance; indeed, the problem had been tackled, with Wong Ping's help, some days before, and, to be almost reassured, Captain Reilly had but to walk to the end of his bridge, whence he could see the faithful Wong Ping diligently at work sluicing the deck with a stream of water supplied from a length of hose-pipe lying snake-like along the starboard scupper.

At the sight Captain Reilly's natural optimism returned like the back-swing of a pendulum, and he rejoined the pilot, who was by now engaged in watching with close professional interest the irresponsible traffic of the ferries plying in and out of Circular Quay. In particular, he was concerned with the vagaries of a Mosman Bay ferry-boat, which was intent upon going across the *Orion's* bows at any cost, or, in the alternative, piling herself upon the rocky spit of Pinchgut Island.

'Call themselves skippers?' asked the pilot vindictively. 'Why, the whole boiling of 'em's no better than or'nary tram-drivers.'

Captain Reilly laughed. 'It's a darned sight too careful you are, old man,' said he amusedly, 'and carefulness never leads any man anywhere.'

The old pilot rang the telegraph for 'half-speed,' and glanced shrewdly at the *Orion's* master.

'Any'ow, even if they are only tramway-men, they ain't going to punch *my* ticket, captain. But if you fancy making an 'obby of carelessness, why'—

'I'm to go ahead and be damned,' said Captain Reilly. 'Well, to tell you the straight truth, old man, that same trick would be suiting me better, and no mistake. I was always the bhoys for takin' me fair share of risks, and, bedad! there's a sight more fun in the game played that way, wid the long odds laid against you and all'—

'Ah!' remarked the old pilot sagely, as he slewed her slowly round to make the Darling Harbour entrance, 'you're young enough, anyhow, to stand the racket.'

Captain Reilly had a fleeting reminder of the odds against him then, before he could win through with the opium deal—and Flossie, and he sighed involuntarily.

'Sure, it's me that's hoping so, old man,' admitted he fervently. 'Tis a wearing life the seafaring, anyhow, and it's true I've taken a skinkful of risk this trip'—

'I've noticed,' said the pilot acutely, 'you've been kind of trying to haul off a lee-shore, captain, ever since I come aboard; but there—I don't want to know nothing about it—but only'—

'Yes?' said Captain Reilly.

'If so be as you're trying to do something new and original in the smuggling line—and

something seems to 'int to me it's more'n likely'—

'Yes?' repeated Captain Reilly, with native caution.

'Then,' said the old pilot, with marked enjoyment, 'I'm real sorry for you, sonny—real sorry—for you're right plumb up against it.'

'Yes?'

'If there's one cove in the Noo South Wales Customs as knows the whole bag o' tricks in that trade, his name is Shine—Mister Josiah Shine; and, by the Lord Harry! I can see the very identical bloke waiting for you, as sure as ever was, on the jetty there'—

Captain Reilly swept a quick glance to the quay and swore softly.

'See him?' asked the pilot, solicitously and with a throaty chuckle. 'Why, you ain't got a Buckley's chance.'

'See him?' echoed Captain Reilly boldly. 'You trust me, I'll see him right enough, the dirty blackguard. I've got a straight flush that will be after seeing me through this, the way he won't be liking it'—

The pilot rang the engines down to 'stand by,' and then again to 'slow astern,' ere he nodded sagely. 'Aye, aye,' said he with conviction, 'but I can call to mind many a sure straight flush in my time that's ended up as a first-class imitation of a wash-out.'

Captain Reilly shook with laughter as he clapped the old man on the back. 'And isn't that just what I'm after telling you?' said he confidently. 'Sure, it's the same thing, only different when you're at the wrong end of it, and, the way I'm reckoning on it, it's your friend Shine that will be getting lost in the wash.'

III.

'Good-morning, Captain Reilly,' said Mr Shine, a trifle stiffly, as he stepped aboard the *Orion* the moment she was berthed.

'It'll be Mister Shine that's speaking,' returned Captain Reilly with heartiness. 'Tell me now, does it go well with old "Malay" and Miss Flossie? I dare say, now, you've seen them both but lately?'

The Customs man raised his eyebrows in somewhat pained surprise. 'I believe,' said he coldly, 'both Miss Mortimer and her father are quite well.'

'First-rate,' said Captain Reilly jovially. 'It's glad I am to hear it. I'm for stepping up the hill myself to-night, if so be that I can get free in time. I'll be seeing you there, perhaps?'

Mr Shine frowned. 'Business first, Captain Reilly,' said he distantly. 'I've got my responsibilities to the State, and they're pretty considerable. This opium-smuggling traffic, for one thing, is showing signs of coming back again, and—it's up to me to stop it.' As he spoke he looked Captain Reilly squarely in the

eyes, and the skipper read there the officer's intention to go over the old *Orion* with a pocket tooth-comb.

'Indeed, now, you surprise me,' replied the skipper, with a frankly interested show of concern. 'I would be thinking, now, that the man that would try to put one across you, Mr Shine, is asking for trouble. But it's keeping you off your work I am, standing here talking. I will be leaving you to it, old man, only that, if so be that you find anything on the ship, I will not be running away without a word or two of explanation about it.'

And with a laugh on his part, and a pale smile from Shine, both men went about their duties.

A couple of hands were dragging a hose across the deck and passing it over the jetty as Captain Reilly passed aft. 'Hullo!' demanded he brusquely. 'What's this for?'

'Flesh water, capitan,' explained Wong Ping lucidly. 'Water tanks allee empty.'

'Can do,' acknowledged Captain Reilly casually, and passed on to where Mr Fraser, the mate, was superintending the removal of No. 2 hatch. To him the skipper had a word or two to say ere he sent for the engineer, and, with him for company, withdrew to the chart-house for a spell.

Old Macintosh, the chief, had a sub-acid but strangely provocative brand of conversation that always acted upon the skipper as a tonic. And so, for the better part of an hour, whilst outside, the donkey-engine shook and rattled, and the derricks swung inboard and out again with the *Orion's* cargo, Captain Reilly invited the Scottish engineer's views on a variety of topics from the thermal values of steam-coals to the theories of Haeckel; and in due time came Mr Shine in person, a trifle disgruntled in fact, but the more suspicious in that his suspicions had led to the discovery of nothing dutiable aboard the tramp.

IV.

At his knock Captain Reilly stepped outside the cabin, and together they crossed to the rail to take a look at the busy scene on the jetty below. The skipper's keen eye swept over its salient features in a glance, and if, to his expert eye, there was anything amiss, it was no doubt on that account that he turned quickly to engage Shine in a ready flow of animated talk.

But Mr Shine was no fool, and listening to the skipper's sudden stream of loquacity, he took care to keep an eye lifting over the wharf below. His was a slow, methodical brain that worked unhurriedly, probing and examining one thing at a time, and if he had failed, so far, to discover what he had expected to find on the *Orion*, he was in no way satisfied or even disturbed at the result.

Of a sudden he seemed to stiffen like a terrier

at a rat-hole. 'My oath!' cried he involuntarily, 'if that ain't a rum thing'—

'What is that, now?' asked Captain Reilly, alert in a moment.

'Why,' exclaimed the Customs man, pointing to the wharf, 'if you ain't got a *couple* of hose-pipes laid on to that there jetty!'

Captain Reilly leant with sudden interest across the rail, and in so doing clumsily fouled the siren-lanyard. A sharp 'toot' ripped the air. Mr Shine jumped.

'Faith! and I believe it's right you are, Shine,' admitted the captain, with slightly overdone unconcern; 'but, anyway, 'tis only the one of them that's pumping'—

But Mr Shine had already disappeared. The captain took another anxious look at the wharf. Just thirty seconds after that warning hoot from the siren, the white-painted bow of a launch poked from out the gloom beneath the jetty-piles and crept surreptitiously under the *Orion's* stern. Once clear of the mooring-hawsers and propeller, the motor-launch started her engine, and in a minute or two she was plugging down-harbour. Captain Reilly watched her until she had swept round the promontory, and only then turned to follow Shine.

Clattering down the short ladder to the deck, he went straight to where a quietly triumphant Wong Ping was busy with polishing-rags on the brasswork of a salt-water cock. The uncoupled end of a hose was lying in a pool of water at his feet. Rags, brushes, a polishing-tin or two, and a brace of empty wooden boxes lay strewn around. The Chinaman turned as his skipper appeared.

'Is it all clear of the stuff you are now, Wong Ping?'

The lid of one almond eye flickered gently. 'All li, tuan,' he whispered. 'Tanks all filled one time, capitan.'

'And the opium?'

The Chinaman picked up a tin of 'Brasso' from the deck, placed it in the mouth of the hose-pipe, which he coupled up to the cock, and grinned delightedly. 'All tins gone, capitan, muchee quick. Customs man no can savee; makee much bobbery one time.'

Captain Reilly burst out laughing. 'Angry—is he?—the little scut! Where is he gone to now?'

Wong Ping jerked a thumb jettwards.

The skipper went to the side and looked over. 'Right!' said Captain Reilly. 'Now listen here. The launch is clear away with the stuff by now, and it's a game I would have with this Customs wallah, savee? I'm for going down on to the jetty to see what he's after. Unless I'm mistaken, he knows we've put a new trick on him, for he's ferreting round that hose like a rat at a pump. Give me a minute or two, and then turn on the water again, and we'll let him see how it's done.'

'Can do,' said Wong Ping brightly; and, with a happy glint in his eye, Captain Reilly hurried off to join Mr Shine on the jetty.

v.

The Customs man had, with the true instinct of the sleuth, traced the shore-end of the suspected hose to a stand-pipe for fresh water. In this manner steamers were, indeed, accustomed to replenish their supplies of water on arrival; but Mr Shine quickly discovered, without surprise, that the end of the pipe, instead of being connected up to the cock, dropped down a hole in the planking of the wharf. Confirmed at once in his suspicions that this hose was being used to convey something from, instead of to, the ship, he peered down into the gloom to the harbour waters beneath. Amidst the recently disturbed flotsam and jetsam of driftwood and oily scum his sharp eyes detected an incriminating pole fitted with a large landing-net. Of the obviously necessary accomplices in a boat or otherwise there was, however, no sign. Mr Shine began to realise, to his chagrin, that he had discovered the nest just too late—the birds had flown. Disappointed and angry, he rose to his feet, to find Captain Reilly grinning at his discomfiture.

'Anything wrong?' asked the skipper politely.

Mr Shine bit his lip. 'Just this, Captain Reilly,' said he with suppressed fury: 'but for that accidental "toot" of yours with your siren and one bit of missing evidence, I'd have had you laughing on the other side of your face by now, and'—

The Customs man broke off abruptly to stare at the hose, which was in process of a queer transformation. Something appeared to be passing through it from the ship. There was just a slight swelling as when a snake swallows a rabbit. With a quick spring Mr Shine flung himself upon the heaven-sent missing link in his evidence, and with the pipe throbbing beneath him under the pressure of a fresh head of water, he yelled orders.

'Quick, there,' he shouted; 'fetch up the end of that hose and lay her along the wharf.'

A stevedore or two stopped work to see the fun, but it was Captain Reilly who commenced hauling up the slack of the hose.

'Faith!' cried he innocently, 'what is it now?'

'Easy!' shouted Mr Shine harshly; 'lay her clear of that hole. I can feel the blessed tin under my hands here. Oh, it's opium right enough, and one tin of it's all the evidence I want to prove how they've pumped the rest of it ashore. Easy now!'

'Aye, aye,' cried Captain Reilly innocently, as the end of the hose, spouting cold water, came above the planking. 'Easy it is.'

'Keep her there,' called Shine triumphantly, and released his own hold on the throbbing pipe.

At that precise moment Captain Reilly appeared to slip clumsily on a wet board, and losing his balance, turned, by an unlucky chance, the full force of the stream of spouting water upon the unfortunate Shine. For one brief instant the Customs man gamely stood his ground, clinging with all his wit and strength to the evidence shot into his eager hands, and then he rolled over and subsided like a water-logged sponge. With belated concern Captain Reilly jumped to help the Customs officer to his feet, but Mr Shine declined any assistance, and, with cold sea-water pouring from his clothes, arose unsteadily and shook a small tin cylinder in Captain Reilly's face.

'Got you, you swindling skunk!' he began, when a shout of laughter from amongst the crowd of stevedores broke in upon his triumphant words.

He paused, gazed at his prize with almost comic dismay, and then, with a gesture which might under happier circumstances have been almost magnificent, hurled from him an empty tin of brass-polish.

Captain Reilly, seated on a bollard, holding his aching sides, paused between gusts of helpless laughter to throw a happy wink at the appreciative audience of stevedores and crew.

'Oh, my hat!' he groaned. 'A fair old wash-out, and no error!'

THE OLD COACHING INN.

SINISTER gable square to the winds,
Shuttered window like sightless eye;
There it stands where the high-road bends
Up the hill to the arching sky;
Broad the strath as it rolls below
From Craigellachie to Carrou:
What have ye looked on, staring eye?
What have ye known, gray walls and dour?

Crows on the smokeless chimneys perch,
Brisk at the wainscot gnaw the rats;
Compassed by hedges of dusty yew,
Rank grow the weeds in the garden plats;
Red with rust are the bolts on the doors—
Never the lock will turn again;
Rang there a step on the wide-flagged path?
Came there a rap on the window-pane?

Under the starry northern night
Chanced there the gallop of horses fleet,
Moving shadows against the blind,
Rattle of bars and tread of feet,
Lightning of sword-blades behind the door,
Women's cries from the head of the stair?
Was there a swish of skirts and cloak?
Was there a glint of eyes and hair?

Every echo is dulled again,
Dim are the eyes that were bright of old;
Turned is the page in the pictured book,
Secret guarded and tale untold.
Still the clouds on the sleety wind
Chase the rainbow across the moor. . . .
What have ye looked on, staring eye?
What have ye known, gray walls and dour?

CHRISTINE G. M. ORR.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

FIJI: ITS HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT, AND INDUSTRIES.

By Sir BICKHAM ESCOTT, K.C.M.G. (late Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for the Western Pacific).

I.

JUST 277 years ago Abel Janszoon Tasman, the great Dutch navigator and explorer, sailing with a favouring south-westerly wind from the island of Tasmania (to which he had given, in honour of the Governor-General of Batavia, the name 'Van Diemen's Land'), sighted, in the bright sunshine of a tropical morning, the Fiji Islands. In his log the group is called 'Prince William's Land,' but there is no record of Tasman having attempted to make a settlement on any of the islands, and, after taking on board supplies of water and tropical fruits, he returned to Java, whence he had set out to discover the 'Great South Land.' To all intents and purposes the Fiji Islands remained unknown for a further period of 131 years—that is, until Captain Cook, in his voyage of discovery in the Pacific, touched, in 1774, at Vatoa, which lies at the extreme south of the Fiji group, and christened it 'Turtle Island.' Fifteen years later Captain Bligh, H.M.S. *Bounty*, after the mutiny of his crew, which ended in his being sent adrift, with some of his officers, in a ship's galley, passed by the Yasawa group to the north-west of Viti Levu, the largest of the Fiji Islands, on his adventurous voyage to Timor, in the Dutch East Indies.

Early in the nineteenth century Botany Bay convicts contrived to escape to Fiji, and were the first white settlers in the islands. Their evil practices and mode of life were reprobated even by the natives, cannibals although they were, and it was not until 1835, when Wesleyan missionaries first landed in Fiji, that contact with Europeans exercised a beneficial influence on the native population. This is not the place to detail the magnificent work among the Fijians of the Methodist Mission, but it was due largely to the influence of their missionaries and of Mr Pritchard, the British Consul of Fiji and Tonga, that, in 1859, the principal chief, Cakobau (pronounced Thakombau), who had been given by English settlers, and had assumed thereafter, the title of King of Fiji, offered to cede to Queen Victoria the whole of the Fiji Islands, which exceed two hundred in number and have a total

area of the size of Wales. The offer was declined three years later by the Duke of Newcastle, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the advice of a Colonel Smythe, who had been sent to Fiji to investigate, and report on, the condition and prospects of the islands. Twelve years later, when Cakobau's Government was reduced to great financial straits, the offer of cession was renewed, and its acceptance was agreed to on the joint recommendation of Commander Goodenough, R.N., who was in command of Her Majesty's ships on the Western Pacific Station, and of Mr Layard, who had succeeded Mr Pritchard as Her Majesty's Consul in Fiji. The change of front adopted by Her Majesty's Government was due partly to the rapid growth in the European population consequent on the introduction, during the American Civil War, of the cotton industry; partly to representations made by powerful bodies in Australia, with which Fiji's trade was principally conducted; and partly to the fear, probably well grounded, that, in view of Germany's activities in the Pacific and the establishment, with the support of the German Government, of German trading-stations controlled by Messrs Godeffroy of Hamburg, the group might become a German colony if the second offer was refused.

The terms of cession were arranged by Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor of New South Wales, who in 1896 was raised to the peerage as Baron Rosmead, and the document signed by Cakobau runs as follows: 'We, King of Fiji, together with other high chiefs of Fiji, hereby give our country, Fiji, unreservedly to Her Britannic Majesty, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. And we trust and repose fully in her that she will rule Fiji justly and affectionately, that we may continue to live in peace and prosperity.' At the closing ceremony on the 10th October 1874, when the deed of cession was signed by Cakobau, twelve principal chiefs, and Sir Hercules Robinson, Cakobau, through his former Prime Minister, Mr Thurston, who fourteen years later became governor of the colony, gave up his war-club to be presented to Queen Victoria, and in doing so spoke as follows: 'With this emblem of the past I send

my love to Her Majesty, fully confiding in her and in her children, who, succeeding her, shall become Kings of Fiji, to exercise a watchful control over the welfare of my children and people.'

II.

Sir Arthur Gordon, afterwards Lord Stanmore, became the first governor of Fiji, and undertook the difficult task of creating a stable administration and of evolving financial order out of chaos. The debts of the colony, amounting to £115,000, which were incurred during Cakobau's reign, were redeemed by the Imperial Government, but the sum was treated as an advance to be refunded by annual instalments, the last of which was paid early in 1919. In the forty-six years that have passed since Fiji became a possession of the Crown the administration and the agricultural development of the colony have proceeded hand-in-hand. Governed at first as a pure Crown colony, Fiji obtained in 1904 an elective element in its Legislative Council, which now consists of the governor, as president, and twenty-one members, of whom eleven are nominated officials, seven are elected by a somewhat limited franchise, two are native Fijians of the highest rank, and one is a native of India.

The introduction of new industries and of better methods of cultivation has changed entirely the financial position of the colony, and has improved, out of all knowledge, the social condition of the population. The financial transactions of 1876—two years after cession—showed a revenue of £40,524 and an expenditure of £66,636. In 1916 the revenue was £335,064, and exceeded the expenditure by £34,347. In 1875 only 96 tons of sugar, of the value of £3417, were exported. In 1916 the quantity exported was 120,528 tons, valued at £1,729,658. The vast strides made in the sugar industry are attributable almost entirely to the enterprise shown by the Colonial Sugar-Refining Company, whose headquarters are at Sydney, New South Wales. Fruit, consisting principally of bananas, the export of which in 1875 was worth only £97, was exported in 1916 to the value of £205,122; whilst the export of copra—that is, the dried kernel of the coco-nut—the principal export of the Fiji Islands in pre-cession days, of which 3871 tons, valued at £40,058, were exported in 1875, rose in 1916 to 15,368 tons, of the declared value of £359,372. The cultivation of the Pará rubber-tree has now been established in the colony as a new industry, and 38 tons, valued at £11,803, were exported in 1917. To the preceding principal industries should be added many minor industries already in existence, which admit of great development, such as the cultivation of sea-island cotton of a high grade; rice, grown extensively by Indians; tea; limes equal in quality to those produced

in Montserrat and Dominica in the West Indies; maize; tobacco; coffee not inferior to the famous Blue Mountain coffee of Jamaica; and cacao which rivals that of Grenada and Trinidad. Cattle-rearing and the raising of horses, pigs, and sheep, if undertaken in suitable localities, should prove to be profitable occupations. But for all industries, great and small, and for the further development of the rich islands in the Fiji group, it is essential that an adequate supply of labour should be provided and maintained.

III.

It is unfortunate that one of the most important conditions of the cession of Fiji secured by Sir Hercules Robinson—namely, the transfer of land from the natives to the Crown—was abandoned under the government of Sir Arthur Gordon, and that in many, if not the majority of, cases the natives obtained, individually or communally, land to which in the pre-cession days they could not have established a claim. The result has been that the natives of the colony, who numbered in 1918 about ninety thousand, have shown a not unnatural disinclination to work steadily for hire on European estates, and have been content, as a general rule, to remain on their own lands, which they cultivate only so far as is required for their personal needs. That the Fijian is capable of hard and sustained toil has been proved by the exceptionally good work of the hundred men who composed the Fiji Labour Detachment that was employed on stevedore duties from 1917 onwards, first at Calais, then at Marseilles, and lastly at Taranto. But for agricultural work, especially on sugar estates, the Fijian has shown, so far, neither aptitude nor liking, and the future of the sugar industry in the colony depends on the continuation, in some form or another, of the arrangements whereby labourers have been imported from India, or on some other source of labour-supply being tapped. During the last forty years emigration from India to Fiji has been allowed by the Indian Government, under conditions which were laid down by that Government, and were similar to the conditions prescribed for the other sugar-producing colonies—namely, Mauritius, British Guiana, Jamaica, and Trinidad. The labourers, who were drawn from the classes in India that live always on the verge of starvation, have prospered in Fiji to a very marked extent, and one of their number, who has attained to a position of affluence since the completion of his term of indenture, is now a nominated member of the Legislative Council of the colony. The Indian population of Fiji, which numbers sixty thousand, is the principal factor in the prosperity of the colony, and it is earnestly to be hoped that the commissioners who were sent recently to India to place the position before the Government will be successful in inducing it to reconsider its

decision to allow no further emigration. To no reasonable conditions that may be imposed by the Indian Government will any objections be raised, and, at a time when there is a world's shortage of sugar, it would be unfortunate if the sugar companies now operating in Fiji were compelled to close down any of their admirably equipped factories through want of sufficient labour to keep existing sugar estates under cultivation.

Fiji, with an area of 7083 square miles, has a population of 163,000, of whom, as has been stated, 90,000 are native Fijians and 60,000 are natives of India. It is estimated that 55,570 acres of land are under cane cultivation, from the produce of which 120,528 tons of sugar were exported, as noted above, in 1916. The Hawaii Islands, which lie half-way between Vancouver and the Fiji group, are smaller than Fiji by some 500 square miles. They were annexed by the United States of America in 1898, and from that date their development has been rapid. The population is, approximately, 240,000; and whilst the Hawaiians themselves number only 23,770, the Japanese amount to 97,000. It is to the latter's labour that the extraordinary

success of the sugar industry is mainly due. In the financial year ended 30th June 1916 the quantity of sugar exported from Hawaii was 640,000 tons, or nearly six times as much as that exported from Fiji in its best year. In a direct line Japan is not more than one thousand miles farther from Fiji than from Honolulu, the capital of Hawaii, and the question naturally arises whether, if the Indian Government continues to prohibit the emigration of its surplus population, arrangements cannot be made to obtain from Japan the labourers who are essential for the maintenance at its present level of the sugar industry in Fiji.

The area of land that can be brought under cane cultivation in Fiji is not so large, probably, as the extent of land so cultivated in Hawaii, but it is large enough to admit of the addition to its workers of, certainly, fifty thousand labourers; and if such an addition were assured, the capital required for their employment and for the extension of the sugar industry would be forthcoming. Fiji would then enter on a new era of prosperity which would result in the colony becoming in time one of the richest possessions of the Empire.

HOW THE PRINCESS HORATIA CAME TO HER KINGDOM.

PART II.

VI.

WITH all this in her mind, it is not surprising that the Princess Horatia turned the conversation upon the present ruler of Prometheus during the ride to the ancient royal fortress.

The road to Hesione, if road it can be called, is a steep and narrow track that scales the face of the mountain-gorge in a manner that might well dismay the traveller who does not love the bright eyes of danger. On one side it is bounded by the mountain-crag rising sheer and rocky to a giddy height; on the other it falls away into an abyss of almost unplumbable depth. And yet, withal, the track may be traversed with perfect safety by those who know something of its hazards and how to avoid them. This (the party was presently advised) could best be done by going in single file. Thus Miss Pinkerton, with blanched cheeks and an expression of resignation to sure and certain death, was led off by the muleteer who acted as guide, and was followed by the princess, whose mule's bridle John King insisted upon holding himself; while his mule, loaded with the baggage of the party, brought up the rear, led by an irresponsible and sturdy urchin, who might have posed as an infant Bacchus.

The princess led up to the subject which filled her mind by discoursing appropriately upon the old fortress of Hesione. The great

Prometheus himself, tradition alleged, had erected the original building on the site, and named it in honour of his bride, in the days before he incurred the wrath of Jove and suffered expiation on the rock. From the ancient rulers of Promethea she skilfully turned to the present monarch, and discovered that John King had been more fortunate than herself, insomuch as he had actually seen him.

'What is he like? Can you describe him?' she asked with feverish interest.

John King shrugged his shoulders. 'He's much like other men,' he replied dispassionately. 'Got eyes, nose, and mouth same as I have!'

An exclamation of provocation escaped the princess. 'Can't you give me any more definite description than that? I'm very much interested in him.'

'Are you? Why?' asked John King, turning serene brown eyes upon her. 'Do you think he's an interesting character?'

'That's what I don't know yet and want to discover. If I could know what he was like exteriorly I might be able to form an opinion. Does he always parade about in a uniform, for instance?'

'I've seen him in one,' admitted John King. 'What does that signify?'

'That he apes the Emperor!'

John King laughed. 'Wouldn't that be *l'èse majesté*?'

'No; imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!'

'But kings generally wear a uniform of some sort, don't they?'

'Oh yes, on occasions! I don't mean that the actual wearing of a uniform is objectionable. It's what it stands for—in the case of the Emperor, anyhow—bullying and bossing. The last King of Promethea, I know for a fact, wore a uniform as seldom as possible. I've always heard it said he much preferred a shooting-jacket. But, then, he was a sportsman.' The voice of the Princess Horatia rose in a note of pride and enthusiasm, and John King again turned his eyes upon her. They had in them a look of surprise and perplexity.

'Do you mean the late King Conrad?' he asked doubtfully.

'Oh no, no! I forgot he was the last—old wretch! I mean King Alexis, the father of the young queen from whom Conrad seized the crown. If that wasn't bullying and bossing, what is?'

A smile played over the pleasant face of John King. 'So you haven't a very good opinion of him?'

'No—have you? Do you think it was a fair thing to do to deprive the rightful queen of her heritage just because she was an infant and couldn't fight for it?'

'But the rights and wrongs of it were mixed up with the royal marriage law, were they not?'

'You mean about King Alexis marrying the Countess Fiorenzoli?'

'Well, I wasn't taking much interest in Promethean affairs at the time, but I have since understood that was the cause of dispute.'

'But why should he not have married the woman he loved?' demanded the princess hotly. 'She belonged to the nobility, and was very beautiful and accomplished?'

'So I understand. But what about the law?'

'There never was a royal marriage law in Promethea,' asserted the princess sharply.

'There was evidently something stronger,' replied John King.

'There was.'

In John King's mind that 'something' was Promethean public opinion; in the Princess Horatia's it was *la grande passion*.

'I think King Alexis was entirely right,' she proclaimed boldly.

'So do I,' said John King quietly.

VII.

The air of conviction with which he spoke, and the glance he turned upon his companion, were, strange to say, decidedly disconcerting to the Princess Horatia. She had not expected such an answer. And as he walked very near to the mule's side on the perilously narrow path, his eyes for the instant had looked very closely into hers. They were most expressive eyes, and

she had seen in them a glint that forced her suddenly to look hard ahead between the mule's erect ears.

She was, after all, of royal blood. Could she permit such a glance to fall upon her from the eyes of an English commoner? But then, to be sure, he did not know it, else he would never have presumed. Of that she felt confident. Yet he was so pleasant, this John King—so thoughtful of her comfort and safety. She sighed to think there was a gulf between them. He was, in short, a gentleman, which Prince Ajax, in spite of his imperial blood, was not.

It was preposterous, of course, to compare a man she had known for only a few hours with a son of the Emperor Hildebrand. But the Princess Horatia was apt to be preposterous, as both Count Wenceslaus and Miss Pinkerton knew only too well. And so she set herself to weigh the pros and cons of John King as he walked by her side conversing amiably, while she scrutinised him with carefully guarded but keenly observant eyes.

He was lean and bronzed; that was pleasing to her. (She had vetoed the fat and pink variety from any place in her estimation after seeing Prince Ajax.) And, then, he was a sportsman with the 'air of modest stillness and humility' than which 'nothing so becomes a man.' Altogether to the eyes of the Princess Horatia he seemed so much more desirable than any royal swashbuckler that she determined to forget the gulf between them.

He was so 'serviceable' too. The princess greatly admired this trait. To her mind it was a royal virtue. To rule and to serve were not to be dissociated, but went ever hand-in-hand. Prince Ajax had scorned such a notion. They had quarrelled rather hotly on the point, she remembered. Man as man, he had asserted, whether of royal blood or no, was designed to rule and to be served—by women, of course. But John King evidently thought otherwise, for when Miss Pinkerton's mule presently came to a stop at a spot where a shallow cavern in the rocky cliff suggested a halting-place, and Miss Pinkerton faintly proposed tea, it was he who promptly detached their tea-basket from the baggage-mule's pack and set the kettle agoing. He also it was who unstrapped their rugs and cushions and seated them comfortably in the little cave, waited upon them all the time, and finally took the major share of the packing up.

By the time they came in sight of the ancient royal fortress, poised like an enchanted palace upon the rocky pinnacle of the mountain-top, and silhouetted against the gorgeous sunset sky, the heart of the Princess Horatia was fluttering like a bird's in the fowler's net.

It was not so much the sight of Hesione, strange to say—beautiful, soul-stirring, and romantic as it was—that caused this leaping in

her pulses; it was John King—the glance of his eyes, the sound of his voice, the spirit within him, which seemed so strangely akin to her own, though she was the rightful Queen of Promethea.

These tender feelings came upon her perhaps most strongly when she watched his graceful figure pass before her towards the gateway of the fortress, to which, he had proposed, he should hasten forward and make demand for her entrance and Miss Pinkerton's. The monks, who for many centuries now had acted as custodians of the ancient royal stronghold, were, it was known, extremely chary of admitting a woman within its time-honoured walls. But the golden key, he had assured her, would probably put matters right.

Thus, when, after a short colloquy with the guardians of the place, he led her mule over the rough cobbles of the great grim gateway, with a monk standing obsequiously at either side with modestly downcast mien, a wave of exultation possessed her soul. Was she not entering the goal of her heart's desire, the cradle of her ancient race, and entering it right royally too, led by a champion bold and true, albeit he was only John King?

Small wonder that her heart felt tender towards this devoted servitor, and that her lips uttered his commonplace name caressingly as she stretched herself, happily tired, upon the hard pallet bed of the austere monastic cell allotted to her within the famous walls of Hesione!

VIII.

The fair and sparkling morning that dawned did nothing to divert the tender sensibility of the Princess Horatia for her travelling companion, but rather strengthened it. John King continued to render his pleasant service, escorting her throughout the ancient fortress from dungeon to rampart, and drawing skilfully from the garnered knowledge of the monks the lore concerning the legendary handiwork of Prometheus, so that the princess felt entirely justified in her bold design in thus visiting the renowned stronghold of her royal line. But what made it all the more satisfying to her soul was the fact that John King did not attempt to disguise the increasing warmth of his devotion towards herself. It waxed even as the sun in the turquoise heaven, nor waned as it sank in splendour on the western sky.

This, as can be imagined, was highly pleasing to the womanly vanity of the young princess, and it is impossible to say what might have been her answer to his bold suit which he pressed that very afternoon had not a wholly unexpected incident occurred to change the tenor of their friendship.

Towards sunset they had, at his suggestion, wandered down a narrow, precipitous, and half-subterranean flight of steps, which, as he had

already discovered, led down to a wondrous little cavern hewn out of the face of the rock in the form of a balcony, or *loggia*, whence could be seen the full expanse of the mountain-track winding down to the valley.

Miss Pinkerton, uninvited and unable to follow, watched their descent with dismayed eyes. What could be more engendering of an undesirable intimacy than such an expedition—with a hand to be stretched forth at every turn, not to speak of the possible necessity of carrying the princess bodily from a perilous position? Miss Pinkerton remembered the stiles in the fair green fields of her native land, and the time-honoured use that men and maidens had been wont to make of them in the days of their youth and folly, and metaphorically wrung her hands in despair, being thoroughly distrustful of the discretion of the Princess Horatia.

Her fears were by no means groundless, for John King was not slow to seize the golden opportunity. It was while they stood together in the flaming sunset, gazing down upon the glorious prospect displayed before them, that he openly avowed his love and laid his heart at the feet of Miss L'Estrange.

This he did with such ardour and sincerity that it might well have got the better of the worldly wisdom of the Princess Horatia, and her hope of asserting her rights as Queen of Promethea, had she not, at the self-same moment, heard another voice sounding unpleasantly upon her ear, and that the voice of no less a person than Prince Ajax.

There was no mistaking the strident, unreasonable, and violent expletives that were rapped out in angry abuse of all things Promethean in general, and in particular of the steep and crooked steps down which he had blindly stumbled, to be projected violently into the midst of the little cavern and almost into the arms of the dismayed Princess Horatia.

At any other moment in her life's history there was nothing she would have enjoyed more than this sight of Prince Ajax's discomfiture. His face, always full and florid, was strongly reminiscent of a baited turkey-cock's, while his green huntsman's hat, recalling a Wagnerian hero with its ridiculous peacock-plume, inclined over one eye in a rakish and unprincely manner. But seeing he had so clumsily precipitated himself into the most tender and romantic episode of her whole career, it could not be expected that even the Princess Horatia could fully appreciate either the dramatic or the ludicrous aspect of his entrance.

Indeed, the horrified tone in which she uttered his name might well have betokened, even to one less obtuse than Prince Ajax, a grave solicitude for his welfare.

When he had sufficiently recovered to adjust his hat, or, rather, to doff it on recognising his liege-lady, click his heels together, and bend

over her hand, he accordingly expressed his thanks for her most gracious and ever-to-be-cherished concern, but assured her that, owing to a beneficent Providence that always interposed favourably on his behalf, he was unharmed. He further went on to expatiate upon the extraordinary and divinely-to-be-interpreted omen of good fortune that the rightful Queen of Promethea should, on this her evidently private visit to her heritage, thus meet with the devoted and undaunted upholder of her cause within the very cave of the great founder of her royal race and kingdom, to which he was even now come disguised, as she must perceive, as a Promethean huntsman, to promote secret negotiations on behalf of her righteous and lawful claim, and in accordance with his imperial father's firm wish and purpose to see her restored to the throne of her fathers, for which cause he was ready to draw his undimmed sword, nor sheath it until he had driven forth the miscreant usurping holder of her crown.

Brevity of expression was not one of Prince Ajax's strong points, and though the princess made desperate efforts to cut him short, or at least turn the impetus of his talk into other channels that she might be able to preserve some shred of her incognito, he continued his blatant boast of restoring the kingdom to his all-but-betrothed bride by the might of his own prowess, until her whole life, lineage, and aspirations were laid bare before her humble admirer, John King.

Never had the Princess Horatia found herself in such a quandary. She scarcely knew whether to laugh or to cry. The situation was worthy of a burlesque. Yet, with John King standing a pace behind her, and silently viewing it all with his keenly humorous eyes that had so lately bent upon her with the Question of all Questions in their deep, ardent gaze, it seemed more like a matter for tears.

And meanwhile the Great Question was unanswered. It never could be answered now.

Henceforth she was no longer Miss L'Estrange to whom he had so honestly declared his love, but the Princess Horatia of Promethea, the daughter of a line of kings, while he was only a simple gentleman with a commonplace name.

Yet it was this same simple gentleman of the commonplace name who now took command of the awkward situation. Stepping forward, courtier-like, as if to the manner born, and making use significantly of his new-found knowledge, he inquired, 'Does your Highness wish to return?'

Offering his hand with an ease and grace worthy of an Elizabethan gallant, he led her, in spite of Prince Ajax's gobblings (which, as it were, he waved aside), through the low aperture of the cavern to the crooked stairway, where a compatriot of the prince's, in a like disguise to his royal master's, did his best to click his heels together and flatten himself against the rocky wall. Farther up the steps they had a fleeting vision of a pair of sandalled feet and fluttering woollen skirts which, the Princess Horatia shrewdly suspected, belonged to the reverend Father Superior of Hesione. He was standing musingly upon the ramparts surveying the sunset when they emerged at the stairhead, and turned a benign welcoming gaze upon them; but his expression was not altogether as composed as it was calculated to be.

'Does your Highness wish to retire?' said John King. 'Or'—

'Yes, yes, I shall go in at once,' replied the princess, breathless and agitated, and not daring as yet to return the honest gaze of her erstwhile suitor. 'I'm rather tired. I sha'n't come out again. Good-night, Mr King, and thank you. Thank you very, very much for—for all you've done. I'm'— But further speech failed her. She held out her hand, and John King stooped and kissed it.

'Good-night, your Highness!'

(Continued on page 807.)

'FARMER GEORGE.'

SOME UNPUBLISHED ANECDOTES.

By GERTRUDE BACON.

AMONG the few family treasures that I, as a younger member of a younger branch, have inherited is an ancient soft-leather-backed MS. book, its yellowing pages covered thickly with an old man's shaky but flowing writing, inscribed in ink that is too good to fade. On its title-page it bears the date 1847, and the inscription: 'Reminiscences of the late John Bacon, R.A., and other Persons of his Time; so far as an old and treacherous Memory may be relied on.'

The writer was my great-grandfather, John Bacon, junior, himself a sculptor of no small fame, many of whose works stand beside those of his more illustrious father in Westminster Abbey and St Paul's. He was over seventy years of age when he penned these patient pages that now lie before me, and he wrote of the days of his own and his father's youth in the latter half of the eighteenth century when George the Third was king.

And Farmer George himself bulks largely in

the old man's intensely interesting, if rambling, story; as indeed he should, for it was largely to his favour that John Bacon, R.A., owed his rapid rise to fame and fortune as a sculptor. Reared in bitter poverty, though of gentle birth, it was by his sheer innate genius that he rose early to renown, and in 1769, when only twenty-eight, received from the hands of the great Sir Joshua himself the first gold medal for sculpture that the newly founded Royal Academy had awarded. A year later he was elected A.R.A., later R.A.; but the turning-point of his career came when Christ Church College, Oxford, desiring a bust of his august Majesty, the young and rising artist was fortunate enough to secure the commission to execute it.

Then indeed came his chance. Clad in plain and sober clothes, armed with his best modelling-tools—we have them in the family yet—and with a silver syringe (which did away with the ungraceful necessity of squirting the water on his model from his mouth!), Bacon repaired to the palace to execute his task. Authorities agree that he was a man of most perfect tact and manners, especially in his dealings with the exalted. Royalty was pleased, and smiled. Where royalty smiled in those days the rest of the world proved mighty agreeable. More copies of the royal bust were commissioned. Orders poured in on all sides from the great and the wealthy; and the young artist was soon established in Newman Street as a fashionable sculptor, with more work to his skilful hands than he could well accomplish, and a growing fortune, which at his death in 1799 amounted to £60,000.

Naturally, therefore, George the Third finds place of honour among the crowd of illustrious personages who figure in these unpublished 'Reminiscences,' and it is to him alone that the following extracts refer. Written as they are in the quaint and stilted language of the formal early Victorian age, they have a delicate old-world savour of a time that seems very, very far away; and as I turn the discoloured pages I seem to hear the soft and deliberate accents (for so they have been described to me) of an intensely courtly old gentleman of strong evangelical bent, and I see again his well-known portrait with its handsome features, blue eyes, and abundant silver hair, high-shouldered coat and enormous white stock of eighty years ago.

This is how the old man wrote, for his children, of his father's great patron: 'My father was one of those who opposed the silly and disrespectful notion, too prevalent among a certain class, that this monarch was not to be regarded as possessing superior intellectual qualities. That thoughtless, superficial opinion arose, I suppose, from the loquacity in which he often indulged, and particularly from his instantaneous change from one subject to another. If this be a sign of lightness among the com-

monality, I contend it was not so in a king who, as his numerous subjects come near him, must find an appropriate word for each (as, of course, the king must speak first); and as his wonderful memory retained something concerning every man's family or doings, he necessarily flew from one thing to another. Hence some very acute and discerning men were not aware of the superior character of his mind. I may instance Lord Erskine, with whom I was conversing on this very subject. He said, "I, like many others, had taken up the notion that the king is a man of inferior capacity, but after being Chancellor, the first time I was closeted with him I discovered my mistake. The king is a d—d clever fellow. He has as much sense in his little finger as is contained in the heads of all his Cabinet put together." . . . My father's testimony rested on the general tenor of the king's conversation, which was never trifling or commonplace. I recall his mentioning that the king once asked him what works he was employed on, and my father named a bust of General Guise, whose life had then just been published. The king said, "You have read his life, of course?" My father replied that he had not yet done so. "Then," said the king, "how can you give him the right expression? How can you mark his character?"

As flattering proof of King George's well-known royal memory, the memoirs cite how, having on one occasion inquired of the sculptor the number and names of his children, he never afterwards failed to ask after them all separately by name, never making a mistake, though the little Bacons were a numerous progeny. 'This reminds me,' the narrative continues, 'of Mr Langton, who was among the first projectors of the Bridgewater Canal, and who was introduced to the king in order to give him some account of the proceedings. The king was, as usual, very inquisitive respecting depth and width, and the method of overcoming certain difficulties. Mr Langton replied as well as he was able, but suggested he would be better able to satisfy his Majesty a twelvemonth hence, when the work had progressed. It was, however, three or four years later before his next interview with the king, by which time he had himself forgotten more than half the circumstances of which he was at once reminded by his interrogator. "How did you surmount the difficulties you met with at this place and that place? Did you find it needful to do so and so? You said your locks were to be so many feet wide—did you find that enough?" with many such questions not a little puzzling to Mr L., who told us that the king had remembered all he had told him four years before, while he himself had forgotten these early difficulties of his undertaking.'

The king's quickness in discerning faces in a crowd is instanced in a story of how he and Queen Charlotte once visited Whitbread's

Brewery, and the original Whitbread, founder of the firm, desirous of commemorating so flattering an event, ordered of Bacon two marble busts of his illustrious visitors to ornament his premises. (Are they there now, I wonder?) The trouble was that Bacon's previous bust of the king was too youthful to represent his present age, and Whitbread, who was politically out of favour, did not see how to approach the king for another sitting, while Bacon himself declined to do so. The astute brewer proposed to the sculptor that he should go to Cheltenham, where the king was then staying, and study his countenance as best he was able. 'To this my father also objected, not only because it would appear like thrusting himself into the presence of the king, but because he said he knew his royal patron would not look favourably on his leaving his work in London and luxuriating among the fashionable at such a place as Cheltenham. "But," said Whitbread, "you can get a look at him when he is surrounded by the crowds that follow him, and then he will not see you." To this my father at length agreed, and was very careful never to get sufficiently near to catch the king's eye, or when the crowd was not very dense. He returned to London triumphing in having accomplished his purpose without having been recognised. Some weeks afterwards he had occasion to be at Buckingham Palace, when the king, on seeing him, said, "How are you, Bacon? How do you like Cheltenham, Bacon?"'

Of a royal visit to Weymouth my great-grandfather tells a story on the authority of a friend of his, Edmund Henning, banker in that town. 'The king was riding out one morning on horseback, attended as usual, when he met a venerable-looking old man walking with a staff. The king stopped him, asked his age, and whence he had come; and the old man told him. "How far you have walked!" said the king; "it is seventeen miles from this place. And how much farther are you going?" "I be going to Weymouth." "Are you aware that that is seven miles farther yet, and that will make a long walk for a man of your age? Tell me what you are going there for." "Why, I be told that the king is there, and they do say that he be a very good sort of man; and I have thought I should like to see him before I die." "Well," said the king, "I can show you his picture. Will not that do as well?" and he put a guinea into his hand. "I be very thankful, sir," said the old man; "but I must go on and try if I can catch sight of the king himself, or I sha'n't be content." "Well," said the king, "look at the guinea in your hand, and then look at me;" on which he took off his hat and turned his face in profile, adding, "The guinea is only my picture; but now you see the king himself, so you may save yourself the labour of walking on to Weymouth." On

which the old man fell on his knees and blessed the king for his great kindness and condescension, and turned towards home again full of joy and gratitude.' Good old Farmer George!

In truth, this very simple-hearted and human monarch liked well enough to play the *Deus ex machina* to his subjects, and to feel himself a father to his people. In his position he could interfere, indeed, to an extent that might well have been resented in anybody else. This same Mr Henning of Weymouth, a great friend of the Bacons, was highly esteemed by the king, who often paid visits to him and his wife, or, if they were out, his young children, in the simplest and friendliest way possible, gave him presents, and on one occasion saved his hay-crop by opportunely sending him thirty or forty soldiers to help to get it in. The following are Mr Henning's own words, which the narrator here copies into his 'Reminiscences': 'On account of the king's illness the royal family did not visit Weymouth for more than two years, during which time it pleased God to deprive me of my dear and amiable wife, on account of which I was for more than a year in a low state of mind. When the royal family came again to Weymouth the king sent a special messenger to my house to request, or perhaps I ought to say to command, me to come to the Lodge, as he wished to see me, and which, of course, I obeyed. But a little before I arrived at the Lodge I met his Majesty and his attendants going for a ride. He received me very graciously, and we had not ridden but a little way when his Majesty said to his attendants, "I wish you to keep behind as I want to speak to Mr Henning." He then addressed himself to me, and said, "I am now going to mention a subject that is very painful to me, but more so to you; that is the great loss you have sustained. I can assure you that the queen and all of us sympathise with you most sincerely, and we hear that you give way too much to grief. Now you ought not to do so, seeing it is what God has been pleased to appoint. I wish to give you a little advice, and that is, look around you and see if you can find another worthy, good woman, and marry again. But remember one thing—never expect to meet with such another as your late wife; if you do, take my word for it you will be disappointed."'

Part of the reason for the very real and continued interest that King George took in the sculptor is undoubtedly to be found in the decided bent they both had for religious discussion. It is certain that much edifying argument took place during the hours the king sat for his bust, greatly, no doubt, to the satisfaction of both. This little *penchant* of the king's occasionally led him into trouble, as witness the following tale, related on the authority of a Mr Leach, one of the royal attendants. 'In the grounds attached to Windsor Castle was a

gardener, whom the king, while taking his private walks, would occasionally stop and converse with, as he discovered him to be a reader of his Bible, and one who had religion at his heart. He was, however, frequently so imprudent as to detain the king longer than he ought to have done, not having the good sense to perceive that the king submitted to be detained, not from respect to him or pleasure in listening to him, but purely out of deference to the *subject* he was conversing on. Mr Leach told us that, from his sitting-room at the back of the castle, he observed the king walking onwards till he got sight of this gardener, when on a sudden the king turned back and walked away. The man was simpleton enough to walk after him, which, the king perceiving, mended his pace; the man in consequence quickened *his* pace, till the king found it necessary to run. The man then ran also; but Mr Leach said he had the pleasure to see that the king was too nimble for the man, and reached the steps which led up to his library before the gardener could overtake him, opened the door, and banged it against his pursuer!

The picture of his panting Majesty, pursued by the implacable gardener, is a pleasing one. Some of the king's servants, however, knew better how to get round him. "There was an old porter at Buckingham House. When the king went to reside principally at Windsor Castle he took this man with him. Three or four weeks afterwards the king came across the man, and said, "Well, John, how do you like Windsor?" The man replied, "I will confess to your Majesty that I do not like it at all!" "Not like Windsor!—not like Windsor! How is that, John?" "Please, your Majesty, Windsor starves me." "Starves you!—starves you! Anybody starved in my house?" "No, please your Majesty, there is enough and to spare as it regards the body; but Windsor starves my soul." "Starves your soul!" said the king; "starves your soul! How can that be?" The man replied, "I know your Majesty requires an honest answer, and therefore I mention that, as your Majesty allows your servants to worship God on the Sabbath day wherever we prefer to go, I had the privilege of attending the ministry of Mr ——" (mentioning some eminent Dissenting minister); "but at Windsor I cannot find out any such preacher." "Oh," said the king, "if that is the case, no man shall starve his soul for me. You shall go back to Buckingham House," and he allowed him instantly to return."

There is another delightfully simple story on the authority of this same Mr Leach. "On one Sunday afternoon the chimney of the room where the king and queen were sitting paid no respect to royalty, and began to smoke. The queen said, "We must send for Leach." "No, my dear," said the king, "let us put up with the inconvenience. Mr Leach will not like to be

engaged in superintending such an affair on Sunday." This, continues the 'Reminiscences,' 'was a concession to what the king knew Mr Leach's religious principles would forbid him to be employed about!'

Space forbids the multiplying of these extracts, though room must be found for the following. 'Another anecdote of his Majesty ought to be recorded, which I take for granted to have been a fact, as it was related to me by the celebrated musician, Mr Charles Wesley, the brother of that wonderful musical genius, Mr Samuel Wesley. We were speaking of the king's general preference for Handel's music, and he informed me of a remarkable prediction of Handel himself respecting the fact. Handel was at Hampton Court when it was the residence of the Prince and Princess of Wales, father and mother of George the Third, who was then only about two years old. Handel was made to entertain a large company of nobility and others who, as is too common, were indulging in conversation while Handel was playing on the harpsichord. But the young prince, who had been playing on the carpet, crept under the harpsichord and sat listening with much delight; which Handel, discovering, said to a nobleman, "My lord, do you see this little prince? Mark my words, my lord; this little prince will patronise my music when I am dead and gone."'

My great-grandfather's own words make fitting conclusion. 'Having related so many matters regarding this good king, the remark may be allowed, what a fine thing to be a king, as it appears that the smallest affair, the most commonplace action, shall be of sufficient importance to be recorded; so that the finger of an illustrious prince seems like the philosopher's stone, turning everything it touches to gold. But for this circumstance, I should be accounted weak and silly for putting value upon an old silk bag and rose, such as in olden times was worn instead of a tail to the wigs of gentlemen in full dress. On one occasion (but I regret I cannot call to mind on what occasion it was) my father had an obligation laid on him to go to Court, and, very much against his own inclination, to go full dressed, with blue satin waistcoat edged with gold lace, ruffles, stone-set knee-buckles, a sword by his side, and powdered wig, having the rose and bag before referred to. How so subordinate a person as my father happened to be near the king I cannot explain; but so it was that, on withdrawing, the king said, "Bacon, your rosette is untied!" On which my father, of course, thanked his Majesty, and was about attempting to tie it himself, when the king said, "Here, I'll tie it for you," which he condescended to do. This rosette is consequently placed among my much-treasured memorials.'

Alas that this priceless relic cannot now be traced!

KYTSON THE MERCHANT.

A BUSINESS MAN OF TUDOR TIMES.

By ARTHUR L. HAYWARD.

I.

THERE can be few satisfactions equal to that of founding a family. To start from little or nothing; to cherish ambitions of wealth, power, and position; to see these ambitions realised and their ends perpetuated, must be one of the truest gratifications possible to any man. How much greater must this have been when wealth was harder to win, when power was restricted to a few, and position was a question of birth! To found a house was a rarer event four hundred years ago than it is now, when easy money has brought with it power, and has dispensed with the necessity of birth in attaining position.

The sneering remark that we are a race of shopkeepers is just. We are and always have been a nation of middle-class folk. Four centuries of shopkeepers have made the greatest Empire of the world, and have seen the decay of every nation which has depended upon prestige and noble tradition as its sole supports. The tradesmen and merchants of Tudor London did more to build the British Empire than all the statesmen, soldiers, and sailors who have so gallantly given of their best to uphold it.

Though it took centuries for the work of these early pioneers to bear fruit in all corners of the earth, England herself benefited by their labours immediately. As these merchant princes made their fortunes they moved out into the English shires, bought estates which the dissolution of the monasteries had left in the king's hands, or acquired property which the old lords of the land were growing unable to maintain with the death of feudalism; and the wealth and business ways of the new-comers soon brought prosperity to the country-side.

Typical of these merchant princes was Sir Thomas Kytson, mercer and merchant adventurer, sheriff of London, and builder of Hengrave Hall, near Bury St Edmunds. As the record of one of the many rising merchants who, as Froude says, 'were able to root themselves in the land by the side of the Norman nobility, first to rival and then slowly to displace them,' what is known of his career may be read with interest.

Our democratic spirit has always treasured the ideal of the poor lad who tramps to London and in fullness of time becomes Lord Mayor. Such careers were as rare in olden days as they are now, though we always like to think that such things might be. Dick Whittington, the embodiment of this encouraging legend, was, as a matter of historical fact, never a penniless boy, but came from a well-to-do family of Gloucestershire, and started his London life with moderate means.

The prosperous London merchants were nearly all drawn from the middle classes, and in most cases came from the country, whither they eventually returned as wealthy landowners to build comfortable mansions and found county families.

II.

The subject of this sketch was a man of this type. The Kytson family held property at Warton, near the Westmorland border of Lancashire, and had been settled there for centuries. Though well-to-do, they were not wealthy, and the keen wits and insatiable ambition of young Thomas Kytson must soon have made him impatient of dull life in a corner of the country, remote in these days, but far more so in the opening years of the sixteenth century. So it happened that about 1503, when he was eighteen years of age, he came to London, and was duly apprenticed to one Richard Glasyer, a wealthy mercer. At the end of his time he was admitted into the Mercers Company, being then twenty-two years old, and embarked in business on his own account.

The mercers of Tudor times were wholesale traders in silks, velvets, cloth of gold, and other finery. The increase of wealth and the habits of pomp and luxury which were beginning to find favour amongst all classes made their business one of the most profitable in the land. In conjunction with the merchant adventurers they attended the staples or cloth fairs on the Continent, and had their branch houses in Antwerp, Middelburg, and Flanders, whence their agents travelled through the Low Countries, and went far afield in search of goods to be imported into England. The finest of materials passed through their warehouses ere they were cried for sale by the prentice-lads of Cheapside.

Young Kytson threw himself into this trade with eagerness, and in ten years' time had already laid the foundations of a considerable fortune. As the son of a country squire with some influence in his own shire, and by virtue of his increasing wealth, at the age of thirty-one he was possessed of sufficient interest to obtain an appointment in the royal household, where, in 1516, he became one of the Knights of the Body, sworn to attend in the king's chamber. In this way he came into personal contact with Henry, and began a number of financial dealings which ran into very large figures. There are records of royal transactions amounting to many thousands of pounds, and a glance at the portrait of Thomas Kytson dispels all doubt as to whether the profit of these transactions showed in the merchant's ledgers or in the royal accounts.

Holbein depicts Kytson with a hard, shrewd face, thin lips closed together firmly, and calculating eyes, which make one sympathise with the wail of a nameless debtor who needed some £800 'to save me harmless against master Kitsun, mercer of London.' A certain widow, Katherine Blount, likewise had little cause to love the hard-headed business man who threatened to turn her out of her home unless she paid a sum equal to £1200 of our money. 'Kytson will have his money at Candlemass or enter into the land,' she complains to Thomas Cromwell.

III.

But business was business in Tudor days as in our own times, and at the age of thirty-seven Kytson was a flourishing merchant and a figure in the City. He had a house with a chapel attached to it in Milk Street, the furniture of which was valued at well over £2000 of our money; a garden under the shadow of London Wall in Coleman Street; another house and chapel at Stoke Newington; and had already begun the splendid mansion in Suffolk which was to perpetuate his name.

In 1521 Thomas Kytson resolved to settle in the country. His business interests required that he should not be so far from London as his native Warton, so he bought from the Duke of Buckingham the manors of Hengrave, in Suffolk, and Colton Bassett, in Nottinghamshire, for a sum exceeding £30,000 of our money. The transaction was barely completed when the Duke of Buckingham was attainted, and Henry VIII. made a bold attempt to seize the properties already sold. But he found his master in Kytson, who fought the case stubbornly, and did not rest content until he had obtained an Act of Parliament confirming him in his manors. This Act, which is dated 1524, gives some inkling of the position he held in the City, for it describes him as 'citizen and mercer of London, otherwise called *Kytson the Merchant*.' Indeed, in his correspondence on the matter Kytson mentions the fame and unpopularity he had earned by his harshness in exacting a loan for the king.

The building of Hengrave Hall was begun as soon as the property was definitely secured. Contracts were given out, and for thirteen years the great work continued. The carving and extra-skilled labour were performed by artisans from London, but the fabric was entrusted to local workmen, the particulars of whose services are all recorded in still-existing account-books. The mason's contract was given to one Ihon Eastawe, of whom it is stated: 'The said Ihon must make a house at Hengrave of all manor of masons work, bricklaying, and all other things concerning the masondrie and bricklaying . . . according to a frame which the said Ihon has seen.' This frame was evidently a complete model of the proposed

mansion duly passed by Thomas Kytson. For this work Ihon was paid £2400. The plasterer contracted to do his work, including ceilings, for £1500. The entire cost of Hengrave Hall, when completed, ran into a sum exceeding £40,000 of our money.

The plaster and stone were mostly brought from Northamptonshire, coming by water to Brandon, and thence by road. A quantity of stone, however, much of the lead, and other materials were obtained at the dissolution of the lesser monasteries, when the destruction of the houses of God furnished this London merchant with cheap material for the erection of his private mansion. In 1538 the work was completed, and over the doorway was inscribed its builder's name:

Opus hoc fieri fecit Tome Kytson.
Ano Dni MCCCC tricesimo octavo.

No expense was spared in furnishing it with a grandeur worthy of its size. In the 'great chamber' alone were eight huge pieces of arras, one hundred and sixty yards in length, depicting hunting scenes and imagery-work. The house was, indeed, a self-contained community, producing everything necessary to run it, there even being a room devoted to the manufacture of candles.

Meanwhile Kytson's prosperity and importance in the business world were daily increasing. He was twice Warden of his Livery Company, and soon became Master. He had a branch house in Antwerp and a warehouse in London full of cloth of gold, satin, tapestry, velvets, furs, fustians, &c., to the value of over £14,000 of modern money. His travellers were scouring Europe, and constantly passing to and fro between London and Flanders. In connection with this, one comes across an incident suggestive of recent times. One of his servants chanced to be coming over from Holland with a large quantity of copper. England was at that time at war with Scotland, and the worthy Dutch authorities were, as ever, desperately anxious to offend neither party, but to maintain a strict neutrality. So Kytson's servant was arrested on the charge of trying to smuggle munitions of war into England, and only after endless formalities, and the swearing of solemn oaths that the copper was not for the making of ordnance, was he allowed to proceed.

IV.

The last day of May 1533 was a day such as London has rarely seen. Ann Boleyn was to be crowned, and the city had determined to do her honour. Cornhill and Gracechurch Street were blazing in scarlet and crimson; Cheapside was draped in cloth of gold, tissue, and velvet. The streets from Temple Bar to the Tower were freshly gravelled, and were lined with the gayest of holiday-making throngs. Every window was filled with the smiling faces of the citizens' wives

and daughters, chattering eagerly, and straining their necks every now and again to watch a gorgeous apparessed figure on a great black Flemish horse, who rode up and down the line of procession to see that all was in order. This was Thomas Kytson, one of the sheriffs of London, who had reached the height of his civic dignity, for he resolutely refused to become eligible for the mayoralty.

Presently there is a thunder of guns from the Tower, Kytson dashes off to take his place in the procession, and then, amidst the clash of bells from every City steeple, and cheers from every citizen's throat, the dazzling column makes its way through the streets. French knights and English knights, mitred abbots and crimson-gowned barons, earls and marquesses in all their glory, pass on. Here come the Lord Chancellor, the Venetian Ambassador, the two Archbishops, the Lord Mayor with the city mace, Garter King at Arms; and then, amidst all her bridal glory, Ann Boleyn, the new Queen of England—'fortune's plaything'—in a white chariot with a golden canopy tinkling with tiny silver bells. Close by her side, with unmoved face, possibly seeing far into the future with those piercing eyes of his, rides Thomas Kytson—plain Thomas Kytson but little longer, for that same afternoon saw him dubbed a Knight of the Sword.

As sheriff Sir Thomas Kytson presided over the inquisition taken at the Guildhall in connection with the great trial of Lord Montagu and the Marquis of Exeter for sympathy with the papal cause. Shortly afterwards he was on the jury for the trial of Sir Geoffrey Pole, Sir Edward Neville, and others implicated in the same affair. He also accompanied Bishop Lee of Coventry and Lichfield to the Charterhouse, where he received the oath of allegiance from the monks, so soon to be dispossessed. On the conclusion of peace with Scotland we find him attending the Windsor Herald as he rides through the City to proclaim peace from St Magnus, London Bridge; Leadenhall Street; the Standard, Chepe; and the Conduit in Fleet Street. These few glimpses are all we get of the busy civic life of this prosperous London merchant.

v.

Another great purchase of land took place in the spring of 1540. A number of manors adjacent to Hengrave were on the market, and Sir Thomas Kytson bought them for something over £43,000. He had by this time spent more than £125,000 on his country estate, and yet at the age of fifty-five was, so far, without an heir. His first wife had given him a daughter, since married to a Suffolk squire; his second wife, Margaret Donnington, the daughter of one of his neighbours at Stoke Newington, had borne him a girl, and was about to become a mother once more. Would the new-comer be a son, or was there to be no child of his own name to inherit

his vast wealth and follow his footsteps in the newly built mansion and estate?

It must have been some such thought as this which made the sharp business man put off making a will and setting his affairs in order. Whatever the reason, however, no will was made, and his last huge purchase was not completed when death stepped in with dramatic suddenness.

It was the evening of the 11th September 1540, and Sir Thomas Kytson lay stricken mortally sick in his great bedchamber at Hengrave. One can picture the room with its tapestried walls, the thick Eastern rugs, and the luxury and comfort the great mercer's travellers had been able to procure him from every market in the world. In a huge canopy bed lay the master, all his grandeur and pomp slipping away farther and farther with every breath he drew. There had been no time to put anything in order, no preparations had been made, and the whole household was numbed by the catastrophe which had overtaken its head.

The chapel bell had just struck eight when one of the watchers by the bedside, Henry Payne by name, leaned over the dying man and asked whether he had left any will. Kytson shook his head and murmured, 'No.' Some time before he had been heard to say that his wife was to have his property. Was that still his wish? asked Payne. 'Ay, marry, shall she,' was the reply. With these four words the greatest estate in England was disposed of! Four hours later Sir Thomas Kytson was dead.

His body received a funeral befitting so great a man. Over £3000 was spent on his obsequies, and a visitor to Hengrave might well expect to find him lying in a tomb worthy of the splendid estate he had created. But his widow was young and pretty; moreover, she was the wealthiest heiress in England. In a short while she became the wife of Sir Richard Long; and on his death, a few years later, she married the second Earl of Bath, who was astute enough to make it an article in his marriage-settlement that he and his wife should reside at Hengrave Hall, 'forasmuch as it . . . was commodious, profitable, necessary and delectable for the health, wealth, and pleasure of the Earl.' When her time came, the countess was laid to rest with her three husbands in Hengrave Church. The effigy of herself in a gown of crimson ermine, with a close black coif encircled by a coronet, lies with that of the Earl of Bath beneath a splendid canopy on an altar tomb of marble and coloured freestone. On the step of this, as though a mere intruder or a poor relation, lies Sir Thomas Kytson, the founder and builder of all the magnificence around.

'Here lyethe Sir Thomas Kytson, Knight,' reads the simple inscription, 'who departed this lyfe ye XIth of September Anno Domini MDXL etatis LV.'

VI.

The crown to all his ambitious schemes and ceaseless labours was denied to Sir Thomas. A month after his death the widow gave birth to a son, who was christened after his father.

Thomas Kytson the younger came into the property on the death of his mother, when he had just come of age, and he settled down as a county magnate. Considering the political and religious troubles of the times, he led a peaceful life, the greatest event in which, perhaps, was the visit of Queen Elizabeth on her triumphal journey to Norfolk. 'Before her Highness passed into Norfolk there was, in Suffolk, such sumptuous feasting and bankets, as seldom in any part of the world hath been seen before. . . . Sir Thomas Kytson and divers others of worship kept great houses, and sundry, either at the Queen's coming or return, solemnly feasted her Highness, yea and defrayed the whole charges for a day or twayne; presented gifts; made

such triumphes and devices, as indeed was most noble to beholde, and very thankfully accepted. . . . On her return she went to Sir Thomas Kytson's, where, in very deede, the fare and banquet did so exceede a number of other places, that it is worthy the mention. A show representing the fayries, as well as might be, was there seene; in the which show a rich jewel was presented to the Queen's Highness.' At the close of these festivities the queen very graciously conferred the honour of knighthood on her loyal entertainer.

With Sir Thomas Kytson the younger the male line died out. Though he was twice married, he had no son to succeed him; and on his death Hengrave, with all its grandeur, passed, through one of his daughters, to the D'Arcies, and thence to a Sussex family, the Gages, who held it until modern times. Three miles or so from Bury St Edmunds it still stands as magnificent as ever, a lasting monument to the commercial genius of that long-forgotten Tudor gentleman, Kytson the Merchant.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

CAPE AND WEST AFRICA—continued.

VII.

OUR first visit to the Oil Rivers, as the mouths of the Niger are called, was paid in March 1883, when we arrived in the *Boadicea* off the Brass River. Here we found H.M.S. *Flirt* at anchor, with Consul Hewett on board. Commander Hammick, of the *Flirt*, was an old West Coast ranger, having an intimate acquaintance with the rivers and their chiefs. We spent five very interesting days with him. A gun-vessel is scarcely calculated to accommodate at one time an admiral with his staff and a consul; but Hammick was more than equal to the occasion. Where he slept was a mystery to us. His cabin was given up to the admiral and the consul, while our cots occupied all the space on the tiny poop, from which, by the way, we were driven almost every night by the warnings of a coming tornado.

Each of the Oil Rivers has its so-called king, who is in reality the principal native oil-trader. The kings have their great war-canoes armed, as we saw them, with Whitworth guns, which they were always ready to use against one another.

The annual visit of the admiral was often taken advantage of by the consul, who possesses great power in the Rivers, to summon the kings and chiefs to a 'palaver,' and there settle disputes, without having recourse to the canoes and Whitworth guns.

We had a 'palaver' on board the *Flirt*. The 'boys'—that is, the slaves—of a chief named Spiff had maltreated the English doctor, and had been fined by the consul a hundred puncheons of oil.

Spiff refused to pay the fine, and the coming of the admiral in a ship of war gave the consul the backing of authority which he needed. After a long 'palaver,' Spiff agreed to 'leave the puncheons' before the end of the month.

At Bonny I was glad to meet Captain Bowler, chairman of the local Court of Equity, and an important man. Some twenty years before, as captain of the foretop, he had been a petty-officer in the *Marlborough*, my first ship.

We attended afternoon service in Bishop Crowther's church—the bishop and his clergy being all Sierra Leone negroes. We must have presented a ludicrous appearance, the admiral, the flag-lieutenant, and myself being carried across a swamp on the shoulders of three sturdy negroes supplied by Captain Bowler.

The service in the church was very interesting. The building was packed with women and young girls, all of them having their dark skins painted or stained with patterns in indigo. They all wore some head-covering, and a light shawl over their naked shoulders, as a concession to episcopal etiquette! It was amusing to see them donning their shawls as they came within sight of the church.

The service generally was in the native tongue, but English hymns were sung fairly well. The sermon was preached by the arch-deacon, a son of the bishop, in English, and translated, sentence by sentence, into the vernacular by a young clergyman.

On leaving the Mission Station we walked through the native town of Bonny, a collection of small huts. In a very forlorn square stood the

ju-ju house, a squalid, tumble-down shed, in which were a dozen or more hideous wooden images; also, fastened on bamboos planted upright in the ground, there were several rows of skulls, the heads of chiefs killed by the Bonny men in their wars.

Ju-ju and fetish appear to be the same thing, a mode of working on the ignorant superstition of the natives, occasionally usefully employed, but generally degrading. We passed a fowl-roost in the veranda of one of the huts with an empty gin-bottle hanging in front of it. The bottle was somebody's *ju-ju*, and served as a protection against thieves. No native would dare steal the fowls for fear of the harm the *ju-ju* might do to him! Might we not at times be grateful in England for some such protection?

VIII.

The trade of the Oil Rivers was mainly, as the name implies, in oil; in some places we also saw large quantities of ebony. To the everlasting discredit of Europeans, they had established a system of barter most degrading to the natives. A puncheon of oil would be paid for chiefly in Hamburg gin, a fiery spirit costing about one shilling and eightpence per gallon. Part of the payment was made in Manchester goods of weird patterns, specially designed for the West Coast; firearms, costing six shillings and upwards, and as likely as not to burst; gunpowder; umbrellas at one shilling and two shillings; elegant smoking-caps of cheap velvet, gold-braided, at four shillings and sixpence; old cavalry-swords at three shillings and sixpence; and so on. But the bulk of the payment was in gin!

All the chiefs of Bonny came on board the *Flirt* to pay their respects to the admiral: Oko Jumbo (the king), Wariboo, Dublin Green, Sam Hart, Squiss Banigo, and Long Tom—each in a splendid canoe, paddled by about thirty 'boys,' the youngest in the bows, the oldest aft. The chiefs looked a very ordinary set of negroes, but they had risen to be great men in their own country. Oko Jumbo offered a bullock for the ship's company. 'Send ashore and shoot any one you like,' he said. 'They are all mine.'

After a short 'palaver' the chiefs wandered about the ship, Wariboo—who was a great warrior owning war-canoes—asking for a box of polish, to see whether his 'boys' could make his Whitworth guns as bright as the *Flirt's* armament. They all left the ship together, and it was very striking to see the six great canoes—every 'boy' 'digging out' with his paddle for all he was worth, keeping perfect time to an accompaniment of tom-toms.

The admiral also had a visit from the ex-King George of Bonny, an æsthetic negro in well-cut clothes, with a velvet coat. He had been sent by his father, the late king, to England, 'to learn book,' so that he might be able to hold his own in 'palaver' with the white man. He cer-

tainly talked and wrote 'book,' his letters being florid compositions. He was said to have addressed a harangue to the chiefs to the effect that 'in every ever-changing scene of change-ful Bonny' he had been their friend. Unfortunately, at his first 'palaver' his 'book' had failed him, and he had been on the losing side. Want of success in such circumstances is unforgivable in Bonny, and the chiefs stopped his 'comey' (native customs dues), leaving him powerless and in debt, but still the perfect gentleman. On my being introduced to King George, he asked, 'Gifford or Jifford?' 'Gifford,' I answered. 'Oh, I thought you might be related to my friend Lord Gifford'!

IX.

Our next visit was to Opobo, the country of King Ja-Ja. He and Oko Jumbo were the two most powerful chiefs in the Oil Rivers, and had waged bitter war against each other. Ja-Ja did not come on board to pay his respects to the admiral so promptly as was expected of him; so the flag-lieutenant (Ian Grant) and I left for the shore to hurry him up. On the way we met a splendid canoe, in which, seated in a large Madeira chair, under a canopy of matting, we saw a black man wearing a tall white beaver hat, which would have been a joy to a Parisian *cocher*, a black-velvet coat and waistcoat bound with very wide silk braid, an enormous gold watch-chain, and a gaudy waist-cloth, beneath which were bare legs and feet.

We felt sure of our man, and hailed him: 'Are you the king?' 'Yes,' came the answer. 'Then you had better hurry on board. The admiral is waiting for you.' The canoe made all haste towards the ship, and we followed.

At this time Ja-Ja feared that his rule in Opobo was coming to an end, and, anxious to enlist the admiral on his side, he pressed him, in the openest manner, to accept a valuable gold repeater-watch. 'You keep my watch,' said he, 'memory for me. I keep yours, memory for you.' Now, the admiral's watch was a hack, lent him for the cruise by a Cape Town watch-maker; so the bribe was hardly veiled. I need not say the exchange did not take place, to Ja-Ja's great astonishment.

Next he invited us all to dinner, it being then about eleven o'clock. 'I go on shore and kill a cow. Dinner at three.' Some of us went, curious to see a native king at home. His 'Europe House' stood in the middle of a large oval compound, the boundary of which was formed of the huts of his many wives—forty or fifty, I think. Amongst them, I regret to say, was a German woman, but she had the grace not to stand at the door of her hut, as the native ladies did.

Dinner was served in a large central room, an old ship's fitting for tumblers and wine-glasses hanging over the whole length of the table.

The 'cow' appeared, in square fids, supplemented by palm-oil chop, baked yams, and Bass's beer. We made our meal off the two last named.

Twice during the dinner the king, who had been rolling the yams into pellets and dipping them into the palm-oil chop preparatory to eating them, washed his face and hands, a basin, soap, and towel having been placed on a spare chair alongside him.

Several of his young daughters came to the doors to have a look at us. Their black skin was entirely covered with bright-red colouring matter, to soften it, we were told. They had, however, no other covering!

X.

Back on board, we made our way to the Old Calabar River and Duke Town, which lies about forty miles from the sea, and is, therefore, above the mangrove-swamps that make the mouths of the Niger so unhealthy. The European 'factories' (that is, stores) at Duke Town were better than any we had seen, and there was a large and clean native town.

The chief authority here (always excepting the British Consul and the Court of Equity, composed of the heads of the European trading houses) was King Duke Eyumba IX. He had been crowned a year or two before our visit by Consul Hewett. The ceremony took place on board a British gun-vessel, and was accompanied by much toasting in ship's rum, a drink specially prized by the West Coast negro. The consul crowned him as Duke Eyumba VIII. A few hours later the king and his chiefs were seen coming off again, and the consul and the captain of the gun-vessel, having strong suspicions that more rum was the object of their visit, were ready at the gangway to meet them and prevent their coming on board.

'Consul,' the king shouted from his canoe, 'you make a mistake. My father Duke Eyumba VIII. I Eyumba IX. I come on board and you crown me again.' But Mr Hewett was fully equal to the occasion. 'All right,' he answered, 'Eyumba IX. it is;' and the disappointed king was constrained to shove off and go ashore.

On our arrival Eyumba IX. came on board the *Flirt* in a six-oared gig, sitting under a resplendent umbrella some ten feet in width, with broad stripes of the brightest colours. His costume consisted of a purple silk dressing-gown with sleeves and collar turned back with imperial yellow (a combination of European and Chinese royal colours!), a dazzling waist-cloth, and, to crown all, a very tall footman's hat with broad curly brims bound in gold, and two rows of gold lace on the hat itself.

He was accompanied by one of his courtiers, Archibong II. by name, who was dressed in a black frock-coat, a Lincoln & Bennett tall hat, a jersey, and a waist-cloth—legs and feet being

bare. A third chief, who gave his name as John Bokko Cobham, Esquire, did not affect a coat, but contented himself with a new jersey with bright-green silk facings. The king and Cobham Esquire were attended by mace-bearers, boys carrying handsome drum-major's wands of office! John Bokko Cobham's canoe was specially fine; he sat under a large umbrella with a deep scarlet fringe; in the boat were a dozen 'music men.' Most of them pounded tom-toms or played a kind of cymbal, while one with two pieces of bamboo beat a sort of drum made of hollowed wood, so big that it just fitted the bottom of the canoe. The general effect was painful to European ears, but apparently very pleasant to J. B. C., Esquire.

XI.

We were particularly desirous of learning what we could about the Old Calabar custom of 'Egbo,' of which Admiral Sir Frederick Richards wrote as follows: 'Egbo is a species of freemasonry comprised of several grades, with great privileges attached to membership. English traders purchase "Egbo" and become members, for the purpose of being able to recover debts from the natives for goods advanced for the purchase of palm-oil; it consists of nine grades, said to be of the total value of £1350, the higher grades not purchasable by Europeans. It is the only law of the people of Old Calabar, and may be regarded as a code founded on heathen superstition, invented by the governing minority for the purpose of keeping in subjection the governed masses, who are principally domestic slaves.'

As a special honour to the admiral, the king had 'ordered Egbo out,' and we were to see him.

In order to maintain the 'Egbo' mystery, the penalty of death was incurred by any unauthorised person looking at an 'Egbo' runner as he passed through the town. This ceremony took place at uncertain intervals, and without any warning, whenever a member wished to have a debt collected. Mr Hewett, however, obtained a concession that 'Egbo' should not be 'blown' without due notice being given in the town, so that the people might have time to get into their houses and shut the doors. (There are no windows through which local Peeping Toms might obtain a glimpse of the mystery.)

Accordingly on our landing there was not a soul visible, and we walked to the palace through perfectly silent streets. We were admitted to a large yard leading to an inner court, where we were met by Archibong II., who had discarded his frock-coat (shirt or underclothing he had none), but stuck to his hat. He was to escort us to the king.

The king received the admiral in his throne-room—an apartment about twenty-five feet in length, the walls covered with mirrors in deep gilt frames. Six large chandeliers with lustres, and about twenty lamps, hung from the ceiling;

a large photograph of His Majesty Duke Eyumba IX., and of the heir to the throne; a gorgeous sofa, with specimens of the needle-work of his wives; and two really handsome chairs of state, very solid, gilt all over, the backs being composed of the arms of England, completed the decoration of the room. The handsome seats of the state chairs were covered with cheap railway rugs!

Inviting the admiral to sit on one of the chairs, the king occupied the other, and refreshments were produced. We had been warned by the merchant who supplied the royal cellar to beware of the king's champagne and port, for which he paid nine shillings a dozen. They were duly produced, in a hamper; but, mindful of the warning, we asked to have some of the wine of the country, the fresh milk of the coco-nut, called *mimbo* in Old Calabar.

With very slight encouragement from Captain Hammick, the king sent his principal wife for his coronation robe, which must have come from the neighbourhood of Drury Lane. It was of purple velvet, reaching nearly to the ground, covered with stars and glittering ornaments; a crown of purple velvet, with bands of enormous imitation rubies and other precious stones set in tinsel brightly gilt, completed his costume. He proudly donned these splendours, and we found it very hard to keep countenance at the sight of this absurd little creature, with an expression of extreme satisfaction on his coal-black face, sitting on a gorgeous chair of state, holding his sceptre across his body, and sticking out his bare black legs a foot in front of him.

Next we were shown over the 'Europe House,' in one room of which we were amused to find, lying on a bed, the third volume of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, *The Complete Elocutionist*, and a Wesleyan Missionary magazine. Lest one should think that this was the class of literature read by the king's household, I may say that when we told our consul, he suggested that the books had been stolen from the Mission Station during a recent fire, which had burned down the greater part of it.

'Egbo' now came down the street—a sort of wild man of the woods, using a branch as a walking-stick, dressed apparently in chain armour, a very large, flat scarlet hat on his head, a big bunch of coloured feathers concealing his features, a thick bristly ruff round his neck and shoulders, and a similar ruff round his ankles. Tied to his waist was a large hand-bell, which clanged at every movement of his body. A group of men accompanied him, beating tom-toms.

The method of debt-collecting was apparently to lodge one of these men (a sort of Oil River bailiff) in the house of the debtor, and to impose a fine of a pig or a goat for every day that the debt was left unpaid.

XII.

Old Calabar appeared to be far more highly civilised than the other rivers which we visited. Yet even in Old Calabar many barbarous customs remained. The birth of twins, for instance, was regarded as so disgraceful as to call for the murder of mother and infants. One of the twins was supposed to be the child of the Devil, and, as it was not known which, both were killed; so was the mother, lest, on her giving birth to more children, the seed of the Devil should bear fruit. Here again good European influence came in; the missionaries provided a refuge for the twins, whilst the natives were persuaded to spare the lives of the mothers.

It must be remembered that the state of affairs which we witnessed was a great improvement on that which had existed some years previously. In Hertslet's *Treaties* can be read an account of a series of extraordinary efforts made by our consuls and naval officers to suppress crime amongst the natives. For instance, Commander Wratislaw, of H.M.S. *Ranger*, obtained from 'King Eyo Honesty III., Tom Eyo, and King Cameroons' a written engagement that they would 'abolish without delay the practice of punishing the innocent in room of the guilty, and would use their influence in abolishing the practice in the whole region of Old Calabar.'

Another treaty tells how the Governor of Fernando Po persuaded King Eyo to 'abandon the practice of sacrificing human beings, either upon anniversaries or as an offering to the gods, or upon the death of kings, chiefs or their relations, or upon any pretext whatever.'

The work thus begun was carried on steadily; European influence slowly remedied abuses, introduced law and order, and finally swept away the little native states, with their warring kings and cruel customs.

All these Oil River towns were eventually placed under British rule, and now form a part of Southern Nigeria.

(To be continued.)

WINTER BOUGHS.

AH! why should we pine
For the leaf's decline,
When the bare boughs fringed with frost
Are a splendour of silver, line on line,
Latticed and laced and crossed?

Summer at will
May be dreamed of still
With her wonder of blossom and wing,
Whenever the sun goes over the hill
With his crimson cloak a-swing.

For, see, in the west
Where the rose is guest
And the gold blooms linger yet,
A flame-red bird with a purple crest
Lies bound in the beech-tree's net!

WILL H. OGILVIE.

Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

INSTINCT.

By DOUGLAS NEWTON, Author of *War, Green Ladies, &c.*

PART I.

I.

COLLINS stood on the fo'c'sle-head of a West Indies packet-boat, and he was astounded at himself.

He stood limply staring at the slapping seas that pushed up the throat of The Water from the tossing at the Bramble, and he asked himself why he, a furniture clerk with a steady job and settled habits, had abruptly shipped as a common seaman. He had not even given notice to his firm in town. He stood frightened at the mad thing he had done, and a rough voice snarled, 'You over there—you staring at the ruddy moon—get to that winch, hang yer! Jump ter it!'

He remembered what he was, and what he was supposed to do. He jumped violently to the wrong thing. He was cursed for a landsman, and a kindly deck-hand put him right. (They were all busy with a wet and muddy chain that came in over the side and vanished across the deck into a small hole.) The deck-hand called, 'That lashin', matey,' and Collins tried three things before he got the right one.

'Wot sort o' seaman be you?' asked the deck-hand.

'I'm a furniture clerk,' stammered Collins—'on a holiday.'

'Ooliday!' gasped the deck-hand, straightening himself and spitting with unerring accuracy into a scupper. 'If this is yer idea o' a 'oliday, crieke, 'ow I sh'd 'ate yer work!'

II.

In this way did a strange phase in the life of John Collins open. It opened with a madness he could never explain. He had no right to go to sea; he hated the sea. He had no right to go to sea as a seaman; he hated manual work only slightly less than he hated work that was uncomfortable and made one wet. He had absolutely no right to ship aboard this packet at all, for he happened to be under contract to his furniture firm, and could not leave without a month's notice. Yet here he was, at sea as a seaman, defying the laws of employer and employee.

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Why he had done it he never did understand. He had come to Southampton for his fortnight's holiday. He had been told of the old-world charm of the town and the towns about, and the prettiness of the surrounding country. He had also been told that a man with expert knowledge and his eyes open could pick up some very decent bargains in old furniture. John Collins had combined a desire for old-world charm and scenery and a hankering for bargains, for which reason he had placed £30 in notes in his right hip-pocket.

And, being in Southampton, he had gone to see the docks. He was not very much interested in docks. He was less interested in ships—they were merely symbols of much sea-sickness to him. The sea and seafaring men had no glamour for him. But he went down to the docks. Perhaps because it was the thing to do in Southampton, perhaps because something drove him there.

He was doubtful about the impulse at first, rather more sure about it on his second visit. He felt he simply had to go down and look at that old-fashioned steamer with a curving prow—which a stevedore told him was a sign of a 'clipper-built,' whatever that meant. He went down because he felt he must go down. And as he stood looking at it, wondering why he had come, he heard some one say that it sailed for the West Indies in a day or so, that it was an old ship used on the inter-island trade only, and that it had come home to refit.

Frankly all this meant nothing to Collins. He wasn't thrilled. There was not the slightest excitement for him in the destination of the ship, or in the things the dockers brought to its derricks in their continuous barrow lines. The ship herself cast no spell over him as she lay at the wharf rocking gently as the second tide thrust against her, steam rising with hissing laziness from her old winches. She was just a ship to him.

As he stood looking at her, and at the men who came and went on the long gang-planks, he heard a man say, 'She'll sail short. Can't get no more deck-hands nohow.'

That meant nothing to him.

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He went away from her, wondering why he had gone to see her; went to his lodgings in Bugle Street, got out his bike, and set off to Winchester. He forgot all about the docks and this West Indies packet, *The Itchen*. But next morning he was down by her side again, looking at her.

He felt he had had to come; but now that he was beside her, he did not know why he had come. He stood there, a tall, ordinary figure of what one called a 'young man' to distinguish him from a youth. He had a pleasant, sallow face, of the kind that can be met by hundreds on London Bridge at the times when clerks swarm. You would like him vaguely if you had to talk to him, and you would never remember him, just as you would find no reason for picking him out from his fellows.

He was an obvious clerk, earning an obviously small, if fair, wage, content with his lot, determined to go on steadily with his steady job as long as he could hold it. Also, from his air of slight restiveness and an absence of comfortable complacency, one could tell that he was not married, but engaged to be married.

That was the one note of individuality in him, as it frequently is the one chance of individuality in the lives of so many of his kind. The even tenor of his days had been disturbed by the fact that he loved and wanted to marry a girl as pleasant and ordinary as himself—a girl very soft, pretty, and desirable in her own quiet way. She was the reason for that £30 in his pocket, and his craving for bargains in old furniture. He wanted those bargains to make money. His regular income (with annual rises) was the sort married people could live upon, but unmarried people could not wed on.

If they had been already married it would have done. But marrying meant a good deal of money. There was a house to rent and furniture to buy, and half-a-dozen legal and other things to do, each of them demanding spot cash. John Collins did not have that spot cash, or not quite enough of it. He was anxious to make a tight little extra sum to cover his wedding.

III.

But on that last morning when he came down to the docks to look at *The Itchen* he had forgotten all these practical facts. He had come on that strange impulse that forced him to go to her. It was the strange impulse that caused him to act in that mad way in the end.

There was no other word for it. Without reason or logic, without for a moment considering what it meant to himself or Winnie, he had behaved—like a madman.

And yet it had happened in such a casual and ordinary way.

A worried man had come off *The Itchen*. He began to stride towards the dock gates, when,

seeing Collins, he swerved aside. He cried, 'Say, you a seaman?'

'Me?' answered Collins in surprise. 'Good Lord, no!'

'Thought you was,' said the man. 'Seen you 'anging about a good deal. Thought you might be looking fer a ship. But I'm not in luck.'

He went striding off to the dock gates. Collins waited by the ship. He remembered having heard a man say that *The Itchen* was short-handed, and he guessed that this fellow's trouble was that he could not find hands to work her. But he felt no excitement about the matter. He did not feel any emotion at the thought that he had a chance to go to sea, to sail to the sun-glowing West Indies. He simply did not think about this at all, but stood idly gazing at the ship without any great interest.

He was there when the man returned, gloom settled on his face. He had been unsuccessful in his search for seamen. When he drew alongside Collins he stopped for sympathy, and said, 'This *is* my unlucky day,' as he scowled at the ship.

'Deck-hands scarce?' said Collins, speaking as one who merely said something for the sake of politeness.

'Not a ghost of a deck-hand in the port. And we sail on the afternoon tide—short-handed, hang it!'

Then Collins, to his own astonishment, said, 'All right, I'll come along with you.'

Directly he had said this Collins was staggered at his own remark. He felt that he had got himself into a mess. He felt that he must explain to the man that it wasn't he who had said that. He wanted to say that something outside himself had made that idiotic promise. And he found himself saying, 'I haven't been to sea before, ever, but I guess I could pick up the tricks pretty quickly. What do you say?'

The man had said very little. He had jumped at him. He had said that all that could be got over, and very promptly set about 'getting over' it. Collins, bewildered, anxious to explain, anxious to get out of this dilemma into which he had been so inexplicably plunged, but incapable—because of some force that kept him tongue-tied—of explaining or getting out of it, went through the process of 'signing on' in a sort of inarticulate protesting dream.

Something seemed to have run right away with him, and in such a manner as to make him go through with this insane and calamitous business in an entirely rational fashion. He behaved with the utmost common-sense in the committing of this disastrous act. He went to his lodging, fetched his suit-case, paid his landlady, and returned to the ship. He even, with this strange, thorough calmness against which he strove to rebel, wrote a picture-postcard to Winnie, and another to his 'boss' in the furni-

ture-office. He was so far in control of his actions that he chose for Winnie a view of the old Norman walls of Southampton because they were pretty, and a card bearing a view of St Michael's Church for his 'boss,' because that would lend an air of gravity to the important communication—this though both cards must come upon their recipients with the effect of a thunder-bolt.

He went aboard with the same calmness against which his soul seemed to struggle with a fruitless amazement. The fo'c'sle, with its darkness, its odours, and its cramped accommodation, seemed to him beastly. But this force, this spell, that had hold of him carried him into it as though to the manner born, and he selected a bunk in such a way as to suggest to the men that he had been at sailing all his life.

It was only when the ship had actually sailed that the malevolent force which had caused him to destroy all his prospects deserted him, and he became the insignificant furniture clerk once more, bewildered by the happenings around him, and beside himself with anxiety and fear at what he had done.

IV.

The voyage does not matter. It was one of entire misery for John Collins. He was sick. He loathed the hard work; he hated getting wet, and he was often wet; the conditions of life seemed to him really frightful. Physically it was a terrible voyage; he was close on breaking down under the strain and the bad conditions by the time it came to an end.

But bad as the physical side of it was, the mental side was awful. During the whole of the journey John Collins was obsessed by the thing he had done, and the things it meant to him.

It meant the shattering of his prospects. He had lost his job once and for all with the furniture firm. The position he had built up so carefully through years of steady work was swept away at one stroke. He would have to begin again—begin again at the beginning, and work up from a small position with a small salary. That would mean years before he reached the level from which he had been so ruthlessly torn.

And that, in turn, meant the end with Winnie. He couldn't possibly afford to marry Winnie for years and years now, even if Winnie overlooked this senseless act of his. He did not think she would overlook it. She was too practical and sensible; she would not be willing to run the risk of linking her well-being with a man who threw everything away from him, as he had, without the slightest excuse.

Even if she overlooked the strange act, he couldn't expect her to wait years and years for him; it was too much to ask a girl in her position to do so. She wouldn't wait, and he would lose her. He sat lonely for hours on the

fo'c'sle-head, quite oblivious to the soft glory of the amazing tropical nights into which *The Itchen* had steamed, because of this agony of loss in his heart.

Why had he been so mad? Why, when things had been so near, had he chucked everything away by this insane impulse? He found no explanation, no reason—save a ghastly one. He could only have done this thing because he was mad. Somewhere in him there lurked a strain of madness, he felt, that he had not known of—a strain welling up in his blood from some obscure generation. It had captured and controlled him at that devilish moment. He had shipped aboard *The Itchen* because he was mad.

He searched through his memories of his family to find who it was that had bequeathed him this ghastly strain. He could find nobody. Father, grandfathers, great-grandfathers; mother, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, they had all been ordinary, steady-going people. His immediate forebears had been clerks, as he was. None of them had ever travelled even. There was no explanation.

Yet madness was the only thing to explain his position. Why else this reasonless journey over a sea he hated? Why else that strong impulse to do what he did not want to do at all? If he could only see something behind it all he might have felt better. He saw nothing behind it—only madness.

V.

They called at West Indian ports. But John Collins took no pleasure in their novelty or colour. He simply did his work stolidly, his mind darkened by the obsession of his disastrous action.

Then, after a month of stolid monotony, John Collins again did a mad thing. *The Itchen* was in the Leewards—calling at Dominica, as a matter of fact. John Collins was lounging disconsolately on the quay, turning over and over again the old melancholy thoughts. It was a night of heavy, oppressive heat, but he did not notice that. He was asking again why he had ruined his life in this way.

Close to him was a sailing-boat preparing to get under way. A nigger on the quay was talking to one of its crew. He heard the sailor utter the name 'Sainte Marie.'

Sainte Marie meant nothing at all to him. But he went over to the quay beside the boat, and called down, 'Are you going to Sainte Marie?'

The half-caste in the boat flashed bright teeth up at him.

'No, sar; we's goin' Martinique. We call at Sainte Marie as we's go—that's what we do, sar.'

'You are sailing for Sainte Marie to-night?' asked John Collins, again with the inner powerless protest against his own action he had felt on the dockside at Southampton.

'We's sail at once, sar, but for Martinique. We's 'call only at Sainte Marie to-morrow afternoon. Lovely place, Sainte Marie, sar. Would you like to come?'

John Collins looked down at the boat.

'Yes, I'm coming,' he said, although he knew he did not want to go to Sainte Marie at all. He turned to the nigger on the quay. 'Look here, row me over to my ship, wait under the fo'c'sle and catch my bag over ship side when I throw it down, then take me ashore again. Be quiet about it now.'

In this way Collins, adding madness to madness, set off for an island he had never heard of, and never had any intention of visiting.

As he sat huddled in a cramped sailing-boat that combined a powerful and unpleasant smell with its other discomforts, he felt the limp despair that had come to him in the first moments after *The Itchen* had left Southampton. Why had he done this? What reason was there behind it? Was he just mad?

He huddled in the clumsy boat all night and the following morning, nursing his distress. Towards midday something happened to take his mind off his troubles. Looking up, he found that the seamen had collected at the forepart of the boat, and were staring ahead and making the air frantic with excited jabbering and gestures.

He went forward, and saw an astonishing sight. Like a great fan against the sky, and from the sea up, there lifted an enormous pall of smoke.

It was a vision to strike fear. As he stared at the silent and brooding pall Collins noticed that the day had changed. The air was sultry and malevolent. The world had become dull and lowering, and full of storm and dust. He could look at the sun, and about it was a band of muffled light, as though he saw it through a screen. The world in this yellow light seemed full of evil and terrible forces—and he seemed alone on a breathless sea.

He had seen nothing like this before, and he did not understand it. He asked of the nearest sailor, 'What's that over there? Burning ship?'

Several voices answered him.

'Sainte Marie. It's Sainte Marie.'

'I mean that smoke—that cloud.'

'Sainte Marie,' they cried again, and there was terror in their voices. 'That is Sainte Marie. . . . Mont Diable has gone up.'

It took John Collins some time to understand what Mont Diable 'going up' meant. It was minutes before he realised he was looking at a volcano in eruption. And then he could not quite understand all it meant. It was all so impersonal, that vast fan of smoke hanging silently over the distant sea. Only when he found his hands and his clothes covered with a curious brown-black dust did he grasp some-

thing of the immense meaning of the thing that had come upon Sainte Marie.

As the boat went towards the cloud of smoke he listened to the sailors talking. He gathered that this eruption could only have started an hour ago. At that time the look-out man had seen a great burst of smoke leap up in the sky, a sort of explosion, and after it the vast cloud had begun to grow over the spot where the island stood. Now and then the sailors would break into excited cries. Great blood-red slashes of colour curled and licked upward in the heart of the pall. Mont Diable was still going up.

As they sailed nearer, Collins saw the island brooding under its cerement of smoke. It was hard to distinguish details because of the smoke. It appeared to him a broad, hummocky island, out of which a hammer-nose of a mountain seemed to thrust. The pall of smoke was hanging about this mountain.

They came closer, and he could see, at a distance, tufts of isolated smoke going up from little bits of woods and from the cleared, brown surface of the hummocky hills. He saw flames running under these tufts of smoke, like sparks in wool, or like fire in heather and furze when a common is ablaze. He could not understand these isolated and outlying fires, but he was told that they had been started by dropping fire. Flying sparks and white-hot stones were plunging down on to the country all about the burning mountain, and woods and dry grass slopes took fire at once.

He noticed then that there was a rain of large black pieces all about the sailing-boat. The deck was gritty with cinders. He noticed, too, that fear was beginning to take hold of the boatmen. They were talking wildly of what they should do. They were throwing glances at him, the only white man on board. He caught their talk. They seemed torn between a desire to make land, which meant taking people and their belongings off in the boat and thus gaining much money, and their fear of something terrible happening to them.

They glanced at Collins, and he heard himself say, tersely and with the accents of command, 'We'll go ashore.'

Presently he saw the town, on the spit of the island under the hill. It was horrible. He saw fires there, wavering among the houses—fires that slacked off and burst out afresh. He saw ships at quays burning down to the water's edge. He saw frenzied crowds of people streaming along the shore on the beach, sometimes dashing into the water. Boats were coming away from the land—all sorts of boats, from smart launches to uncouth dinghies. All were crammed with people; frantic men, women, and children had still, it seemed, to struggle for life, though they were making off over the water from death. He saw a

packed whaler sway drunkenly under its burden of humanity, heave, and spill its entire cargo into the sea.

The air was thick and suffocating with smoke and gases as they moved closer in. The seamen now had to dash buckets of water every now and then over flames that sprang from woodwork and rigging as falling cinders ignited them. The men were frightened.

Collins said again in that voice of command, 'Go right in.'

He thought there ought to be a lava-stream. He had read accounts of such. He asked about it,

and it was pointed out. It was disappointing. All he could see of it was a swathe of dull smoke and gases winding down the mountain-side.

When the boat touched the beach, well away from the town and the mountain with their fire and destruction, Collins landed at once. He left the boat without looking back, caring not at all whether it went away without him or not. He plunged straight towards the town. He felt horribly frightened—but he wanted to see everything.

(Continued on page 821.)

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

By F. N. BURN.

THESE recollections are written by me in Dalle, a suburb of Rangoon, in the month of March 1919. Just one hundred years ago, in March 1819, my father, the late General George Burn of the Madras Army, joined the service of the Honourable East India Company. His commissions in the various grades from ensign to major-general are before me as I write. He was born on 25th March 1803, and as his first appointment as ensign is dated 6th March 1819, he had not attained the age of sixteen years when he became an officer.

I was born in 1843 at Bangalore, where my mother was staying during my father's absence in the first Chinese war. Soon after his return from foreign service he obtained three years' furlough to England, and the whole family proceeded there in the sailing-vessel *Nile*, Captain Nisbet, round the Cape. My earliest recollections as a child are of the sea. My sister, who was three years older, has told me that we rescued the crew of a vessel on our homeward voyage, their ship having been destroyed by fire. Of this event, however, I have no personal remembrance. I have only a hazy recollection of a vast expanse of water, and of going on deck to look at it and to enjoy the cool sea-breeze. I was too young during my father's furlough in England to remember very much of him. I was always fond of reading, though I understood very little of what the books were about. I read the *Pilgrim's Progress* before I was four years of age. *The Fairchild Family*, *Little Henry and his Bear*, *Masterman Ready*, *Robinson Crusoe*, are the titles of a few of the books with which I soon became fairly familiar.

My father retired after forty-two years' service in India, and I then saw a little of him for a few months until I came to the East myself in 1862. In 1876 I returned to England for a six-months' holiday, and it was then I learnt most of what I know regarding him. He was born in Hanover Square, London, where his parents resided. His father was employed in the

India House, so had no difficulty in getting one of his four sons into the Indian Service. My father was educated at St Paul's School, where, he used to say, the teaching was good, but the punishments were often brutal and cruel. Young people of the present time have little idea of the treatment meted out to school children in the early years of the nineteenth century. Those who survived it often turned out good and humane men, but the reverse must sometimes have been the case. No examinations were held of those who obtained cadetships. They were called up before a Board of Directors, asked a few simple questions, and told to be in readiness to proceed within so many weeks to the particular presidency to which they had been appointed. They seem to have been of all ages from fifteen to twenty-five.

My father's destination was Madras, and one of the cadets who came out at the same time was married, he told me—the only instance he ever saw or heard of such an early union throughout his whole Indian service. During the Napoleonic wars there was a tradition that one rather diminutive cadet who presented himself was interrogated by a director: 'Well, my little man, do you think you would be able to run a Frenchman through the body with your sword?' 'I don't know, sir, for I never tried,' was the immediate reply; 'but I would let a Frenchman run me through the body before I would run away.' Needless to say he passed with honours, and he afterwards became one of the most distinguished servants of the East India Company.

On arrival in Madras my father was posted to the 14th Madras Infantry, a regiment which had seen considerable service in the later wars of the eighteenth century, and won the distinguished motto of 'Faithful and True,' which it bore on its colours and appointments. He was an ensign for only one day, receiving his promotion to a lieutenantancy on the following day. The ink filling up all his commissions must have

been good, for it had faded very slightly after a hundred years in the case of the oldest one—half of this period having been spent in a tropical climate, where neither paper nor ink is supposed to last so long as in the temperate zones. My father's regiment was ordered on service at Kittow in 1824, at Kolapore in 1827, in Goomsow in 1836, and finally in the first Chinese war in 1841–42. He told me he learnt his drill with sepoy, and with the old heavy flint matchlock. At Goomsow, where we had an army of nearly 7000 men, besides artillery, he fired several rounds from a sepoy's musket at the embrasure of a fort we were besieging, and his shoulder was sore from the effects for several days afterwards. This was where he obtained his first prize-money, 600 rupees, half of which, he said, he remitted to his father in London to assist in the expense of educating his brothers.

We often begin campaigns with muddling, and we actually started our first Chinese war with only our European troops armed with percussion muskets, although the invention had taken place more than thirty years earlier. The Madras Infantry, which formed the bulk of our army, were still armed with the old flintlocks. This very nearly led to a disaster and the slaughter of a company of the 37th Madras Infantry, which, having missed the road, found itself, with night coming on, in the middle of a paddy-field, and gradually being surrounded by some thousands of Chinese and Tatar troops. The weather also changed, and a tempestuous storm of rain followed on a very hot day. The sepoy, were, however, well disciplined and ably commanded; they trusted fully in their officers, and obeyed every order given. The storm appeared to increase in violence, and as darkness had set in, and the effecting a safe retreat with his wounded seemed impracticable, Lieutenant Hadfield (in command) formed square, and resolved to keep the Chinese at bay with the bayonet as best he could. The firelocks were mostly useless in the heavy rain, though some of the sepoy had loaded under cover of their clothing and handed their muskets to their officers. A forward man amongst the enemy would be picked off sufficiently often to deter them from closing. This went on for two hours, when two companies of Royal Marines, armed with percussion muskets, arrived, and delivered the sepoy from their seemingly hopeless position. A single volley poured into the crowded ranks of the Chinese at the distance of a few paces soon swept them away, and at the same time proved the value of the percussion muskets to the whole army.

When the 37th Madras Infantry returned to their own presidency after the war was over, they were formed into the 37th Grenadiers in recognition of their discipline and good behaviour. No notice, however, seems to have been taken

of the blunder the authorities made in sending any troops to a war armed with flint muskets fully thirty years after the invention of percussion-caps. We had successfully muddled through. My father used to say that the Chinese war was the only one Britain had ever waged which more than paid its cost in money.

I remember as a boy in the 'fifties of the last century that when a court-martial was held on an officer in any part of India, a short *résumé* of it, with finding and sentence, always appeared in the budget of Indian intelligence, which used to be published on arrival of the mails. This went on until the mutiny of 1857, somewhat on the same principle as giving short details of cases against the civil population of the country which still appear in every home newspaper. There were sometimes six or seven of these courts-martial in a single issue of the paper called the *Homeward Mail*; usually two or three. The majority of the cases were for being drunk on duty, and conduct 'to the prejudice of good order and military discipline.' The remarks of the Commander-in-Chief, approving or disagreeing with the finding or punishment, were always appended. Some of those I have read in earlier days, when Sir Charles Napier was Commander-in-Chief, were often amusing and instructive. He was a man who said what he thought, and often in very unofficial language. One I remember concluded somewhat as follows: 'Officers and gentlemen have every right in their spare time to ride to the devil if they so choose. But they have no right to do so in crowded places where there is a danger of their sending other people there *when they may have no wish to go*.' Napier was a fine old soldier, but he could not hit it off with Lord Dalhousie, who was another autocrat in his way, and who as Governor-General was, of course, supreme. When the 66th Bengal Native Infantry mutinied, Napier disbanded them and enlisted 1000 Gurkhas in their place. This he had no right to do without reference to Calcutta. In 1857, though there were instances, notably at Lucknow, of a few sepoy of particular regiments remaining faithful to the British, the 66th Gurkhas, enrolled by Napier in the 'forties, was the one solitary instance of a whole regiment of the Bengal regular army, of seventy-two regiments of native infantry, doing so. Had Napier's advice been followed by Lord Dalhousie, in all probability there would have been no mutiny in 1857, for he wanted to maintain at least 10,000 Gurkhas in the Bengal Army. Since the Nepal war of 1816 the Gurkhas have always been amongst our bravest and most loyal soldiers, and their enlistment in larger numbers would have shown those who had hitherto composed the Bengal Army that we were not, as they thought, wholly dependent on them for filling the ranks of our sepoy regiments.

HOW THE PRINCESS HORATIA CAME TO HER KINGDOM.

PART III.

IX.

THE spirits of the Princess Horatia, which inclined to be low next morning, were greatly revived by the receipt of a small folded missive. She found it lying beside the jug of steaming coffee that the lay-brother left at the door of her cell at an early hour. It was addressed in strong, neat characters to 'Her Highness the Princess Horatia,' and was sealed at the back with a small red seal which bore the faint impression of a signet. But the princess did not stay to examine the seal, so eager was she to break it. The writing, she knew, was not the scrawl of Prince Ajax, and her heart fluttered pleasantly.

'Do I greatly dare,' it ran, 'to ask if you will come out to the ramparts? His Imperial Highness will not be stirring for some time yet.—JOHN.'

She gazed at it for a moment with shining eyes. It was her first love-letter. At least, it was the nearest thing to a love-letter that she had ever received. She liked the intimacy of the signature. Then, with the contrariness of the human heart—perhaps more especially a woman's heart—she began to wonder if she ought to like it. She even thought she should be very much displeased. Was not John King being over bold in thus addressing the rightful Queen of Promethea? Did he not understand that a gulf yawned between them? Nevertheless, on finishing her coffee, she put on her hat, and, without acquainting Miss Pinkerton, sped out to the ramparts.

The morning air was fresh and sparkling as wine, and there was John King awaiting her at the bottom of a steep flight of steps that led up to the topmost height of fair Hesione. He came forward to greet her with his usual pleasant smile. Yet it was, somehow, different. The pleasantness was the same, but it had in it something more, something she knew that was for herself alone. She held out her hand to him, and he bent over it and kissed it.

'Let us ascend to-day!' he said, looking into her eyes with his dark, smiling orbs. 'We were interrupted yesterday down in the depths, so to-day we shall climb to the heights.'

Accordingly at his suggestion she meekly tripped up the steep stone steps, amazed at her own behaviour. Why should she obey the behests of John King? She must remember her position and remind him of his, since he seemed to forget it. So she decided as she mounted to the battlemented terrace that rose at a giddy height as if poised in blue ether, with

the world lying far below. Reaching the top, she gasped a little, with the steepness of the climb, the sharpness of the air, and the sheer loveliness of the scene—and, also, the agitation of the moment. For John King, after standing by her side, gazing into the heavenly space of blue, and down upon the rocky crags and lower towers and turrets of Hesione, sharing her delight in silent sympathy, gently laid his hand upon her arm.

'Princess,' he said, to draw her attention from heavenly sights to a more pressing earthly matter, 'I am waiting your answer to my question of yesterday.'

Her arm fell away from his touch, and she drew back a pace with slight hauteur. 'Everything is changed to-day from yesterday,' she murmured.

'Why? Because Prince Ajax has arrived at Hesione in disguise?'

The tone of his voice and the glint in his dark eyes brought a smile to her lips.

'He's a buffoon,' she observed, 'but he was not playing a part. Nor am I—not now. You may find it difficult to believe, but he really is the second son of the Emperor Hildebrand, and I—am the rightful Queen of Promethea—the daughter of King Alexis. I was very anxious to see my kingdom, so I came as Miss L'Estrange, an English tourist. And it is true, as the prince said, that I hope one day to get back my kingdom—though not, I trust, by his help,' she added vehemently. 'And so'— She lifted her eyes pleadingly to his, as if to implore him to understand her position without further words.

'And so you think me outrageously presumptuous that I should still ask you to marry me?' he said quietly, taking both her hands in his.

'You must not,' she murmured, turning her head aside to avoid his gaze, though she did not withdraw her hands. 'I am Miss L'Estrange no longer.'

'Yet I still dare to love you. You—just you,' he said earnestly. 'Can you not dare to return the love of plain John King?'

'Don't ask me,' she pleaded. 'I may not—I—'

'I did not expect such an answer from the daughter of King Alexis and Queen Horatia. Remember there is no royal marriage law in Promethea. I have your own word for that,' he added triumphantly, with a smile playing over his bronzed face.

She gasped at his boldness, and her breath came and went sharply as he still held her hands captive. She could not speak.

x.

'I think we were both agreed that King Alexis was entirely right, were we not?'

She was silent. Her eyes wandered over the rocky walls of the ancient fortress. It was fair to see and girt about with romance—the handiwork of a god. She was the daughter of its race of kings. What should be her choice? The kingdom of Promethea, the troubled, 'insubstantial pageant' of a throne, herself the centre of storms and tempests and the quarry of swashbuckling hunters; or the quiet kingdom of a good man's heart and the sweetness of the crown of love?

She could not have told how long she stood in hesitation, with John King holding her hands in his strong clasp and eagerly awaiting her answer, nor yet how long she might have stood upon the fearful brink 'to be or not to be,' had not Prince Ajax appeared from the doorway of the citadel and at once descried the two figures who stood poised against the turquoise sky on the topmost height of Hesione.

He stood below, crimson of visage, and stared up at them as if he doubted the sight of his eyes.

'John,' whispered the princess, releasing her hands and placing them upon his shoulders, 'I am my father's true daughter. I surrender all to my love.'

'My princess,' said John King in triumph, folding her in his arms in the full vision of the gaping Prince Ajax and the aghast Miss Pinkerton, who had just stepped forth from the doorway.

'Do let us go and announce our betrothal to him,' cried the princess, with a laugh of pure happiness. And down the steep flight of steps she sped, with John King following fast upon her heels.

Hand-in-hand they advanced upon the still gaping prince, who had now been joined by his fellow-huntsman and several of the monks, headed by the Father Superior; while poor Miss Pinkerton leaned against the stout wall of the citadel, unable to support this shocking result of the princess's foolhardy expedition and her own indiscreet behaviour.

'Sir,' began John King, in a voice that was full of dignity and pride, 'Her Highness the Princess Horatia desires me to inform your Imperial Highness that she has pledged her troth to His Majesty the King of Promethea, who requests that you will hold the matter in confidence until such time as he can inform his Ministers and subjects of his intended alliance, which will restore with peace and honour the throne of Promethea to the rightful queen.'

The hand of the princess fell from his clasp and her eyes widened, half in amazement, half in dismay, as her lover proceeded to make a similar announcement in the Promethean tongue to the reverend guardians of Hesione. They, lifting their hands to heaven, repeated in unison a benediction upon their king and his royal bride, the Princess Horatia.

'John,' murmured the bewildered princess when the monks had withdrawn, bearing Prince Ajax and his companion with them, while Miss Pinkerton discreetly vanished, 'what does it mean? Who are you? Am I in a dream?'

'My dear,' said her lover serenely, 'it means exactly what I have told Prince Ajax and the good fathers. I happen to be the wrongful King of Promethea, and I am going to restore the rightful queen to the throne of her father in the happiest possible manner for myself and everybody else.'

'But it seems to have happened so ridiculously like the plot of a comic opera—I can't believe in it. How did you come to be at Hesione just when Prince Ajax arrived in his absurd disguise?'

'It's all very easy to explain, my dear—though I am not responsible for the absurdity of his Imperial Highness's disguise. Prince Ajax, or the Emperor, it seems, has for some time been trying to upset the loyalty of our subjects, as well as that of the fathers of Hesione. He finally confided to the Father Superior his design of coming in disguise to further his machinations. The good father, who is my friend and a loyal Promethean, acquainted me of the fact, and suggested that I should pay a private visit to the fortress and confront him. I took his advice. On the way—Well, you know the rest.'

'So we were both masquerading, and you never confessed that you were not John King until I had humbled myself to agree to a *mésalliance*. Wretch, to take advantage of my innocence and *penchant* for romance!'

'Forgive my deception! I thought at first the *mésalliance* was going to be on my side, and wondered how the Prometheans would take it,' he added with a gay laugh. 'We are both playing the parts of sensible beings now, so are quits. But I protest against the charge of masquerading. I didn't don a uniform—I've got several, but don't ape the Emperor—or assume any disguise. I merely wore my usual travelling-suit. You took me for an Englishman (I do happen to have a London tailor), so I gave you my name in the English form. In the Promethean tongue I am called *Evano Rex*.'

THE END.



HABITS AND CHARACTERS OF BRITISH WILD ANIMALS.*

VIII.—THE RABBIT.

By H. MORTIMER BATTEN.

I.

AS a rule, young rabbits are born in a shallow burrow known as the 'stop' or the 'stab,' often not more than a yard in depth, and so small that one would hardly think an adult rabbit could squeeze into it. Generally this hole is out in the centre of an open field, facing south for warmth. It is the rabbit's first step towards hiding her young, though her ideas in this direction are still so undeveloped that she often digs her stop within view of the whole colony, the fierce old bucks of which are as great a source of danger to her children as is the weasel or the stoat. The nest consists largely of down the mother has stripped from her own breast, intermingled with soft dry grass or moss scratched from the rocks, so that nothing warmer and softer could be imagined.

Nature devotes a good deal of energy to keeping the rabbit population within reasonable limits, and it is just as well that it is so; otherwise Bunny would overrun the whole universe. Often this thinning-out process begins before the babes have seen the light of day. Perhaps the mother is young and inexperienced in nest-making, and instead of digging the burrow half-way up the sloping bank, she digs it at the bottom, and the day after her infants are born there occurs a heavy thunder-storm. Water collects in the little hollow, and begins to trickle into the burrow. It may finally fill the chamber within, drowning the whole family; or it may merely damp the bedding. In the latter case three of the young ones, perhaps, contract paralysis, a fourth dies, while the remaining two, being sturdier than the rest, take no harm. When the mother comes again to feed them, she rakes out the dead one, and evidently carries it off so as not to advertise the whereabouts of her home, for I have never seen the missing member of the family lying near the nest.

In a few days all the young have their eyes open, and are old enough to begin to think about a vegetable diet. The first favourable night, therefore, the mother leads them out of the nursery-burrow into the moonlight, shepherding them and pushing them along, while, dazzled and bewildered, they try to get beneath her. Slow is the progress that they make; but presently, topping a ridge, they see scores of

other rabbits squatting about on the moonlit plateau, some quietly feeding, while others sit up with ears erect, doing sentry-go.

The mother-rabbit now becomes very goggle-eyed and important, stamping her hind-legs as she herds the sprawling little ones across the open. Several rabbits sit up and look at her, then, seeming to take it as a matter of course, go on with their feeding. One long-legged old gentleman (more like a hare than a rabbit), through whose ears there are many shot-holes, hops up with a look of inquiry, circles inquisitively round once or twice, then scratches his neck with an air of indifference. His very manner seems to indicate that this old fighting buck is the king of the colony, and that one will hear more about him later on.

The mother-rabbit takes her family to the home-warren, whither most young rabbits go as soon as their nest-days are over, and here their worldly training begins. By no means are they the only young rabbits occupying the burrow, for on sunny days scores of the same age are to be seen sitting about the warren-entrances, enjoying the warmth, or shivering in the wind, between intervals of nibbling the closely cropped grass.

As the days pass they find more and more of their own food, thus becoming less and less dependent on their mother, and she, sad to relate, is very rapidly losing interest in them. Old Long-Legs, the king of the colony, now begins to make himself felt. When he has nothing else to do, or the time seems favourable—whenever, indeed, he happens to think of it—he amuses himself by chasing the youngsters through the burrows, kicking them and nipping them, and making himself an unholy terror in their lives. At first their mother sticks up for them in a half-hearted way, for they are still quite small. But very shortly she seems actually to forget which are her children among the many that throng the burrows; and so Long-Legs bites their ears, kicks them head over heels, chases them, and makes them squeal for mercy, till finally they run and hide at the sight of him.

II.

Each night the young rabbits venture a little farther afield, becoming more and more interested in the movements of their elders. At dusk, an old doe sits up and begins to hop out along one of the clearly defined runways that lead from the burrows. Slowly and cautiously she goes, placing her feet just where she placed them last night and the night before, while

* The articles in this series, in much fuller form, together with chapters descriptive of the remaining larger British mammals, are embodied in a handsome octavo volume, *Habits and Characters of British Wild Animals*, by H. Mortimer Batten, with life-like illustrations by Warwick Reynolds (W. & R. Chambers, Ltd., 21s. net, 1920).

behind her comes first one rabbit and then another. A second old doe (a buck never leads) sets out along a second runway, leading in the opposite direction; then the move becomes a general one, almost every adult rabbit sallying forth on its nightly foray. For a minute or two the whole earth is brown with them, and one would never believe a single warren could contain so many residents. Rapidly, almost mysteriously, they melt away. In the dimness you just see a leading doe, perched like a silhouette on the break in the wall, as she pauses for a final survey ere she leads her train into the next field. She disappears, and a second black speck takes her place; then a third and a fourth are seen, like bobbing clockwork toys, till finally the gathering darkness blurs out the gap.

Not long do the rabbits stick to their runways, one branching off here and another there, so that by the time the moon is up they are scattered all over the country-side—old Long-Legs being two miles away, nibbling a cottager's cabbages at the very threshold of the village. At the home-burrow, squatting about the plateau, there remain only a sprinkling of youngsters and a few nursing mothers keeping guard.

The youngsters join in at the tail-end of the procession ere very long. The first night out the wall across the meadow appears to them as an insurmountable obstacle, so they nibble the grass on this side of it; the night following they try the leap and succeed, browsing on the other side; ere a week is up they are nibbling the grass nearly a mile away—keeping a weather-eye open for Long-Legs, who is apt to pounce furiously upon them at any time.

All along nature's weeding-out process, designed to keep their numbers in check, is going on. There comes a rainy spell, during which several of the young rabbits contract liver complaints through eating too much wet grass, and die. In the wood near there lives a wild cat of the tame variety. She actually shares a room under a rock with several adult rabbits, and each night she steals forth along a rabbit-runway, as though she were one of the colony; yet ten minutes later she is crouching behind a wall, a sinister vision of bristling fur and gleaming eyes, waiting for the first unwary youngster that comes her way!

Then one night a whole battalion that set off northwards fails to return, and at dawn, before the respectable world is astir, a ramshackle motor-car takes a sackload of netted rabbits to a neighbouring station.

In spite of these drainages, however, the home-warren becomes more and more thickly stocked, every mother taking her young there as soon as they are old enough. And now we see the value of old Long-Legs, who in the past has been a bully and a tyrant, apparently neither useful nor ornamental. The family whose career we have so far followed are now strong and independent; but Long-Legs is still the terror of

their lives, driving them out whenever he sees them, as if intent on inflicting some bodily injury. Glad to be rid of him, they turn at length to the great wood at the mountain-foot to the west, and here, among the loose rocks, thickly overgrown with bracken and briar, they make homes for themselves, free to do what they choose.

This wood is really the overflow reservoir for the home-burrow. Each year scores of young rabbits have been taken to the burrow, remaining there till old enough to take care of themselves; and then, bullied and harried by some old buck, they have gladly moved to the shelter of the wood, which, as the season proceeds, becomes thronged with the surplus stock of young rabbits. Were it not for this the home-burrow would become overcrowded, and disease, nature's never-failing remedy, would fall upon the colony.

III.

Almost all animals of gregarious habits have ways of signalling danger to one another. One of the first things young rabbits learn to do is to signal danger by thumping the ground with their strong hind-legs, and it is to be feared that, in their inexperience and ignorance, they misuse the alarm when they are small, thumping away at the very slightest pretext, and apparently carrying on a Morse system of telegraphy with each other in this way. Old rabbits, however, never thump unless they suspect serious danger, and the more suspicious they are the more vigorously they thump.

Then rabbits have another and a far more important way of signalling danger to each other, which they do unintentionally and without sound. There are times when the thump system would merely attract the attention of their foes—when it is better that every rabbit should steal swiftly away, as silently as possible, as they often do.

Of what value is the rabbit's white tail? One would think it merely makes him conspicuous when otherwise he might escape unseen; and this, indeed, is the case. His white tail is of no value to him personally—in fact, he would be better without it; but it is endlessly valuable to his friends, in the same way as *their* white tails are endlessly valuable to *him*.

The whole colony is at its feeding-grounds, and suddenly danger appears over the ridge. The rabbits are as yet unseen, but the faintest sound would betray their presence; so the cony nearest the danger rises and bolts swiftly and silently, and every rabbit he passes sees a bobbing white danger-signal, which means there is not a moment to be lost. And each rabbit as he beholds it rises and glides away, unintentionally giving the alarm to those nearest to him, so that in a few seconds it has spread north and south and down the forest-side, and the man stealing through the shadows with his gun wonders why there is not a rabbit abroad to-night, for by the time he reaches the foot of the wood the alarm has flashed ahead of him over two or three fields!

Rabbits appear to exist simply as a natural food for other things, and there is no end to their foes. Guns, nets, snares, traps, dogs, weasels, cats, and foxes are but a few of their everyday enemies, for tens of thousands of rabbits meet their fate annually by flood-water or by disease. Those killed by man, the veritable cartloads which go to our cities each week during autumn and winter, in fact the whole year round, are but a dribble compared with the gigantic drain on their numbers effected by the ordinary course of nature; yet everywhere the rabbit thrives and multiplies, often to so great an extent that the most stringent measures have to be taken in order to keep its numbers in check.

In the mountains of the north the rabbits for ages past have made their burrows in the sandy banks of the mountain-burns; and the very fact that these banks are of sandy formation, which so exactly suits the rabbit's burrowing habits, proves that the streams are subject to sudden torrent from the heights, the silting and sifting process of endless floods having washed away the earth and left only the insoluble sand. Each year, when these burrows are full of young rabbits, the flood-waters come down and exterminate whole colonies—the victims merely huddling in batches at the ends of their holes, making no attempt to escape ere their retreat is cut off. In fact, the abundance or scarcity of rabbits in the autumn in these regions is governed entirely by the number of spring and early summer spates. If there have been no floods, then August finds the glens and the woods alive with rabbits; but if, on the other hand, floods have been frequent, there is hardly a rabbit to be found in the country when August comes along.

IV.

Of all ways man employs of taking rabbits, probably more fall by the snare than in any other way, for its use is world-wide and universal.

Netting is the only humane method of catching rabbits, as in shooting a certain percentage get away, however deadly a shot one may be, to perish miserably; while in ferreting numbers of rabbits are injured by the ferret—if not by his teeth, then by his claws—and have to be abandoned in their burrows. I consider snaring more humane than ferreting; but the cruelty begins when old and rotten snares are used, and the rabbit gets away with the tightly drawn noose about his neck.

What fate is then in store for him? Better far that he had met the weasel on his own ground, or perished by the flood-waters when he was small. There is no getting rid of this hateful thing about his neck, and he does not know what ails him. For days the wretched creature lingers between some sheltering cranny and a patch of greensward, wearily dragging himself back and forth, unable to eat or to take an active part in the world of sunlight about; and

in the end blindness overcomes him, if not death in some merciful form.

Sometimes, after days of torture, a rabbit gets rid of the cruel noose, and finally recovers his strength; but he is now a blind rabbit. Every colony of any size has its blind rabbits, just as long ago every herd of buffaloes on the prairie had its blind members. And just as the blind buffalo, his other senses becoming quickened, was often the first to give warning of danger to the rest of the herd, so blind rabbits, feeding with the rest of the colony, are frequently more alert and keen than any of their brothers and sisters.

I have seen a rabbit, totally blinded by the broken snare or by shot, get up and bolt like an arrow on the first approach of danger, dipping underground at the exact spot without hesitation or fault. His foes are many, however, and, thus greatly handicapped, it is merely a matter of time ere he falls to one or other of them. Once off his own runway, once turned aside from the path he knows so well, and he stumbles, falls, and is lost, finally crouching in the open without further attempt to save himself.

On their runways rabbits always place their feet in exactly the same places, so that the track, instead of being evenly worn, like a human pathway, consists of a string of worn patches, from one to the other of which they hop. The rabbit-catcher knows this, and places his snare in such a way that it will catch the rabbit mid-leap; but a pathway of this kind is of value in that the patches become trodden hard and free of crackling leaves and twigs, so that the owners can run along it without creating undue noise.

The rabbit is swifter than the hare when on its own ground and over a short distance, the superiority of the hare lying in its staying-powers and in its marvellous maintenance of a high average speed.

It is generally thought that the natural home of the rabbit is its burrow, that this creature belongs to the earth, and comes up only for food; but this is not so. Like most wild creatures, rabbits love the sunlight and the air as much as we do, and seek the ground only as a place of sanctuary from their foes or from storms. A far greater number of rabbits live and have their homes above ground than dwell in burrows, their open-air houses consisting of little seats in the grass, wisely chosen to suit the weather; and here they crouch as you pass by, never stirring unless you threaten actually to tread on them.

V.

Rabbits are polygamous—or, rather, they are wholly licentious as regards their marriage customs. 'Faint heart never won fair lady' is the code of the rabbit metropolis, and he who, by strength of hind-leg and readiness of tooth, is best able to hold his own against his fellows, is, to put it bluntly, the father of the most children.

A doe wild rabbit probably begins to breed

when three months old. Some naturalists put the age at six months; but since a rabbit is full-grown at three months, and it is no uncommon thing to find does that are not full-grown already heavy with young, three months would seem to be a conservative estimate.

The number produced per litter varies with the time of the year. An early spring or a late autumn litter may number only three or four, late spring and summer litters being from five to ten. The young are born blind and deaf; they begin to hear at the end of ten days, and their eyes to open about the eleventh day. These data are the result of observation among the rabbits of the Pennine heights. The young are independent of their mother when about three weeks old during a season of plenty, and almost as soon as they are self-supporting she begins to bethink herself of yet another family. Indeed, it would seem that the female pairs again within twenty-four hours of producing her young; and having these facts to work upon, it does not require much imagination for one to arrive at an understanding as to how the rabbit survives.

Though closely allied in many ways, the rabbit and the hare are totally different from one another in character and temperament. 'Rabbit-hearted' is an expression commonly used not only by white races, but also by red and brown people, and except in the case of a mother defending her young, this creature has no heart whatever. When pursued, it trusts to a short burst of speed taking it to the sanctuary of its burrow, and if foiled in any way and unable to find immediate shelter, it at once loses heart. I have known a rabbit, on finding its burrow closed, to begin immediately to run in foolish circles, screaming piteously, though its pursuer was nothing more fleet and formidable than a small boy, into whose hands the creature ultimately fell!

One has every respect for the hare, but neither the character nor the mentality of the brown rabbit is calculated to excite our admiration. It will return and nest time and again in the hollows of a swamp that is periodically flooded, and where death by drowning inevitably awaits its young; it has no morals to speak of, and no pluck whatever. True that it figures as an important item on the nation's bill of fare; but even here the rabbit does not pay its way, and only because it is to the poor man what the pheasant is to his employer is the existence of the creature justified.

Rabbits are not supposed to be particularly hardy animals, as they are said to be susceptible to damp, yet they seem capable of surviving under any conditions whatever. In the heights of the Scottish hills, where they live for seven months of the year amidst the driving wet of the cloud-wraiths, they flourish exceedingly. On every wind-swept island bordering the coast,

though some are so bleak and rugged that practically nothing grows in the shallow soil, the rabbits fatten and multiply till periodical disease wipes them out. Among coast cliffs they are entirely at home. Here, on a dizzy shelf, the young are born; they grow up to share their burrows with the puffin and the shearwater; they become a crag-fast race of their own, thriving and multiplying till some, perforce, wander inland.

VI.

Rabbits do considerable damage on the grazing-lands which they frequent—not only by what they eat and by so defiling the land that sheep will not graze after them, but by bringing about an entire change in the flora of their habitat. Where rabbits flourish the grass soon dies, and its place is taken by thistles, nettles, and other weeds which are very difficult to displace. The areas of useless sand-grass found in some localities are probably due to rabbits, the more useful growths that once clothed these areas having been killed off, so that the coarser, hardier growths finally took possession. On sandy hillsides the rabbits do considerable damage by casting up vast mounds of unfertile earth, and thus burying the fertile surface.

Farmers do not generally realise the full extent of the damage done by rabbits on their property. It is customary to let the shooting, if in the farmer's own hands, and the rent received for it is supposed to compensate for the damage done. On the many rabbit-shoots I myself have rented, however, it would, on almost every occasion, have been possible, had one cared to work, to pay the rent by selling the rabbits killed at sevenpence per head. Those rabbits cost the farmer more than sevenpence each to rear, and by letting the shooting he was by no means assured that the work of extermination would be thoroughly done. I do not mean to infer that farmers would be well advised to increase the rent of their rabbit-shooting; on the contrary, from the tenant's point of view, it is seldom worth what is paid for it, and the best arrangement is for the farmer to come to an agreement with the tenant that, after a certain date, measures will be taken systematically to reduce the rabbit population—preferably by the employment of a professional rabbit-catcher. The man who is simply out for sport does not kill down the rabbits as they should be killed, and by February at the latest traps and snares should have been brought to bear, and should be kept in operation till they no longer yield results. The doe-rabbit killed in February could profitably be bought, at ten times her market-price, by the farmer in whose land she was killed, and this is a point he should bear in mind ere he decides to dispense with the rabbit-catcher's services.

So few wild rabbits die by the kindly hand of Time that it is difficult to arrive at their natural length of life. In an enclosed park in the West Riding a rabbit, distinguishable from his fellows by a white ruff about his neck, was seen by the family at breakfast almost every morning for nine consecutive years. He was born about the same time as the eldest son of the house, and, curiously enough, he died, judging from his disappearance, on the same night as the child's grandpa died! His name went down with the family traditions.

This rabbit lived a hedged-in and protected life in the precincts of a city, and under such

conditions he might, indeed, have lived to see his fifteenth year. How long a wild rabbit lives depends upon the speed at which it lives. Safe from its foes, passing its days in peaceful security, it would probably live many years longer than if it were eternally but unsuccessfully chivied by stoats and lurchers. Since normally wild rabbits live less strenuous lives than hares, they live proportionately longer. I should set down the average life of the normal wild rabbit at eight years; senile decay generally sets in rapidly at the end of the ninth year, and few of them live to reach eleven.

NEW OIL FROM OLD.

By FREDERICK A. TALBOT, Author of *Inventions and Discoveries*, &c.

AT this moment the country is suffering from a shortage of oil to keep the wheels of industry running smoothly. Mineral oil as a native product is virtually unknown in these islands, although a certain quantity is derived from shales; but the domestic supply would be totally inadequate to keep our workshops in full swing. The average individual scarcely realises the vital rôle which mineral oil plays in our complex industrial and commercial life. If we were suddenly to be deprived of this commodity, every piece of mechanism would be brought to a dead-stop. We should be unable to grind our corn, unless we reverted to the methods practised by our woad-bedecked forefathers. We should be unable to move the flour from point to point, because our trains and various road vehicles, as well as power-driven vessels, would be condemned to immobility. We should be deprived of the conveniences afforded by artificial light, heat, and power; our workshops would be forced into idleness.

To modern civilisation oil is as indispensable as is bread. It is a moot point whether the lay mind has ever conceived what an oilless Britain would mean. Yet we have been prone to waste this commodity in the most reckless manner. The mechanic at his machine wipes his hands upon a lump of cotton-waste. When the cleanser becomes too saturated to be of any further use, it is consigned to the flames. In the process of destruction both the rag and its greasy contents are lost. Separate the one from the other, and the two articles become available for a further spell of usefulness. Oil drips from a machine, and is absorbed by a layer of sawdust on the floor. When the absorbent reaches the stage at which it cannot possibly soak up another drop of oil, it is swept up and thrown into the furnace. A simple remedy, but how wasteful! The oil is lost beyond recovery.

Formerly it did not matter. Oil was cheap.

In 1913 oils and greases, or substances from which they are produced, were coming into this country from all parts of the world in steadily flowing streams to the value of £22,000,000. It was so easy to draw from the inexhaustible reservoir offered by Mother Earth, so simple to prepare for specific purposes; it could be despatched over thousands of miles at an insignificant charge, and could be placed upon the market at a very low figure. So, oil being available in plenty and cheap, why trouble to recover the greasy contents of the waste or the sawdust?

But to-day the streams of oil have shrunk; and we cannot produce sufficient ourselves to satisfy our requirements. The stringency is such that we have not enough oil to go round. Moreover, in accordance with the inexorable law of supply and demand, the price of this formerly abundant and cheap commodity has soared, until now it has reached a startlingly high figure.

Fortunately for us, at least one inventor was wiser in his generation than his countrymen, and during the prodigal days of peace, despite the unattractive outlook, gave his ingenuity and fertility of thought full rein to perfect a simple and inexpensive means of recovering a significant volume of oil from waste materials at negligible expense. Although the days of plenty militated against his making revolutionary headway with his invention, nevertheless he did succeed in enlisting the practical encouragement of certain prominent firms, who expressed their faith in his process by installing the requisite plants, which sufficed to demonstrate the capabilities of the system. Consequently, when the exigencies of war conclusively demonstrated that we must proceed warily in our consumption of oil, and pointed the advisability of reclaiming waste as far as practicable, to make available new supplies go further, a proved, simple, and inexpensive process for achieving the desired end was found ready to hand. So industry

was spared the weary waiting incidental to the commencement of a new movement at a critical moment, and was saved the interval of suspense between laboratory experiment and proved commercial application.

The process in question has been described as a simple means of offering new oil for old, or (should it not be?) producing new oil from old. It compels attention because it completely dispenses with any necessity to resort to chemical processes, which at one time were considered the only feasible solution of the problem, and which, in addition to being somewhat circuitous, are liable to prove expensive, inasmuch as the indispensable ingredients to-day are relatively costly, more particularly the solvent.

The system may be most aptly described as the effective application of dry heat combined with centrifugal force. The necessary plant comprises a cyclinder or drum, inside which is placed a perforated steel cage, which in turn receives a basket contrived from wire or perforated sheet-steel. This basket is removable, to facilitate charging and emptying. The cage in which it is placed is so mounted as to be free to revolve, the necessary rotary motion being imparted by a jet of steam playing upon the blades of a small turbine directly connected to the cage.

The waste—oil-soaked cotton rags, cotton-waste, mechanics' gloves, or whatever it may be—is dumped into the basket, and the latter is then inserted in the cage. The drum is now closed and the steam turned on. The jet of steam playing upon the turbine-blades causes the latter to revolve, carrying the cage and its contents round with it, speed being increased until a peripheral velocity of approximately six thousand to seven thousand feet a minute is reached.

After the steam has performed its initial function of driving the turbine, it is not permitted to escape, but rises through a central dome to pass into the heart of the contents of the cage within. It permeates the whole of the material, thus heating it up, and in so doing renders the oil more fluid. Passing through the material, the steam escapes through the perforations in the cage, and thence into the outer air. The oil and the grease thus liquefied become separated from the solid material as represented by the rag or waste, and upon release, under the centrifugal action set up, are forced through the meshes of the basket and the perforations of the cage, to fall within the annular space between the cage and the outer drum. The oily ingredients, being of the same temperature as the steam, are rendered exceedingly fluid, with the result that they run readily. The oil, falling to the bottom of the drum beyond the zone of centrifugal action, is now permitted to escape from the separator into the settling-tanks. Here any solid impurities which

may be present gravitate to the bottom in a sediment as the oil cools, to be subsequently drawn off. If desired, filtering of the oil may be carried out simultaneously, the hot oil being conducted from the separator to vessels provided for this purpose.

It will be seen that the process is continuous, it only being necessary to stop the machine at intervals to withdraw the basket and empty the contents, from which nearly all the oil has been extracted, and to insert a fresh charge. The fact that the whole of the retrievable oil has been extracted from the contents of the basket is apparent from the cessation of the flow from the drain-pipe into the settling or purification tank. The actual time occupied in the separating process naturally varies according to the heaviness and the character of the oil or the grease.

The apparatus itself is noticeable from its compactness, simplicity of operation, the small space required to accommodate it, and its high efficiency. All that is required is a supply of steam, which in the case of a factory driven throughout by electric energy generated by a gas or an oil engine may be economically raised specially for the purpose by a small portable boiler. The steam does not even require to be raised to a high pressure to complete its work. The plant is completely self-contained; while, moreover, it requires no form of mechanical drive involving the installation of overhead or underground gear, belting and pulleys, or other complex devices. The fact that it occupies very little space enables the plant to be installed in any odd corner which is not otherwise being used. As a matter of fact, the plant may be mounted upon a base plate, and in such a manner as to facilitate its removal if required. The efficiency is high, because the quantity of oil recovered is in excess of 90 per cent. of that contained in the waste. Then, again, it must be remembered that full advantage is taken of the steam. The consumption thereof is very low, owing to its economical application. The initial pressure of the steam suffices to drive the turbine; while, virtually as waste steam, it is allowed to fulfil a further useful purpose—namely, the permeation of the material under treatment, thus facilitating and expediting the separation and the recovery of the oil and the grease under the centrifugal force imparted to the container by the turbine. Consequently full use is made of the steam itself.

The settling-tank comprises a sheet-steel vessel fitted with a suitable inlet to receive the oil from the separator. The contents of the tank are heated by a closed steam coil. This raises the temperature of the oil to such a degree as to permit the ready separation of water and solid impurities associated therewith. The pure oil rises to the surface of the tank, and is immediately led off to another vessel to cool; while the solid matter settles to form a sludge,

and can be drawn off, together with the water, through a cock in the base of the settling-tank. One novel feature is the adjustable copper float which slides on a brass pipe and is ingeniously connected by a suitable union to the draw-off sludge cock. The outlet for the pure oil is connected with this moving float, and in such a manner as to be always at the level of the contents. As the level of the oil in the settling-tank falls the float naturally descends, until at last it comes into contact with the denser sludge, when further movement is instantly arrested, and no more oil is allowed to pass from the surface into the second vessel. But all the time the settling-tank is receiving oil from the separator the float is working, and so maintains a continuous steady delivery of pure oil to the second vessel.

The material from which the oil has been extracted, upon removal from the basket, is submitted to a washing process which extracts all dirt and other foreign matter. Upon emergence from the washer the material is placed in a drying-cabinet. When withdrawn from the cabinet it is ready for use once more, being as clean as when first served out to the workmen.

The oil-reclamation process being purely mechanical throughout, the material suffers no physical deterioration from submission to the treatment. The fibres of the waste or rag are left quite unimpaired. Moreover, the oils natural to the textile, and those introduced during its manufacture, are left untouched. Consequently the waste shows only the signs of ordinary wear and tear, and may be passed through the reclamation-plant again and again, until absolutely worn out and rendered unfit for further service. If a small percentage of new waste be added to each issue of old waste, and the two blended together, the treatment may be continued indefinitely, and in this instance the loss of waste becomes scarcely noticeable.

The system possesses the additional advantage of being inexpensive in first cost. Naturally the capital expenditure involved varies according to the desired capacity of the installation, but for the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds it is possible to secure a machine adapted to the requirements of even a large factory. Further, the value of the materials recovered—waste and oil—is such as to enable the plant to pay for itself within a very short time.

The economical factor of this system has been proved very convincingly time after time. Indeed, in many quarters it is regarded somewhat as a money-maker, from the fact that it has indicated to the firms practising the process a source of revenue which they have hitherto persistently disregarded, in the feeling that it was not worth while to exploit the waste.

Machinery plays a more or less prominent part in every industry, and its care and attention necessarily entail the utilisation of a certain

quantity of rags, waste, or cloths. The consumption of this material is far more significant than one might be disposed to imagine from cursory reflection. Thus one large establishment specialising in the chemical industry installed a small plant comprising two of the turbine centrifugal separators, a washing-machine, and a drying-cabinet. The grease-laden waste is passed in at one end, is submitted to treatment in the separators, is subsequently washed, and finally dried in the heated cabinet. Upon emergence from the opposite end of the plant it is ready for reissue. The total cost of the plant was two hundred and ten pounds, the preparation of the building for its reception entailing a further outlay of one hundred and ninety pounds—four hundred pounds all told. Cloths are employed as the wiping material, the cost of each being slightly in excess of twopence. During the course of a single year three hundred and fifty thousand cloths were passed through the plant, and were induced to yield, in all, one hundred and twenty-five casks of oil, aggregating five thousand gallons. At tenpence per gallon this represented a total of two hundred and eight pounds six shillings and eightpence. The ability to use the cloths over and over again enabled the firm to effect a direct saving upon expenditure for cotton-waste during the twelve months of two hundred and eighteen pounds eight shillings—one hundred and eighty-two hundredweights at twenty-four shillings per hundredweight. Against this figure, however, had to be set the outlay for fifteen thousand new cloths to make good the losses incurred through ordinary wear and tear, which at two shillings and a penny farthing a dozen aggregated one hundred and thirty-one pounds ten shillings and twopence halfpenny. But even then a saving under this heading of eighty-six pounds seventeen shillings and ninepence halfpenny was secured. The gross saving recorded during the year was no less than four hundred and twenty-six pounds fourteen shillings and eightpence, the net return, after allowing for wages, repairs, cost of steam, capital outlay on the new cloths, and 5 per cent. depreciation upon the first cost of the plant, being no less than one hundred and two pounds twelve shillings and fivepence halfpenny. This plant was installed upon the basis of defraying cost out of savings effected, which was achieved within approximately four years!

The foregoing is by no means an isolated instance. Many similar cases might be cited, showing equally striking results. The oil return as a result of the treatment fluctuates widely. Thus it is found to range from one gallon per hundredweight of waste treated in a motor-garage to twenty-two and a quarter gallons from a similar quantity of this material used to tend the blast-furnace equipment of a colliery. No matter how apparently small the reclamation

may seem, the process is remunerative, because it not only yields a certain proportion of oil, but enables the waste, the cost of which represents a significant item in these times, to be used again.

In order to determine the precise advantages and economic value of the system, one of our railway companies carried out an interesting comparative test. The original practice was to submit the soiled sponge-cloths to the ordinary washing process. They were sent to a laundry for the purpose. The cost under this heading was seven shillings and sixpence halfpenny per week. The cotton-waste was replaced by new material in the usual manner, the yearly bill for this commodity being one hundred and thirty-seven pounds. The company then installed a small plant such as I have described at a cost of one hundred and twenty-five pounds eighteen shillings and sixpence. During the twelve months seven hundred and sixteen gallons of oil were reclaimed; but the most notable saving was in connection with the cotton-waste, the outlay on which was reduced from one hundred and thirty-seven pounds to one hundred and two pounds eighteen shillings—thirty-four pounds two shillings less. At the end of the year, after allowing all charges for the operation of the plant and 5 per cent. depreciation, a saving of thirty-one pounds nineteen shillings and tenpence over the previous system was secured—sufficient to enable the plant to pay for itself within four years.

But the ability to wring the oil from the cotton-waste used for wiping machinery does not represent the limits of the system. Indeed, it can be employed for wresting the oil from any material. One large works making extensive resort to automatic machinery employed sawdust, distributed over the floor, as the medium for absorbing oil dripping from the machines. When the sawdust had become thoroughly saturated and soiled, or at specific intervals, it was swept up and thrown into the furnaces. It was suggested that this sawdust, instead of being unceremoniously burned, should be passed through the reclamation-plant. The only modification required was the substitution for the ordinary metal basket of a canvas bag to hold the sawdust. The result was a complete success. The steam, after performing its initial function of driving the turbine, permeated the powdered mass and liquefied the oil, which then became freed by the centrifugal force exerted, and was thus recovered. The sawdust, upon withdrawal from the bag, was found to be quite clean, and suitable for another spell of duty, and consequently was redistributed over the floor, to be re-collected and re-treated again in due course. This cycle is repeated indefinitely, it only being necessary to add a small proportion of new sawdust to the bulk after each treatment to repair the various losses inevitably incurred.

In fashioning metal-work with the lathes a vast quantity of oil becomes associated with the turnings or swarf. The general method is to allow the oil to drain off, but if it is heavy and adhesive the quantity recovered in this way is very small. So it was decided to ascertain the possibilities of the centrifugal system in this connection. The turnings are dumped into the canvas bag and placed in the separator. The hot steam causes the oil to release itself from the metal, to be thrown off and recovered. In this instance practically the whole of the oil is reclaimed, leaving the turnings clean and dry. Preliminary draining is superfluous, because the swarf can be bagged and introduced into the machine without any delay. Of course, the oil recovered can be re-utilised as a lubricant in the working of the metal by the various machines. One firm which decided to introduce the system has recorded a startling success. At the present moment by treating all its swarf in this manner it is recovering over one thousand two hundred gallons of cutting-oil every week, which quantity represents about 90 per cent. of that originally served to the machines.

Such results as have been narrated are sufficiently impressive to establish the economy of the process, and so it is not surprising to learn that to-day our factories, no matter what their range of activity, are availing themselves of this simple and inexpensive means to reduce their oil and waste or cloth bill. Even the printing trade has discovered the possibilities attending the application of the idea to its peculiar requirements. The rags, cloths, and waste used in the cleaning of type and rollers, which become soiled with ink and turpentine, are submitted to the process. Both the ink and the cleansing medium—turpentine—are recovered for further duty, as well as the rags themselves.

'PRAMS.'

EVERY day, when the weather's fine,
The prams go by in an endless line:
Prams of brown, and prams of blue,
Family prams, and prams brand new;
And pushing the prams along the street
Are trudging mothers on weary feet—
While in every pram, it is quaint to know,
Is a man or woman in embryo.
A few more years, and each will be
A doctor, or clerk, or a wise M.P.—
Perhaps a professor in cap and gown—
Perhaps a Lord Mayor of London town!
(And if they are baby girls—why, then,
They are the future mothers of men!)
O babies, whatever in time you are—
Whether you foot it or keep your car—
Remember that once you rode the street,
Pushed by a mother with weary feet,
And whatever heights you may reach some day,
She gave you the first push on your way!

B. NOEL SAXELBY.



Chambers's Journal

SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

SOME attempted to scare their intellectual betters with the desolate vision of a winter fireside—maybe fireless—short of the comfort and the tranquillising influence, the balm, of a fair company of new books. A want of paper, the preciousness of labour, and a new reactionary but yet refreshing parsimony of persons were to form an anti-literary combination that might drive the booksellers to ruin and the people to the papers only, with a preference for those of largest circulation. But yet among those of sense and a certain quality of mind—the standard not needing to be superlative—reading is not so much a pastime or a simple custom as an affair of the instincts; while this fireside reading on winter nights has been discovered to be the only effective means of preserving a certain purity of heart and elevation of thought, with determination to persevere upon a disappointing way, amid the much surrounding grossness of the time. There were days when people were stimulated to good reading by examples in high places; they have gone. Ministers and politicians are not to be suspected of a tendency to bookishness in any form while they are so marvellously practical—and cunning withal—in the furtherance of their most material measures. Mr Gladstone sought solace and delight continually in out-of-Commons hours by happy excursions in beloved fields of Homer, but not for some years past have such habits been customary among Premiers; nor have they been encouraged. A new and unliterary spirit reigns among leaders of the people. There is the true story of a permanent official at a most important department at Whitehall who, upon a new man of no appreciable erudition taking over the Ministerial control a few years ago—and he was and is a Minister of eminence—wrote to a friend in horror and dismay, saying: 'At last we have here a fellow who can neither read nor write!' But neither the illiteracy of Governments nor the conspiracies of economic circumstances may diminish the ardour of a man of good mind for the reading and contemplation of a book that lays a presumption to him that it is good and entertaining. Indeed, it would be no surprise to know that the law of contrary here makes

incidence, as at some other desirable points in our present disordered existence, and that the scarcity of books, for such as it may be, or the talk of it for what it is, has encouraged the way of reading and increased both its extent and its seriousness among those who are of that way—made it more serious certainly, for light novels are fewer and books of fact (or what purport to be so) more numerous.

* * *

The fashion of the time among writers and readers is for revelation. If there were printed but a thousandth part that is of consequence of all that was said and done by those in high places during the last six years, what revelations then! We are assisted to a few of them, and some are of high quality. Indeed, one has the idea firmly that the new Repington book, with its intimate and detailed view of so much that was happening behind all the most important political, social, and other scenes, for value and interest joins the historic company in which are established the diaries of Pepys and Evelyn, the Creevey Papers, and such like. And to this it may be added that there is a certain semi-official feel in the reading, and if it is likened to Pepys and Evelyn, it is, as we say, 'more so' than they are, and more important. Colonel Repington has the true manner of the diarist who sees and knows nearly everything, and is engaged in a constant and skilful quest of the little that remains, with a fine idea of his own consequence, which is good in every way. Take his diary at random and see how, in fulfilling duty or relieving conscience by recording his daily experience, he catches at our curiosity and sets a spark to imagination. Thus—it is a Sunday in January of the last year of the war: 'Finished my article on the need of the army for men, explaining the whole situation clearly to the public, and laying the blame for our critical situation upon the procrastination and cowardice of the War Cabinet. It will create a sensation when it appears. Played a little bridge at Lady Paget's with Lady Mar, Lady Florence Willoughby, Mrs Maguire, Lord Charles Montagu, and a few more. I told them of my resignation, and they all applauded it. Dined with the M'Kennas, Mrs George Keppel, Lady Granard, Sir Lionel Earle, and several others,

who all seemed delighted with my decision, and said the nicest things. I then went on at 10.30 P.M. to see M. Cambon, the French Ambassador. De la Panouse was with us during our talk. I explained the position of affairs, and requested M. Cambon to explain the real position to M. Clemenceau. Cambon undertook to write a letter to M. Clemenceau, and guaranteed that it would be delivered to the French Premier personally—perhaps by Cambon's brother—and I offered to go to Paris if Clemenceau wished to see me. Cambon inclines to the view that the Germans will not attack in the West, but agrees with me that we must be prepared for it. Here, then, is not only a little of war fact and history and much suggestion, but such a dainty demonstration of psychological fluttering as the admissions of all the most famous diarists exhibit. But apart from this class of revelation, there are given to us now other fresh volumes of life and men and women, their capers and caprices, their more secret ambitions, their funny little intrigues as they forget the sun and the stars and are possessed of an instinct that all they think and say and do are things of some importance. Those who do much reading of new books, such as for whom the publishers' announcements are as the best of news, may agree that never were personal confession, revelation, or biographical study made more attractively than now. A good reason is that in recent times people have been living rather more than they should, and now, with such experience, desire to know more than ever of life. The subject attracts them.

* * *

Some old problems created neither by wars, by wages, nor by politicians are given to the minds of prospective readers as such books as these come fresh from writers' minds. They are problems that arise from conscience a little troubled on fine points of ethics and duty. How should this new literary stuff be treated by us, the individual reader? How thoroughly, or to what extent a little less than thoroughly? What system of reading should there be? To what principles should there be adherence? These are ancient questions; they vary naturally with readers and persons, suggesting they should also vary with the books. Upon such a train of thought one approaches a conclusion that all systems should be denounced, and moods or judgments of the moment be left in full authority, as is mostly done with those who made the books. But a majority of regular readers of books, perhaps, attach themselves to the idea of some sort of system, among other reasons, so that to the best of their capacity they may conscientiously accomplish their duty, reading as much of what is good for them as it is felt they should and can within the fair compass of a lifetime. This is perhaps not in all ways a commendable view, but it is remarkable how it interests the general community of readers who, at the close of a season, have a sense of

increasing futility, helplessness, despite their most extensive reading. Untouched volumes glare from their covers reproachfully from year to year. A man ashamed at fifty declares that ere another sun of spring shall shine the *French Revolution* of Thomas Carlyle (who, having been, as we may say, under much suspicion for pro-Germanism, and for that considered improper and not to be read during the war—as Wagner was not to be played—when minds were so much contracted, is now permitted to return), and with it some new reading of value and consequence, like the new life of Disraeli, already touched with that fearful plague of procrastination, shall be added to the company of the read and thought upon. Such book skeletons are reared up in the mental cupboards of most readers; they have been disturbers since the responsibilities of reading were first realised, and each neglected year has made them more harassing, until now they often cause a real unhappiness. The root-cause is failure to admit limitations, due to hypersensitiveness upon intellectual duty. You may have heard of the case of the country gentleman, a considerable reader and lover of books, obtained from subscription libraries in parcels of six, who, coming to London and for the first time visiting the reading-room of the British Museum, was overwhelmed with the vast immensity of literature preserved and visible in that great rotunda, and having heard that even this was nothing to what was hidden behind, was so overcome with the minuteness of his own extreme effort against this seeming infinity that he determined never again to read anything but the newspapers and such simple stories as he had on shelves at home. Something of this feeling comes at times into the minds of many of those who are regular and persistent readers of books; but they are wise, perhaps, to thrust it aside unthought upon, or to be philosophic, realising that it is rather a morbid fancy, and is, indeed, associated with such others as are concerned with suggestions upon the futility of life itself, having regard to the problems of the universe and wondering upon eternity. Best it is to make no resolutions, dismiss such niceties of conscience in these reading matters, dismiss rules and systems, and let only moods and pleasures have their way, for what reading comes not from them is wasted effort surely. There would be a gain in the end. This is well enough, some will say; but such questions as that of skipping are not to be so dismissed, and the post-war conditions of fewer books, with probably the standard of literary and informative value appreciably raised, brings new points to them. Thus, for a case, there are in the two volumes of the Repington afore-mentioned 1168 closely printed pages, and if these—leaving aside the consideration of pleasure and curiosity—are to be read with thoroughness, there are very many nights and Sundays to be applied to them,

and diaries are hard for skipping, since pages and paragraphs are usually unconnected with each other. If with some it is to be Repington in thoroughness, as they would like, then Mrs Asquith with her splendid candour and truly charming egoism, the love-stories of Disraeli, a fascinating set of Victorian vignettes by Lord Frederic Hamilton, and several others must be slipped, with more worry for the conscience, and a new fancy possibly that in a far future of human evolution the power of speedy absorption by the mind, assisted by a new and intense capacity of eye, may rid our distant posterity of such quandaries as these.

* * *

But still it is for the present a question for each person—each person for himself, and often should be of every book. Some are born to skip; a glance of three seconds upon a page might be enough for them; their sight, by a trained instinct, would catch upon such sentences as they felt were of consequence to their special cases. This is again sometimes a matter of long and careful training; it is like the capacity of the good journalist of long experience who at a single glance upon a large sheet of newspaper discovers there what is of importance to him, and in this way may deal with a score of papers, and not unthoroughly, in less than half-an-hour—have ‘read’ them better, indeed, than another might when devoting several hours to one. For in this quick glance there is a fine acuteness, and it is such acuteness and concentration upon selected passages that are at the same time an excuse, and even a certain commendation, for the skipping, because an expert at this procedure may often know and remember much more of the inside of a book than one who plods a laborious way along every printed line. Clearly then, if our skipper knows his business, the better the book the less there is of skipping. Conscience is well enough, but who that tries to act with it has not a certain envy of another who, bringing down to his chair at evening three or four new volumes, with a satisfied air and a slapping of the final covers goes off to bed with the lot accomplished—as he would say—and truly well prepared to tell stories from them all, or explain the authors’ attitudes and directions? And those who like to live with the characters of a novel for a lengthened period, feeling that such society and companionship is a pleasure sweetly drawn (how the characters of the Barchester community of Anthony Trollope did seem to fasten on us, and insinuate themselves into our very lives!), may yet admit, even with a hesitation, the advantages of a novel a night, so that an evening thus may be of itself complete, like another at a theatre, leaving the freedom of open choice for its successor. What, again, is true is that few books in general, and extremely few new novels, are worth more than a single spell of the time of any one who makes fair use of life

and capacity; while, as to the novels, some supposed to be the cleverest are desperately difficult to skip. There is a vogue in these days for Mr Joseph Conrad, whose art is held by his admirers to be higher and more splendid than that of most of our native writers whose tongue he uses, having chosen it and lived and worked in England for so long. Excellent and very conscientious work it is indeed, but this is no reading for the skippers. Mr Conrad insists upon the most minute attention to every statement that he makes, and not just that, but a close memory for all he says; indeed, a friend complains that, much as she admires and likes this Mr Joseph Conrad, she finds the need of learning his opening chapters irksome.

* * *

A little meditation makes it appear that to learn to read well and efficiently, in a manner such as to satisfy completely an individual demand, to still the murmurings of a captious conscience, is an accomplishment for long experience, for a keen judgment. But some of the wise men say that at middle age and afterwards the zest for reading diminishes. It may have been that way in calmer times, but many would distrust the suggestion now. In a note Samuel Butler set the proposition: ‘People between the ages of twenty and thirty read a good deal. After thirty their reading drops off, and by forty is confined to each person’s special subject, newspapers, and magazines.’ If this were really so, it would require a new examination of the skipping problem and the reading systems that have been propounded. Upon ‘the art of reading’ some suggestive books and a mass of articles have been produced. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has lately issued a volume bearing on this subject, the result of lectures delivered; but he treats it widely, and not, as some would say, practically. That may be a manner in which he would not care to treat it. But one wonders if his title, *The Art of Reading*, were the best, thinking now of one of the most delightful treatises on book-reading having that title—*L’Art de lire*—a book of rare flavour and yet ‘practical,’ written by the eminent French critic, Émile Faguet, who died some four or five years ago. No man who loves his books, none troubled upon such doubts as have been stirred just now, should omit the pleasure of a reading—a slow one, if but for compliment’s sake—of this gentle discourse. It opens in the preface by reminding us that Voltaire said that people read very little, and, as to those who wish to learn something, the majority read very badly; while Sainte-Beuve observed that the critic is just one who knows how to read, and teaches others how to read. Then, when Émile Faguet begins himself in the first chapter, he abashes the community of skippers, and those who have defended and abetted them, first with the title ‘*Lire lentement*,’ and then his admonishing

opening lines, saying (translated): 'To learn to read one must first of all read very slowly, and afterwards read very slowly, and always, up to the last book that has the honour of being read by you, it will be necessary to read very slowly. It is necessary to read a book as slowly to enjoy it as to learn from it or to criticise it. Flaubert said: "Ah, those men of the seventeenth century! How they knew Latin! How slowly they read!"' And then we are taken along delightful dissertations, rich in suggestion, wise in advice, upon books of ideas, obscure writers, bad writers, poets, sentimental books, critical books, re-reading, and other phases of the vast affair. Perhaps no other critic has written so nicely and effectively, in almost a popular vein, and yet with dignity and strength, as Émile Faguet in the case of this little brochure. We come at the end of it to some generous reflections in an epilogue where he says: 'The art of reading is the art of thinking with a little assistance. Consequently it has the same general rules as the art of thinking. One should think slowly; one should read slowly; one should think with circumspection without hurrying in the thought, raising objections ceaselessly; one should read with circumspection, raising constantly one's objections against the author; yet at the beginning one should abandon one's self to the train of his thought, and only after the lapse of a little time turn round to consider it.' . . . Émile Faguet makes some appealing suggestions in nearly every line; there is no little book that a worthy reader would care so little to race through as this. In such a presence we should forget we ever heard of this vulgar skipping.

* * *

For exculpation of ourselves there are, after all, writers and critics, good and wise, who are not so austere as Émile Faguet was—yet right, we know, in his austerity. Not long ago Mr Walter de la Mare, a good and favoured poet, gave his mind to the subject in a manner very practical and at length. He examined the situation as it has just presented itself, with thoroughness and in the cold and unsentimental manner of a house-painter or a plumber. The questions of taking notes, of whether we should bother ourselves with the author's preface, of whether we should read the end of the book before the beginning or while engaged upon its middle, are duly examined, sure conclusions and good advice resulting. Speed and skipping are twin points, and Mr de la Mare suggests: 'Whatever the pace may be, a second immediate reading of the same book or passage may curiously sharpen any vestige of the faculty we may happily possess of the second sight. We may thus, and thus only, win the smile from our author that accompanies the grasp of his hand. Much (as always) depends not only upon whether we wish to remember what we read, but upon *how* we

wish to remember it. Personally, rather than remember all that I have read I would much prefer to read again all that I can remember, though a sound method of reading might have substantially augmented the latter. . . . To skip or not to skip is an equally simple question. Just as, perhaps, a poet should be forbidden to indulge in *vers libre* until, for mere discipline's sake, he has written, say, 500 Limericks, or 154 (unpublished) Petrarchan sonnets, so should the skipper earn the privilege of skipping. It requires years of practice to skip with precision. Moreover, though an author may be telling us something which countless other authors have told us before, he is telling it in his own peculiar way. From each individual book, then, we should learn in what manner and degree we should indulge ourselves in this indolent kind of blind-man's buff.' And so, having taken counsel with friends and the authorities, we find with but partial satisfaction that these questions are for ourselves, with our inclinations and our necessities guiding us. Are we greedy—even with a vulgar greed, as some would say—of the new books that come to print this fireside season, then we must forget we ever met good Émile Faguet. There are a score or more of little reading-tricks—the handling of books, the making of each volume in some way personal to one's self—that would make good argument and mutual gain among a company of earnest readers. The book when it comes new from the shop is a raw and impersonal thing. The potentialities are there, of course, but it is at this appearance an affair entirely of an author and some printers, and much like a thousand others. But yet it comes to us with a certain appeal as of one who would not be so little identified, one who seeks a master and a friend. For ourselves the new book arriving by messenger from the shop in Piccadilly is like the little puppy-dog we bought some time before. There is some pathos in this lonesome coming; it needs a master, strong but kind, and these twain will become attached. The little dog develops an individuality, and a pride with it, and a pretty arrogance with the pride. So it is with our new book, or ought to be. We may read it, and may mark it, and make notes upon it, and treat it according to our judgment and our fancy. Then it becomes our book indeed, our very own and not like others, a precious and friendly possession, the companion for the fireside. Take care of the manner in which you mark your books; these markings would reveal to strangers prying curiously upon them your inner thoughts and feelings, something of your soul. One of the most satisfying institutions established by an old reader who makes few notes on fly-leaves and none elsewhere (keeping a note-book for some special quotations of striking value as it seems to him) is, when the last line has been read and there is a pause for a little thought, to

write at the end the place and date of reading, and any other circumstance about it—as of companionship, or nature of work or study at the time—that may be germane to a later consideration. The interest of a contemplation of this conjunction in after-years is hard to indicate to

those who have no experience of the kind. Specially it makes a strangely enlightening study of one's own variable, mood-tossed self to reflect at a re-reading in older age on changes in judgment and affection that arise from time and circumstance.

INSTINCT.

PART II.

VI.

HE had been wandering about the stricken town for hours, running a multitude of risks that he never realised, when it suddenly occurred to Collins, 'They ought to know about this at home.'

The thought stuck in his mind. At first he put it away by telling himself that somebody would send the news along; but the thing came back to him again and again, reinforced by the thought that there was nobody there to send the news—no newspaper reporters or people of that sort.

He was helping one of the few white settlers in the work of rescue, when this idea came to him in a way he could not resist. As both straightened themselves after finishing one job, Collins asked, 'Is there a place I could send a telegram?'

The other looked at him as though he were mad, and said, 'Good gad, does it look like it?' and then, as an afterthought, 'But I don't know—the cable-station at the other end of the island might be all right. It should be outside the danger-zone.'

In an hour Collins was in the cable-station. He did not quite know why he had gone there, but he had got there. He had started out to follow the road the settler had indicated. Just outside the stricken town he had found a horse in the shafts of a gig, the horse left tied to a rail by a water-side house, and badly scared. Collins had never driven a horse before, but he drove that one, and by some miracle reached the cable-office.

In the cable-office he found a three-fourths white telegraphist. The quadroon was limp with fear and wanted to run, but his body was held there by that three-fourths strain in him that forbade him to leave his post. But that seemed the limits of his grit. The one thing he did not appear capable of doing was working his instrument. He said to Collins, 'I've sent out the alarm. Nothing more can be done.'

'I want to send a cable,' said Collins evenly.

'I've sent the alarm,' the telegraphist cried, dancing in repressed fear. 'I can't do anything more—nothing more need be done.'

'You've got to do it. I want to cable to—to *The Morning Record*, London.' It was the first paper that came into his head. It was the one he read every day in London.

'I can't possibly send it.'

'It's got to go off.' Collins's even voice was implacable. Before it the clerk changed his line of resistance.

'Have you got a pass?' he asked, hoping that would defeat this stubborn fellow.

'What's that?' asked Collins.

'A pass—permission to send over the wire.'

'I'll pay,' said Collins. He put his hand in his hip-pocket and pulled out his wad of notes. The man fell back sullenly, defeated by the sight of this money.

'Will it be a long message?' he snarled.

'I don't know,' said Collins. He didn't know how much a word the message would be, so he said, 'Go on until this runs out.'

'I can't send a long message,' wailed the man. 'My nerves'—

'It's got to be done,' said Collins. He took the cable-forms the telegraphist had been fiddling with, and began to write with the utmost simplicity.

VII.

Collins didn't know the first thing about sending distance cables, and the telegraphist had to pull him up several times and irritably point out mistakes. But as the message grew things went smoother. When he had settled down to work, the telegraphist found his nerve. It was what he had needed—something to steady him—and he became more sympathetic and helpful to Collins.

Collins wrote down very plainly the things he had seen, using the abbreviations he would use if wiring a message for his furniture firm in England. He knew so little about writing that he did not spoil his message with purple passages. He just told baldly of the way the town of Sainte Marie had been overwhelmed; the way the houses were burning; the way people were flying allwhither; the way he had seen the bodies of men and women caught as they ran the gauntlet of fire in the streets; how they had fallen scorched to death by the abrupt upsurting of flame from frail, wooden, palm-thatched houses. He told of the wild lost children suddenly bereft of mothers; of mad and wandering women looking for children torn away from them in the panic. He told of the struggle to get to sea, and the overturning of overfull boats. He told in a sentence or two

of the fog of smoke and gas and the ever-falling rain of fire. He told of half-naked people flying into the country-side of the island, and of a settler's terse cry, 'They're flying straight into famine.' He gave facts and figures he had picked up from these white settlers as they had struggled in their rescue-work.

It was a message admirable and strong in its laconicism. The telegraphist took it from him slip by slip, and sent it clicking over the cable into the great void of a world as yet unconscious of the disaster. It was not a very long message, though it took Collins a long time to write. When he had finished, and signed it, the man handed him back eight pounds, which seemed to Collins to stamp the telegraphist as a robber, until he counted the words and worked out the cost—and gained his first insight into the dimaying price of those few words he had read so casually over his breakfast at home.

When he had finished, he wondered what he would do next. But at once the inner impulse came to him again to return to the burning town. As he made this known he found that the telegraphist had ceased to be hostile, and had become his friend. The telegraphist both venerated the press and needed his company. The telegraphist overwhelmed him with advice.

'I've a motor-cycle,' he said. 'You can run into Sainte Marie on that very quickly. Hide it outside the town so that no one can steal it. You can see the town and come back here. You'll want a place to sleep—well, sleep here. Also, you'll want to wire again, and your paper will cable you instructions here. You come back.'

So Collins, who understood a motor-cycle, began those journeys to and from the town which lasted for a fortnight. On the next day he did receive a wire from *The Morning Record*, and in it he got a hint of the scoop he had secured, though not of the tremendous splash he had made in newspaperdom. The editor of *The Record*, like the live-wire he was, had jumped on to the thing at once. He cabled: 'Magnificent man. Send all can. File R.T.P. Draw on us all expenses.' The telegraphist told him that R.T.P. meant Receiver to Pay, and showed him a cable he had had giving Collins the freedom of the cables to the extent of two thousand words a day, if necessary. Collins thereupon sat down and wrote another message.

VIII.

That is the story of Collins's first and astonishing 'scoop,' and the story of the strange impulse or instinct that lay behind it—that instinct which had impelled him to go to Sainte Marie against all reason. Instinct or impulse is the only thing that explains the way Collins smashed up his ordinary life to ship to the West Indies, where he did not want to go, and then to undertake that sailing-boat journey so as to arrive

at Sainte Marie at the psychological moment. There's no reason in his action; there is, so far as I know, no other way of explaining it. He had the instinct to get to a certain spot at a certain critical moment—that's all there is to it.

And that's all there is to John Collins, the great special correspondent of *The Morning Record*. He is, actually, an utter 'wash-out' as a special correspondent for most days in the year; and then that instinct gets to work, and there is a miracle, and *The Record* 'scoops' once more, big and fine.

For the remainder of John Collins's story is made up of that sort of thing. Collins stayed on in Sainte Marie writing cables about the sufferings of the people, the rescue-camps, and the need for funds, until his editor wired curtly: 'Cut it out. Come home.' Thereupon Collins took a boat to Jamaica, and at Jamaica was met by a lively little man from Cook's Agency. The man told him that an amazingly large sum had been placed to his credit in the banking department of his firm, and he took Collins's innocence in hand, saw that he went to a first-class hotel instead of a third-rater, fitted him out with decent clothes, and smothered his ideas about a second-cabin trip home in a brisk command for a saloon berth.

Collins arrived in London full of fear for his future, and anxiety concerning his reception by Winnie. He decided he had better go to *The Record* Office first. He would probably get that editor to see that the messages he had sent were worth a few pounds—if only for the time they had taken; and with a few pounds in his pocket he might face Winnie with greater courage.

His experience at *The Record* Office startled him. The editor welcomed him as though he were a king. And he didn't even wait for Collins to bring up the subject of payment. He called his accountant in, named a sum in hundreds that took Collins's breath away, asked, 'Do you think that's fair, Mr Collins?' and in a moment was handing over a cheque as though such sums grew on currant-bushes.

And on top of that he further pounded Collins into bewilderment by saying, 'And, look here, you come to us permanently, of course. Three years' agreement, at, say'—and he named a figure which exceeded Collins's rosiest ideal of a monthly salary. And then, as he hesitated, this pleasant and violent man let him see that he was merely mentioning a weekly salary. For he read into John Collins's silence the instinct for bargaining, and he multiplied the astonishing sum by four and added twenty pounds, and said he would say that figure a month; and Collins, almost bursting with joy, agreed to be a special correspondent at that figure a month, and went off to Winnie in bewilderment and rapture.

They decided not to marry for three months—

one never knew how things would turn out; and for ten weeks it seemed as though they had been wise, and to the editor as though he had been quite otherwise. For during those ten weeks Collins proved hopeless. In the ordinary routine of office-work he was the dullest of failures. He 'fell down' on every 'story' that was assigned to him. He didn't know the first things about nosing out news and following up scents. In routine jobs—weddings, political meetings, and the rest—to which the news editor in despair sent him, he wrote so woodenly and with such lack of perception that he was worse than the worst cub reporter. By the end of those ten weeks the editor was seriously thinking of paying off the contract and getting rid of Collins. He was an incubus.

IX.

And then, at the end of the ten weeks, the news editor came one day to the office to find that Collins had apparently got rid of himself. The news editor wanted to send him to a cattle-show, and Collins was nowhere to be found. He hadn't come to the office at all since sent out on a job the day before. The news editor, forgetting how hopeless the fellow was, gave way to temper. He was short-handed, and for this fool to act like this was to throw the whole working of *The Record* out of gear. He raged all day, promising the most curdling tortures when the fellow did come in.

Collins did not come in. But just about the time when the machines were being prepared for the final 'Town' edition of *The Record*, a stream of 'flimsies' began to pour into the news-room. These telegraphic-slips contained a bald, strong message telling of a terrible mining disaster *then happening* somewhere in the north of England. The message was obviously being sent by somebody who had been on the spot *before* the awful thing had happened. That was the fact. Collins had been in that mining-town two hours before the first moment of the disaster; his signature was on the messages.

He had 'scooped' once more—'scooped' as brilliantly and dazzlingly as he had over the Sainte Marie volcano disaster. *The Record* was the only morning paper to print the news. A special edition of *The Record* had a full story from its special correspondent, John Collins, while even the evening papers had to be content with short, 'flash' paragraphs sent by local men.

Collins had gone to that northern town, as he had shipped to the West Indies, for no reason at all. He could not explain himself. The impulse, the instinct, had come to him quite suddenly; he had gone to the station, bought a ticket for a town he knew nothing of, and hurried there by train.

He could not explain himself at all. And now he did not try; nor did anybody try. It became an accepted fact in *The Record* Office. John Collins, his editor saw, was a man who, in ordinary routine-work, was dull and useless to him; but he had an instinct—a brilliant instinct—for being on the spot at critical moments. The editor did not attempt to reason it out, but acknowledged the fact, and kept Collins as his special correspondent.

And John Collins remains his *great* special correspondent to this day. A man you never hear of at all until, startlingly, *The Morning Record* comes out ahead of any other paper with a great piece of news; as it did in the Sainte Marie and the mine disasters; as it did, later, in the story of the Balkan Revolution, the sinking of the Cape liner off the Spanish coast, the big and ugly strike in Ontario, and so on.

In each of these cases Collins had arrived on the spot before, or immediately on top of, the happening. His instinct, his curious inner sense, had carried him there against reason. You can, if you like, put it all down to some sixth sense that gives his commonplace soul some strange, psychic warning of coming events; but, on the whole, you had better leave it, as John Collins, and Mrs Winnie Collins, and the editor of *The Record* do, to his instinct.

THE END.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A NAVAL SECRETARY.

VI.—ASCENSION.

By C. E. GIFFORD, C.B., R.N.

I.

INCLUDED in the command of the admiral on the Cape station was Ascension, an island of volcanic formation, lying some eight degrees south of the equator.

The island, which had been occupied by the British in 1815, was regarded pretty much in the light of a ship, and was officially described as 'Tender to *Flora*.' This '*Flora*' was not the Goddess of Flowers, but the stationary ship at

Simon's Bay; and 'tender' must be read in the naval sense—that is, a vessel attached to a parent ship, and not as suggesting any affection for *Flora* on the part of the residents in the island!

In the *Challenger* report Darwin compares Ascension to a large ship kept in first-rate order.

In the middle of the island, which is about twenty-two miles in circumference, is the Green Mountain, 2800 feet high, the only spot in the island having a sign of vegetation. From it can

be seen the outlines of twenty or more volcanic cones, little craters long extinct. From the foot of this hill to the shore not a shrub, not a blade of grass, is visible. Some of the houses in the so-called garrison on the beach have a few flower-boxes in their verandas, but nothing grows in the surrounding soil, if, indeed, the scorias of volcanoes can be considered to constitute soil. In some of the valleys, however, there are patches of purslane, and the castor-oil plant is found in many places.

Of this isolated spot a captain of the Royal Navy was in command, with about a hundred officers and men under him. Those married officers whose wives could be accommodated on the island were appointed for three years, other officers for two. It is on record that a bachelor once asked to be reappointed for a third year; but he was an enthusiast, who wanted to complete a work on the fauna and flora of the island.

Communication with the outer world was almost limited to the arrival from St Helena, at intervals of thirty-five and twenty-one days alternately, of the homeward-bound Cape mail steamer. Thirty-five days' news to read and twenty-one days before another word came, and no electric telegraph to disturb one—can anything more peaceful be imagined? And yet in Ascension there was war at times. A story, known there as 'The Judgment of Solomon in the Island of Ascension,' tells of the wives of two officers of equal rank both laying claim to a front-seat in the little church. The matter came eventually to the captain for decision. After hearing what they had to advance, 'Ladies,' said he, 'your husbands' commissions dating from the same day, I am not able to award precedence to either; therefore the only fair way of settling the matter is for the elder lady to take the front-seat.' The coveted pew is said to have remained unoccupied during the stay of the two ladies on the island.

II.

Ascension furnishes a very interesting illustration of what can be done by man to assist nature in rendering habitable a volcanic island. The first necessity is, of course, fresh water, and untiring efforts have been made to save every drop formed on the central hill by the condensation of the moisture brought by the damp south-east trade-wind. A dew-pond collects some of it, and constant watch is kept for a 'drip,' no matter how small, in the upper six hundred feet of the hill, which is often enshrouded in wet fog. The water is led in pipes to tanks, the lowest named 'God be thanked,' and so on to the garrison.

The Green Mountain fully justifies its name. There are interesting reports at the Admiralty, dating as far back as 1847, of the efforts made to introduce verdure into the island. A Kew gardener is said to have spent some years there, carefully studying the possibility of encouraging

the growth of trees, shrubs, vegetables, grasses, &c.; and the Bermuda cedar, stone pines, and fuzes were specially recommended.

As we saw it, between 1882 and 1885, the Green Mountain presented a striking contrast to the lower parts of the island. The farm-bailiff lived there permanently, and there were a few houses, occupied in turn by the residents of the garrison, with gardens and shade-trees—Bermuda cedars, a few palms, eucalyptus, bananas, Pride of India, hibiscus, and a very brilliant bed of nasturtiums met the view. We found quantities of tomatoes (the little yellow *pomme d'oro*) growing wild on the slopes.

The farm was of considerable extent, producing fruit and vegetables, including turnips and sweet-potatoes. There was also pasturage for cattle on the slopes.

Paths had been cut round the ridge, and here gorse, blackberries, wild ginger, mimosa, and other shrubs abounded. Captain Barnard reported in 1862 that a thousand Australian wattles had been planted, and that a thousand more were ready to go in.

The farm-bailiff in 1883 said that he thought sheep would do well, and the admiral sent up a flock of five hundred from the Cape of Good Hope, but the result was not altogether satisfactory.

III.

The farm suffered from a series of pests. Land-crabs swarmed, and a reward was offered for their destruction, which gave occupation and pocket-money to some of the men. Rats multiplied amazingly, and trappers were constantly at work killing them. Cats were introduced to keep down the rats; but, alas! the cats increased so rapidly that a price was soon put upon their heads. When I shot one the keeper said, 'Six-pence in my pocket!' Rabbits were plentiful, and furnished both sport and food; but in *Whitaker's Almanack* for 1913 it was stated that steps were being taken to exterminate them. Several pairs of rooks were sent out from England to destroy the wireworm which ruined the turnips. For two or three seasons they did not breed; then came a succession of reports from the farm-bailiff: 'The rooks are nesting'; 'The birds are sitting'; 'The young birds are on the wing'; and then, sad to relate, the whole colony flew out to sea and were heard of no more. The nearest point of the African continent is about nine hundred miles distant, but this is not a greater distance than is covered every year by the flocks of short-winged quail that migrate from the Azores; so the rooks may have settled on the shore of the Gulf of Guinea.

To take the place of the rooks, mina-birds were imported from Mauritius, and they and little avadavats, seed-carriers, were multiplying at such a pace when we visited the island that in subsequent years the authorities may well have had to introduce hawks to destroy them.

Then, too, bitter complaints came of the destruction to shrubs and crops caused by a herd of wild donkeys, and they were condemned to be shot. The farm also suffered from the early morning visits of many wild goats, which returned after their meal to the precipitous cliffs on the southern side of the island. They furnished sport to the early riser in the mountain houses, and were accordingly not unwelcome visitors; but I read that they, too, have become such a pest that they are being exterminated. In fact, the only really popular introductions appear to have been guinea-fowl and the red-legged partridge. I shot one of the latter flying out of an india-rubber tree!

A very interesting visitor to the island is the 'wide-awake,' a tern or sea-swallow. These come in their thousands every eight months, occupying a valley known as 'Wide-Awake Fair.' Here the female lays one egg on the ground, and hatches it; and as soon as the young birds are strong on the wing, the whole colony disappears for another eight months. They are said to make their way to the Sargasso Sea, that expanse of floating weed in mid-Atlantic, and to feed on marine insects. During their stay in Ascension their eggs form a pleasant change in the monotonous diet of the residents.

Another periodical visitor is the turtle. The females come to lay their eggs on the sand, and from one to two hundred are 'turned' yearly, and confined in ponds until their turn comes to be eaten or to be sent to England. They run up to six hundred pounds and more in weight.

It was in the days of Sir Joshua Jebb, the prison reformer, that inquiries were made as to the diet of naval prisoners. Ascension had a small prison, where offenders against discipline were at times confined for short periods. In the diet-sheet of this prison appeared on two days a week 'turtle-soup.' Sir Nowell Salmon, Commander-in-Chief of the station, knowing Ascension, passed this; but exception was taken by the home authorities to the extravagance of feeding naval prisoners on a delicacy suggestive of Guildhall banquets. A serious report from the medical officer of the island, in which he stated that in the trying climate of Ascension prisoners sentenced to hard labour needed a generous diet, in order that they might not

suffer in health, with a covering remark by the captain that turtle-soup was a drug in the island market and cost practically nothing, was accepted as a sufficient explanation; the prisoner was not deprived of his turtle-soup, which, by the way, he by no means appreciated.

IV.

Ascension was the depot for supplies of all kinds for the West Coast squadron.

Our endeavours to provide fresh meat for them on their periodical visits, and for the crew of the island, were not always successful. I have mentioned the flock of sheep, which we had hoped would produce a goodly number of lambs yearly, but did not. Our arrival in the *Boadicea*, with a large crew, was welcomed by the paymaster of the island as an occasion which he had long been awaiting for killing an enormous ox which had been sent out from England. It was three times as large as the island, unassisted by ships' crews, could consume, and was eating its head off, being stall-fed on English hay, and he calculated the beef had already cost about two shillings and fourpence a pound—a great sum for those pre-war, preparation days!

I was greatly honoured by having placed at my disposal the services of Jimmy Chivers, the veteran mule of the island, said to be its oldest inhabitant. He carried me to the Green Mountain, amongst other places, and only once did his aged limbs give way, when we came to earth (or, rather, cinders) together.

Before taking leave of Ascension I must mention that one cannot quit the island when the 'double rollers' are prevalent. These enormous waves come without any warning, and break on the shore with great violence, and this whilst ships lie quietly at anchor in calm water outside the rollers.

Since putting together these notes I have again read Lady Gill's charming book *Six Months in Ascension*. This is an account of the visit of the Astronomer of the Cape Town Observatory, Sir David Gill, and herself to the island to observe the transit of Mars. To any one interested in Ascension I would say, read Lady Gill's narrative.

THE END.

FINDING'S NOT STEALING.

By E. R. PUNSHON.

I.

'MY dear,' protested Mr Napper Hill—for already the car had been at the door a quarter of an hour, and how was he, a poor dull man, to know that Mrs Napper Hill loved it to be there so that the neighbours might have

every chance for indulging their natural admiration and envy?—'my dear, I thought you said you were ready. We shall be late if you aren't quick.'

Mrs Napper Hill, a little afraid that she had overdone it, and that they might indeed miss their train, told her husband indignantly that it

was all his fault for standing there like a dummy and not helping her. Then she snapped a final warning at the maid, gave her two or three more hurried last instructions, and bustled out of the house to the waiting car.

'And I do hope,' she added in a tone more expressive of despair than of hope, 'that Annie won't forget what I've told her.'

And in the house Annie closed the front-door, and made behind it a face little indicative of affection for her departing mistress. 'Thank goodness,' she thought, 'they won't be back till Monday, and I'll have a bit of peace till then. Profiteers—that's what they are.'

She did not quite know what a profiteer was, but she used the word as a current and handy term of abuse, just as people in a different sphere of life employ 'Bolshevik' as a convenient word for expressing reproach and dislike; and then, as she was turning to go back into the kitchen, she gave a sudden, loud exclamation.

For there, shining on the mat at the foot of the stairs, lay Mrs Napper Hill's new diamond pendant.

'Lor'!' exclaimed Annie loudly, as she stooped to pick it up.

Then she laughed as she thought of Mrs Napper Hill's dismay when she discovered her loss, and of all the lectures about carelessness that that good lady had given her in the past, and of how clearly she had pointed out that it was entirely Annie's own fault when Annie lost her purse a few months ago.

'She'll be fair dropped on,' said Annie, chuckling, 'when she knows.'

Still smiling, highly pleased, Annie went into the dining-room and put the pendant to her throat to see how it looked there on her reflection in the mantelpiece mirror. It looked very nice indeed, she thought, and the glittering, shining jewel seemed to her the most beautiful thing she had ever seen in her life.

'Wish it were mine,' she murmured, touching it with loving fingers. 'Isn't it just pretty?' she cooed while she tried it first in one place and then in another on her dress, and at last turned away with a little, half-unconscious sigh. 'The missis won't know where she's dropped it,' she thought. 'I had best send her a telegram.'

She had been instructed to do this in case of any important happening, and had been duly provided with telegraph-forms ready to fill up. Annie had already got them out and was looking for pen and ink, when a sudden thought flashed into her mind, so that all at once she went very pale as she drew in her breath with a sharp gasp.

Mrs Napper Hill would not know where she had lost the pendant. She would almost certainly not discover her loss till she reached her destination, and then she would most likely imagine she had dropped the jewel in the train or at the railway-station, or perhaps in the car

on the way to the station. It would not be likely to occur to her that she had dropped it in the hall before her start.

'If I keep it,' Annie said to herself—and it was like some one else whispering in her ear—'no one will know.'

Very pale, and trembling a little, she looked nervously around as though to see who had spoken or who could hear. In the palm of her open hand lay the sparkling thing, winking temptation at her. Instinctively her hand closed to hide it, but she could still feel it in her clasp, and it was as though whispers of longing and desire travelled up her arm to fill her mind and overcome her will.

'It wouldn't be stealing,' she muttered—'only keeping.'

This seemed to her a distinction of the utmost importance and significance, and yet all the time she knew very well that there was not the least real difference. Hitherto she had always been a very honest girl, for so far no temptation like this had ever come her way, and deliberately to seek opportunities to rob her employers had never even occurred to her.

Nor, indeed, was it now the money value of the jewel that tempted her, but only what seemed to her its overpowering beauty. She felt she could not bear to part with a thing so altogether lovely.

She opened her hand again, very cautiously, and there it still was, even more beautiful than she had thought, shining tranquilly in her palm as though appealing to her never to let it go. And why should she? It might be hers if she liked. Practically it was hers already. Mrs Napper Hill had lost it; she had found it; that was all.

Annie discovered that she was very cold, and it surprised her greatly to find that she was trembling in a very curious manner. Her accustomed chair by the kitchen-range was near, and she sat down; and somehow it appeared to her that by doing this with the pendant still in her hand she had in some subtle way taken possession of it, and that henceforth it was hers.

'Very well,' she thought, 'I'll keep it.'

Her mind worked with an unusual rapidity and clearness. She saw that it would be easy to pack it up in a little cardboard box she had, and send it through the post to her sister, asking her to keep the box for her without opening it. Then presently she would give Mrs Napper Hill notice and take another place; and after a time, cautiously, she would be able to wear the pendant, sometimes, on special occasions. She could say it was a present from a soldier. No one would suspect—know.

Quickly she began to put her plan into execution; and when she had the pendant securely packed in its little box she pinned on her hat, and hurried out to the post-office round the corner. She would wait a month or two, she thought to herself as she sped along, and then

she would give notice, or provoke Mrs Napper Hill, by means of what is technically known as a 'back-answer,' to give her notice; and then, after she had found a new place at a safe distance and waited a little longer, she would be able to begin wearing the pendant. Already she felt herself thrill with anticipation of that supreme moment when all the world should see it, shining in all its glory on her neck, beautiful beyond conception.

'My!' she said to herself, drawing in her breath between her teeth; and it was much that she expressed in that one word. 'My!' she said again, and then for a third time, 'My!'

And as in a vision she saw herself moving through a great crowd with the pendant shining at her throat like the summer sun at high noon.

II.

When she came to the post-office Annie found that it was shut—for lately it had been closed every day from one till a quarter past two—and there still wanted a few minutes to the opening-time.

A little vexed, and feeling that she was not tidy enough to go on to the post-office in the main street, she returned to the house. She could easily come back in ten minutes or so, when the office would be open again. She let herself in by the front-door with the key Mrs Napper Hill had given her. As she did so she heard a slight noise in the dining-room, and thinking the cat was there, pushed open the door, and saw within, to her extreme amazement, a pale, thin young man who had just forced open the sideboard and extracted therefrom a quantity of the silver that was Mrs Napper Hill's chief glory and delight in life.

Annie was so astonished that for the moment she could only stand and stare; and then it came into her mind that this pale, thin young man was one who had called recently once or twice to try to sell her some cheap jewellery, and, failing in that effort, had nevertheless engaged her in friendly conversation, which had been, at least, an agreeable break in her task of blackleading the kitchen-range, though during it he had asked so many questions that finally she had called him Mr Impudence and Mr Curious, and had sent him about his business. But what on earth he was doing here now she quite failed at first to understand, though she did take in that he was making a pretty mess of the room she had so carefully tidied that very morning—and wearing his hat, too, he was, just as though he were in his own house.

'What are you a-doing of, if you please?' she demanded indignantly.

He had turned as she opened the door, and he was looking at her with an expression in his eyes such as she had never seen before. It puzzled her very much, and she saw that he was breathing hard, like a man short of breath, and

that the muscles of his mouth were twitching in the oddest manner possible.

'What have you come back for?' he muttered. 'I saw you go; I watched you. It's your day out. What did you come back for?' With a sudden and violent gesture he pushed towards her the silver he had just laid on the table, so that some of it fell on the floor. 'There,' he exclaimed; 'now then.'

'Mind what you are doing,' she cried angrily, for the cream-jug he had just pushed from the table to the floor was a favourite of Mrs Napper Hill's, and there would be a frightful row if she found it damaged on her return.

'Look 'ere,' said the pale, thin young man quickly; 'you 'elp me, and we'll go shares. See? You needn't do anything. See? Not a thing. But I'll give you half; honest, I will. See?'

'What? What? What's that?' she muttered.

He made a gesture of extreme anger and impatience.

'It'll be safe enough; no one will know a thing,' he urged. 'I'll give you half; straight, I will. No one will suspect. Why should they? This silver's worth a bit, and there's jewellery upstairs, and some loose cash besides. Shares, me and you. As easy as anything. You go out as usual for your day off, and when you come back you find what's happened, and you go right to the police. See? Halves it'll be, you and me—and worth it.'

'Think I'm a thief?' she demanded indignantly.

Her resentment was extreme. The cheek of the fellow! Watching her go out, and then coming sneaking in, without so much as a 'by your leave,' and marching into the dining-room and upsetting it all, when she had only done it out that very morning! And then expecting her to help! And standing there with his hat on, as large as life!

'Think I'm a thief, do you?' she repeated. 'I'll show you.'

She shook at him her hand in which she still held the cardboard box that she had packed the diamond pendant in, and turned with a vague idea of summoning help. She was not conscious of the least fear, for, indeed, her heavy and slow-moving mind had not even yet taken in the full significance of the thing. Her chief feeling was one of hot indignation at the man's cheek and impudence in first watching her go out, and then coming creeping in like this. She had simply never heard of such a thing. But now, the moment that she moved, he was upon her with a sudden leap, and catching hold of her arms, he tried to thrust into her mouth an antimacassar he had snatched up from the back of a chair.

Yet this was scarcely a prudent thing for him to do, for Annie was an exceedingly strong girl, and plucky enough, and now extremely angry, and he was certainly not possessed of any excep-

tional physical strength or skill. So, when his first attack failed—for she wrenched her arms free at once—it was on almost equal terms that they fought there in the doorway of the dining-room and in the hall, and with a swinging slap on the cheek she sent him staggering backwards.

'Would you, though?' he snarled, and flew back at her at once; for, coward though he was, the thought was in his mind that this was only a woman and he could soon master her.

He lashed out a vicious blow at her with his clenched fist, and it was by pure good fortune that she managed to avoid it. Often enough she had engaged in rough horse-play with one young man or another, and had generally found her strength not markedly inferior to theirs; but this was different—oddly different. She divined in him an intention to do her harm; and this blow he had dealt her, though she had managed to avoid its full force, had sent her reeling, nearly falling. He came at her again with his fist raised ready to deliver another blow, and some instinct born of the rage and fear she felt made her dodge under his lifted arm and wreath one hand fiercely in his thick, disordered curls. His hat had fallen off, and she had dropped her cardboard box, and as they scuffled there in the hall she was screaming at the top of her voice, while still maintaining her grip on his florid curls. Cursing wildly, he tried again to strike her, but she was pressing too near his body for his blows to be effective, so he adopted new tactics and kicked her ankle viciously. She fell, but in falling somehow so twisted herself about him that he fell with her. They rolled over together on the floor, crushing utterly his hat and her cardboard box, he still cursing vigorously, and she uttering scream after scream, with her hand still wreathed in his hair.

'Let me go. I'll murder you, I will—if I swing for it,' he panted, and somehow or another found himself free, though at the expense of a handful of hair left, roots and all, in Annie's grasp.

She was on her feet, too, by now, and ready to rush at him again; but he had no more stomach for the fray, and flew to the front-door and out, with her hand upon his heels. She struck at him as he tore down the steps, but only with her open hand and without effect.

He turned on her furiously. 'Leave me alone—why can't you?' he cried, and hit back at her, but wildly, doing her no harm; and when he fled down the street she was still close behind him, still uttering scream after scream.

With one wild final curse he bolted round the corner and straight into the arms of a very large policeman who—the hour and the man for once coinciding—chanced to be standing there.

III.

'Now, what's all this?' said the very large policeman, enfolding the pale, thin young man

in an ample embrace in which he became at once completely lost, as a drop is lost in the ocean.

'Stop thief!' said Annie, turning the corner. 'Stop thief!'

'Right, miss,' said the policeman; 'so he is.'

'It's a fair—cop,' panted the thin young man from his place in the policeman's arms.

'It is so,' answered the policeman, who seemed of an amiable character, and to like to agree when possible; 'but what have you been up to?'

'Stop—thief!' repeated Annie; and then, realising that that request was no longer necessary, she added, 'You just step this way and you'll see what he's been a-doing of.'

She led the way back to the house, where the disordered hall and dining-room and the silver ready for removal showed quite plainly what had been the intentions of the pale, thin young man, who had now the air of being much more thin and pale even than before.

'Watched me out, he did,' said Annie indignantly; 'but I came back, and there he was as large as life—and me only tidied the room this morning as never was. And wearing his hat, too, same as he might be at home. But when he grabbed me I grabbed him, and that's his hair I pulled out, the great coward.'

'I ain't no coward,' snivelled the pale young man, roused by the injustice of this reproach, for he felt he had fought like a hero. 'And you 'urt me more nor I 'urt you,' he added, painfully conscious of an aching gap in his florid curls.

'Asked me to take half and let him go,' said Annie, continuing with increasing indignation; 'so I says, "Think I'm a thief?" says I'—and all at once she paused abruptly, for her eye had caught the sparkle of the diamond pendant resting by the doorway, where it had rolled from the smashed cardboard box, and now winked ironic greeting at her. 'Think I'm a thief!' she repeated mechanically, watching how it shone and glittered there, sparkling with a mocking sense of what only she and it knew.

'Quite right, too,' said the big policeman approvingly; 'and all I can say is, if every young lady was as honest as you—my word!'

He paused as though overcome by the thought, and then noticed where Annie was looking, and saw the diamond pendant for the first time.

'Hullo! what's that?' he asked. 'More of your little work, eh?' he said to the pale young man.

'Wish I may die,' declared the pale young man, but not as one expecting to be believed, 'if I ever saw it before.'

'Course you never did,' smiled the big policeman; 'innocent as a babe unborn, you are. Well, you come along with me now.—Miss, you'll not be scared waiting here alone a few minutes, will you? I'll send 'em round from the station at once, and they'll be here in two

ticks; so don't touch nothing till they come. You won't mind waiting just a minute till I get this beauty put away safe?'

'Oh no,' said Annie, 'not at all, thank you.'

'Right-o,' said the big policeman, and vanished with his captive; while Annie, left alone,

first picked up the fragments of the broken cardboard box, and then, sitting down on a chair, looked steadily and with defiance at the diamond pendant winking at her from its place by the door its ironic reminder of what only she and it knew.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A ONE-MAN SAWING-MACHINE.

A MOST useful appliance for estates and large farms is the 'Wade One-Man Drag-Saw.' As the name indicates, it is primarily intended for sawing, its special purpose being to cut tree-trunks up into sections in the place where they have fallen, in order to facilitate removal. Hitherto such work has been carried out by hand, but owing to its greatly increased cost hand-labour is now prohibitive. The apparatus referred to consists of a two-stroke single-cylinder petrol motor, which drives, through a chain, a shaft having a crank-arm at one end for working the saw. Motor, petrol-tank, and gear are mounted upon a frame, having a wheel at the front and handles at the back; in fact, the contrivance resembles a wheelbarrow in general appearance, and can be trundled about from place to place by one man. When a tree-trunk is to be sawn up the appliance is wheeled to the spot, and the handle end of the machine is made to rest on the top of the trunk, to which it is fixed by spikes. The other end is carried by the wheel, which is securely locked. The saw will cut through a large tree in a few minutes at an almost negligible cost, in spite of the high price of petrol. Not only is this apparatus useful for sawing up trees, but the motor is fitted with a pulley, and can be used for driving root-cutters and other farmyard machines.

CATERPILLAR TRACTOR FOR STEAM-NAVY.

The construction of almost all large buildings, such as hotels, office blocks, &c., involves a considerable amount of excavation-work, and these operations are now commonly performed by machines known as steam-navvies. These appliances closely resemble steam-cranes, in that each consists of a jib for lifting, projecting outwards and upwards in front, which is balanced by the engine and boiler at the rear, the complete contrivance being mounted on a turntable, carried upon a wheeled truck. The 'shovel' is in the form of a rectangular box, with cutting-teeth on the front edge, open at the top, and fitted with a movable bottom. This shovel is mounted on the end of a long steel girder known as the 'dipper-stick.' When earth has to be excavated, the shovel is lowered to the bottom of the hole, and the dipper-stick is clamped to

a fulcrum, the result being that when the shovel is wound up from the end of the jib by the steam-engine it follows a circular path with the dipper-stick as radius, and cuts earth away until it is full. At the top of its stroke the shovel is high enough to be swung round over a lorry or a wagon, into which the contents are discharged by pulling a trigger, thus letting the bottom fall open. The operation is nearly automatic, the bottom closing and relocking itself as the shovel descends for another load. A variation in the mode of carrying a steam-navvy has been introduced recently by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, & Co. for some excavation-work in the west end of London. In this case the appliance is mounted on a caterpillar tractor, and is driven by an engine of forty-five horse-power. Although the treads of the caterpillar-bands are smooth, so as not to damage the roads, the contrivance is capable of climbing gradients of fifteen degrees. It is also fitted with a hauling-drum and a wire-rope, by means of which it can haul itself up inclines of one in four. The weight of the machine is twenty tons, and the over-all length is twenty feet, while the width is ten feet. The shovel can lift three-quarters of a ton of earth at each stroke from a depth of fourteen feet below, and deliver it at eighteen feet above, the surface upon which the tractor is standing. Owing to the difficulty of carting away the earth fast enough, the output is usually limited to three hundred tons per eight-hours day, but the navvy is capable of lifting sixty tons an hour.

EFFICIENCY OF THE OPEN FIRE.

Some very interesting, and to many people astonishing, facts in connection with open coal-fires have been revealed during a research by Dr Margaret White Fishenden which was carried out for the Manchester Corporation Air Pollution Advisory Board. According to this investigator's report, apart from the loss in unburnt products in the form of ash, soot, or gas, the total efficiency of the open fire approaches 100 per cent., the only heat completely wasted being 'that which escapes from the top of the chimney (though even this is doing useful work in causing ventilation), and that which is conducted through the walls at the back of the fire to the outside.' The tests carried out comprised measurements of the heat radiated into rooms from various forms of open fires, under various conditions and

burning different fuels. With ordinary house-coal the amount of heat radiated ranged between 20 and 24 per cent. of that produced by combustion, and it was 'proved that the supposed great variation in radiant efficiency between different grates does not exist.' Experiments with what is known as low-temperature-carbonisation coke (a richer coke than the gasworks variety), which lights easily and gives off flames without smoke, gave a radiant efficiency of from 30 to 33 per cent. in a grate which gave only 25 per cent. with coal. Several preparations widely advertised as doubling the value of a ton of coal were tested, only to find 'that they had no effect whatever on the quantity of heat given out to the room from a given weight of fuel.' Experiments on the effect of draught showed that an adjustable register should be fitted to every open fire, by means of which the draught can be reduced to a minimum once the fire is burning satisfactorily. 'This register should be placed about a foot above the opening of the chimney, as otherwise smoke and dust will be driven into the room when it is closed.' Under such conditions the open fire may become quite an efficient means of heating a room, for, although only about 25 per cent. of the heat in the coal is given out as radiant heat, merely a small proportion of the remainder is really wasted, some of it being utilised in warming the chimney, thus raising the temperature of adjacent rooms and of the house generally. An interesting feature of the radiation from open fires is that the greatest effects are produced in a direction varying from forty to sixty degrees with the horizontal.

AN UNBREAKABLE VACUUM-FLASK.

Invaluable as is the vacuum-flask, it has the serious drawback of being easily broken, owing to the fact that the inner container is of glass. This defect is eliminated in an unbreakable vacuum-bottle now on the market, which is constructed entirely of steel. Although there are inner and outer containers, the latter being made up from several stampings, the joints are so welded that the complete bottle is to all intents and purposes in one piece. The inside is lined with 'amalgam,' a rich blue flexible enamel which does not crack or tarnish in spite of differences of temperature in the liquids carried. Gun-metal black, with nickel base and top, is the standard finish, but the body may be covered with leather if desired. The mouth is fitted with the usual cork and cup. The quart size will keep boiling liquids hot for over twenty hours, the two-quart size for over twenty-four hours.

SOMETHING NOVEL IN VACUUM-CLEANERS.

No vacuum-cleaner worked by one person can ever be quite so efficient as the corresponding apparatus driven by an electric motor; but a suction-sweeper that we have examined recently runs the electric type very close indeed. The

vacuum is produced by a rotary exhaustor which turns at about three thousand revolutions a minute. It is driven through multiplying gear by two light rubber-faced wheels at the rear of the appliance. These wheels actually drive the fan only while the cleaner is being pushed forward, but the momentum created keeps the fan running during the back strokes also. As in some other vacuum-cleaners worked by hand, a rotating brush, driven by two small wheels at the front of the machine, first stirs up the dust, which is then sucked up through the usual nozzle into a dust-bag clipped on to the outlet to the fan, the upper end of the bag being suspended from the handle of the cleaner. This dust-container can be instantly detached, and the dust emptied out through a large mouth closed by a special clip. All the working parts are completely protected from dust, and they require lubricating only at long intervals. The machine is constructed almost entirely of aluminium, and every effort has been made to secure lightness; in fact, the complete apparatus weighs only between six and seven pounds. As already indicated, the results achieved by it are remarkably good. The same makers also produce an electric vacuum-cleaner. Here again we have the rotary fan, but in this case it is driven by a tiny electric motor at no fewer than eight thousand revolutions a minute. This machine has so powerful a suction that no rotating brush at the nozzle is needed. In other respects it is very similar to the hand type, being made of aluminium and very light. The wire for carrying the electric current is provided with a plug which will fit any electric-lamp socket, or it may be attached to an ordinary wall plug. Various types of nozzle for cleaning curtains, upholstery, &c. may be used with the machine.

AN IMPROVED GAS OVEN.

The big reduction in its weight which takes place when a piece of meat is cooked in a gas oven is always cited as a serious drawback by the advocates of electric cooking. It arises from the constant stream of air through the oven necessary to keep the burners alight. Naturally this air absorbs moisture from the meat and has a tendency to dry it up. Electric ovens and those heated by coal ranges are entirely closed, and no circulation of air within them takes place, with the result that meat cooked in them suffers only a comparatively small shrinkage. Not only is the flow of air through a gas oven an undesirable feature from this point of view, but it has the serious drawback of carrying dust off the kitchen floor on to the food being cooked; while if an outside door is opened the temperature of the oven is immediately lowered. A gas oven that we have recently seen in operation obviates these disadvantages, and has the additional advantage of saving gas. As the oven is entirely enclosed (the burners being in

independent chambers at the sides), no circulation of air is necessary, and foods cooked in it are absolutely protected from dust. Other advantages of having the burners outside instead of inside the oven include the absence of all smell caused by fat spluttering on to the gas-jets, and the exclusion of mice and insects from contact with the inside of the oven at any time. The oven may be obtained alone, or it may form part of a complete gas range, fitted also with an open fire for airing and warming, and with a hot-water circulator controlled by a thermostat.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TELEPHONE.

An excellent photograph was transmitted recently by telephone from Antwerp to Paris, and a reproduction of it appeared in the *Matin*. It showed a group of Swedish girl gymnasts passing in front of the camera, and was reproduced in eight minutes. In *The Times*, where a report of this performance appeared, the following explanation was given of the apparatus used and the principles upon which it works: 'The invention makes use of the inequalities of the surface of a carbon photograph in an ingenious fashion. It is known that these inequalities, which are exceedingly minute, vary with the depth of shadow—that is to say, with the effect of the light upon the surface of the medium. The method of utilising these conditions is as follows. The photograph to be transmitted is placed on a cylinder in every respect like the cylinder used in phonography, which, as it revolves, presents to a needle every point of its surface. The needle and the cylinder form part of a telephone circuit, and the sound of the needle as it passes over the diminutive elevations and depressions of the photograph is amplified by means of a microphone attached to the needle; that is to say, the current which passes through the telephone-wire varies in conformity with the inequalities of the surface of the photograph. It remains only to translate at the receiving end these variations of the current in such a fashion as to reconstitute the picture. The telephonic current is made to pass through an apparatus known to electricians as the oscillograph of Blondel, which is a sort of supersensitive galvanometer. It consists of two fine metallic wires carrying a tiny mirror placed between the poles of an electro-magnet. Each variation of the current through the wires causes the mirror to move. The light from an electric lamp is reflected by the mirror. By means of a simple optical arrangement of lenses and a transparent screen of graded tints, the light reflected from the mirror falls on a revolving cylinder covered with photographic paper—the counterpart of the transmitting cylinder—and the image is formed by successive projections of light which correspond to the variations in the surface of the transmitting photograph.'

'BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW.'

Referring to the statement made in the paragraph under the above heading in our October issue that there is no direct evidence of the use of straw in the making of bricks, nor does any trace of the ancient use survive in Egypt, a correspondent writes: 'During a four-years' sojourn in Egypt and Palestine, in the course of which I came closely in contact with the country people, or "fellaheen," I have frequently seen finely chopped straw, called "tibbin," used in the making of bricks. A particular occasion comes to mind when I set a party of natives to make bricks for the building of an outhouse, and the foreman came and asked for "tibbin," explaining that the bricks would not hold together without it.' An Essex correspondent also kindly informs us that in his neighbourhood there are some ancient buildings constructed of air-dried clay lumps, and these have straw in their composition. On the authority of a local bricklayer, he states that stubble used to be collected and sprinkled on the clay, and was trodden in by horses. The clay was then rammed into moulds, and the bricks thus formed, after lying on sticks to dry for fourteen days, were built with mortar in the usual way. The clay was derived from a boulder-clay formation, and as it contained small lumps of chalk, was unsuitable for making bricks to be burnt in a kiln; hence the use of air-dried bricks of the kind described.

A VALUABLE AID TO THE DEAF.

While it is obviously the case that the progress of science in some directions has been retarded by the Great War, it is no less true that in others it has been accelerated. The science of acoustics affords an admirable illustration of this truth, for the research-work undertaken during the war in order to provide a microphone sensitive enough to detect the whereabouts of enemy submarines has led to material improvements being made in an instrument known as 'The Acousticon,' which we believe, from experiments we have made, to be a real boon to those suffering from deafness. This handy apparatus, which is so compact in form that it can readily be carried about on the person, consists of three parts—the battery, the microphone, and the ear-piece, all of which are connected by fine, flexible wires encased in silk. The battery, which is of the dry-cell type, is so small that it fits easily into the waistcoat or blouse pocket, where it always remains. The ear-piece, which is hardly greater in diameter than a five-shilling piece, is carried in another pocket when not in use; when in use it may be held up to the ear, or clipped to it by an adjustable band, if it is desirable to leave both hands free. The microphone or transmitter may be carried permanently (even during use) in another pocket, or under a gentleman's tie or a lady's blouse; or, if preferred,

it may be temporarily attached to the coat or the blouse while it is being used. The microphone, which is, of course, the most important part of the instrument, is made of very fine vulcanite, thus avoiding the marked vibration inseparable from the employment of metal. On the face of the microphone are a number of openings, through which the sound is admitted. By means of a bevel it is deflected on to a cone, which guides it on to a highly sensitised diaphragm, the sound having been made more resonant on its way by the chamber through which it passes. From this diaphragm the vibration is conveyed to the ear-piece, where it is reproduced in tones which are louder or softer according to the needs of the user, who can readily adjust the instrument to his own requirements by means of a regulator at the back of the microphone. If desired, the apparatus may be worn in such a way that it is hardly noticeable; and, of course, the necessity of speaking into a receiver is entirely obviated. A special form of the instrument is adapted for use in churches and in halls where public meetings are held. A suitable microphone being fitted in the pulpit or the rostrum, it may be connected with any number of ear-pieces placed in the pews or seats where they are needed, and as each ear-piece is fitted with a regulator, the volume of sound can be modified at will. It is interesting to learn that one of these instruments was specially installed at Versailles during the Peace Conference for the benefit of the Right Honourable W. M. Hughes, the Australian Prime Minister, who was thus enabled the more easily to take part in that historic assembly. He now uses the instrument regularly in the Federal House of Parliament. Another form of the apparatus is being employed by American detectives to check the machinations of the criminal classes. When installed in a room where suspects are gathered, it enables a listener outside to overhear their conversation without their knowledge, and thus to be in a position to foil their plans.

A NEW UNIT OF GAS MEASUREMENT.

Time was when by far the most important test of the efficiency of coal-gas was its illuminating-power. With the practically universal use of incandescent mantles and the greatly extended employment of gas as a heating agent, however, heating or calorific power has now come to be the more important factor, and this has been recognised in a recent Act of Parliament. Under its provisions, gas may in future be sold at so much per therm, instead of at so much per thousand cubic feet. A therm is defined as 100,000 British thermal units, a British thermal unit being the amount of heat necessary to raise 1 lb. of water 1° F. Every local authority or gas company adopting the new unit is required under the Act to declare the

heating value of its gas, and provision is made for ascertaining by a system of tests that the declaration made is in accordance with facts. This change of unit, however, will not involve any change in the meters at present in use, for, if the heating value of the gas is known, it is an easy matter to change cubic feet into the equivalent number of therms. All that is necessary is to multiply the number of cubic feet by the declared heating value of the gas, and divide the result by 100,000. Thus if the declared heating value of the gas made by a certain corporation is 550, 1800 cubic feet will be represented by $(1800 \times 550 \div 100,000)$ therms, or 9.9 therms. It may be noted that, while the Act is at present a permissive one, it may, at the instance of the Board of Trade, become obligatory in the case of any or every corporation or gas company at the end of two years from now.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions, publications, &c. mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE BUILDER.

A DREAMER in a pleasant land,
With untrained eye and untaught hand
I laid the broad foundation-stone
To build a temple of my own.

In heat and cold, in sun and shade,
Stone upon stone the wall was laid,
And as the shapely temple grew
I builded better than I knew.

With careful hands and loving art
I traced the vision of my heart,
And saw with glad and wondering eyes
The temple of my dreams uprise.

In silent beauty as it grew
I builded better than I knew
Until the polished corners shone
Above the broad foundation-stone.

But when through tears and sunny gleams
I saw the temple of my dreams,
The cross of sacrifice was set
Upon the highest parapet.

I would not rashly claim as mine
The Master Builder's fair design;
Only because my heart was true
I builded better than I knew.

G. R. GLASGOW.

*. * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to 'The Editor, *Chambers's Journal*, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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CHRISTMAS 1920.

TAMMAS TOSH—BEADLE.

By JOSEPH LAING WAUGH,

Author of *Robbie Doo*, *Betty Grier*, *Cute M'Chayne*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

IT was Thomas Tosh, beadle, grave-digger, and manse factotum, who first drove me up Shinnel Glen, and in his own inimitable way introduced me to much that was of interest to me then, and is hallowed in recollection to me now.

Indeed, in all things parochial, Tosh was my guide and preceptor; and to me, a stranger in a strange land and among fremit folks, his titbits of local history, his information regarding near-hand cuts and byways, his naïve remarks, and artlessly expressed philosophisings were, in those days of my early ministry, both welcome and enlightening.

I am writing from memory, and I have little definite on which I can pin an assertion, but I am sure I never at any time put a leading question to Thomas in order to draw him out and elicit his opinions. Then, as now, so far as human analysis was concerned, I relied entirely on a keen sense of observation, a deductive, analytical faculty which seldom led me astray. Besides, such wheedling tactics were unnecessary in Tosh's case, for he was by nature chatty, sociable, and communicative, and volunteered, with a readiness and apparent relish born of knowledge and familiarity, oddments of domestic news and scraps of interesting information,

which oozed from him as freely and naturally as water from a moss-rock well.

It was only at times, however, that Thomas was voluble and talkative. The responsibilities of the glebe lands and the manse gardens lay heavy upon him, and when fencing on the glebe or gardening on the grounds he was, as a rule, too eident and preoccupied for lengthy converse.

'Ah, Maister Crosbie,' he said to me one day when I was thoughtlessly holding him in what he considered irrelevant, useless 'confab'—'ah, Maister Crosbie, but I maun get on; the day is aye ower short for me, an' talkin's no workin'—at least in my line. It's a bad job when your haun's get taigelt wi' your tongue, so, wi' a' due respect to your crack, I'll get on wi' my wark.' And before I had hunted up 'taigelt' in my 'Warrack' and fully grasped the meaning of the pithy old Scots saying, Tosh was lost to his surroundings in the subdivision of a two-pole potato-plot.

It was in the roomy, old-fashioned manse gig, behind stolid, jogging Donald, and with me, a patient, interested listener, that Thomas showed to advantage as a conversationalist.

The turn-out—horse, trap, and harness—had come to me, as I understand it had come to my predecessor, with the living. How it had

come to be reckoned a parish asset I cannot explain. My oldest parishioner couldn't enlighten me, and none of my heritors pleaded guilty of any deed of gift; but Tosh called it 'oor's' with an emphatic ring of possession, and looked so much part and parcel of the antiquated concern that I accepted it without qualm or question.

Tosh was no Jehu; his seat was contorted and inelegant, and his constant rein-tugging and whip-cracking entailed a physical exertion that tired him sorely. But he had a fairly accurate estimate of Donald as a 'goer,' an estimate based on a quarter of a century's acquaintance; and although I could have walked faster, I put up with Donald's 'five mile an' oor, no coontin' stops,' just for the pleasure of having Tosh's company and the benefit of his newey conversation.

The first outing we had together was on a July Monday afternoon. I remember it well, for, as the placed minister of Shinnel, I had on the previous day preached my first sermon, and was, of course, anxious to know how the parish had received it. Quite naturally I thought, considering the importance of the event and the fact that we were sitting *tête-à-tête* in the trap, he would take the opportunity of conveying to me the public impressions. But I was disappointed, for, notwithstanding the many possible openings the conversation offered, he was silent on the subject that concerned me so keenly.

'Ay, sir,' he said, as he 'raxed' me the strap of the stiff leather apron, 'it's Miltonbrae I think ye said ye wanted to veesit. Weel, weel, Donal an' me ken that airt brawly—it's a lang but no a sair road. Juist sling your 'brella on the lingers there; ye maunna lippen it behind ye, for it nicht fa' oot. A cane-backet gig looks weel when it's new, but the pairish boys o' a by-gane generation hae smoket the back oot o' this yin, an' cane-wark hereaway canna be renewed—imphm. Ay, ay, but bide a wee; ye maun buckle the strap o' the apron to the splash-board there, so that if Donal fa's ye'll be less likely to be shot oot.'

'Is Donald likely to fall?' I asked apprehensively.

'Weel, I—I wadna say *likely*, but when his mind's no on his wark he's guilty o' makin' a mistake; but, dod, sir,' he added blithely, as if exonerating Donald, 'if it comes to that o't, we're a' tarred wi' the same brush—deed are we—imphm. Weel, if ye're a' richt we'll mak' a stert.—C' way, Donal, then; tak' the gait canny, an' naue o' your braingin'.'

Donald, with bowed head, had been looking long and earnestly at the chuckie-stones in the gravel-drive, and it was only after much riving and tugging at the reins that he answered Tosh's call, and proceeded to walk slowly down the avenue. He didn't accelerate his pace when we reached the loaning, and, thinking Tosh was disappointed that Donald was not showing his

mettle before his new master, I remarked, by way of encouragement, that a slow horse was a sure horse, and that Donald was maybe a good follower at a funeral.

Tosh looked quickly towards me; then, with a laugh and a twinkle in his eye, 'Mebbe he is, sir,' he said. 'I canna say for certain, for I've never driven him at a funeral. It's like this, ye see—I canna baith bury the corp an' drive the minister. . . . Here's Maister Simpson comin' along the road. Ye wad shak' haun's wi' him at the induction, though mebbe ye'll no mind his face. . . . Mairret his deceased wife's sister, they tell me,' continued Tosh when we had passed. 'I dinna ken what ye think about that, sir, but in my humble opinion there's no muckle wrang in't. When inclination is coontered by the law o' the lan' there are aye mony law-brakars. . . . Knockjig in the hollow there—fair guid grun', but could brawly dae wi' mair than it gets. If ye dinna put it in ye canna expec' to tak' it oot, an' I've often telt Knockjig that he was wrang to work sae lang wi' road-reddens when guid byre manure was cheap an' handy. But I daursay he kens his ain grun' best, for he was born on't. So was his faither an' grandfather. They say there were Curries in Knockjig when Shinnel bell was first hung, and that waana yesterday. . . . That's the wey, Donal. Faith, ye're makin' the stoor flee noo;' and Tosh proceeded to pull his long, battered felt hat well down on his ears, as if anticipating a hurricane velocity.

Donald was certainly trotting, but he had a 'click spavin,' which made his movement so jerky and the gig so jolty that it gave me the hiccup. But I didn't like to complain, or discourage Donald in the way of well-doing.

'Streetch o' guid; fishin' watter there,' said Tosh, pointing with his whip. 'Tak's nacky wark, though, for the trees are ower near; but by wadin' up the middle and workin' wi' a short line—a grouse an' claret, a Mairch Broon an' a butcher—ye'll fill a basket or ye're hauf a mile up. . . . That's yin o' oor fouk—James Laidlaw by name—on the brae-face, workin' on the dyke. Grumblin' kind o' a buddy, an' by-ordinar' cat-witted, but a weel-meanin' sowl, an' the best dry-stane dyker in the shire o' Dumfries. Was bad for the dram at ae time, an' was reckoned a bonnie fechter at Thornhill fairs, but he quat drinkin' when his coo chocket wi' a tattie, an' noo ca's cannily along, workin' o' fore-nichts in his gairden an' breedin' canaries. . . . Juist think o't, sir—canaries! an' him six feet three in his stockin'-soles. Dod, if it was turkeys or even jeuks yin wadna wunner sae, but—humph! . . . An', mind you, they're no the slim, strecht-backet canaries that we've aye been used wi', but crampet, hurkle-backet, roon-shoudered wee sows, sae uncomfortable-lookin' on a spake that yin wunners hoo it is that cheery whussalin' comes naitral to them. . . .

[Christmas Number.]

Sunnybrae on the left there—a nice hoose an' weel bielled by the plantin'—brick, an' harled, an', as ye see, a red-tile roof. Robert Gaw the sclater—a Scaurbrigger, but a decent man—bides there. It belongs to Davie, his auldest son. Davie's dune weel in Glasca. Ser'ed his time to the sclaterin' wi' his faither here, took early to the toon, jined the richt kin' o' a kirk. Then he sterted on his ain, the congregation backet him to a man, an' he's never yince looked ahint him. I mind when the pair o' breeks he wore was a' he had in the worl', an' noo they tell me he has a pair for every day o' the week. His mither let oot that when he's here on holidays he dis haet a' but wear white serks an' smoke cigars at thrippence a time. But he's a fine falla, an' a guid freen to mony a puir body in Shinnel. An' a' on the quate, too—never a cheep or a brag, but a cairt o' coals here, a pun' o' bacca there, a bag o' meal to this yin, a hunnerwecht o' tatties to that. Dod, sir, it's graun'. Ay, I often think, nae maitter hoo high up a man may speil, he's nae credit to his native place if he isna mindfu' o' the needfu' fouk he was reared amang. . . . Toots, man, Donal, gee up; this is no a brae. . . . Dod, sir, auld horses are juist like auld fouk—they're quick to ken when the road gets stey. . . . Are ye—eh—quite comfortable sittin' there? Mebbe ye wad like to try your haun' at the drivin'.

I assured Tosh I was perfectly comfortable, and that I had no desire to take the reins.

'Weel, weel, so be it; some like to drive, ither to be driven—implm. An'—an' mebbe ye dinna ken much about horses, onyway.

'Oh yes, Tosh,' I said, 'I know a good deal about horses. In fact, I—I love horses. I was brought up on a hill-farm, you know.'

'Ay, man, d'ye tell me that?' and he looked towards me, both pleased and interested. 'Dod, sir, that's news to me. I've aye liket hill-fouk—they're a' thinkers, a' workers, kindly as the sun that cheers them, an' free as the bracin' wind that tans them. Ay, hill-fouk for me every time. Dod, man, if it had been noised abroad in the pairish that ye were uplan' bred an' yin o' oorsels—we're a' sheep-fouk here away, ye ken—we wad have plumpet for you on the votin'-day to a man. Ay—an', mind you, it was, at first, a scrimp majority—juist neck or naething wi' ye; an' considerin' the fremit subject o' your trial sermon on the wanderin's o' the Children o' Israel, ye were real lucky to pu' through. . . . Noo, had I been a minister staunin' for the kirk o' Shinnel, I wad have ramsacked the Word o' God frae Genesis to Revelations for nice verses about green pastures, an' feedin' flocks, an' carefu' shepherds, tacket them a' aroon' a hamely text, such as—weel, such as—och, ye ken yersel'. An' in my disoorse I wad have brocht in the—the—daivert! I'm gettin' taigelt an' I canna oot wi't—but I wad have

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brocht in onything but the closin' up o' the walls o' watter an' the droonin' o' the puir 'Gyptian sodgers in the Red Sea. . . . Believe me, sir, I never heard o' a Shinnel man sellin' sheep to a Jew; no yin in a hunner ever saw an airmy or traivelled on the sea. It's a' hearsay to us, an' often second-haun' at that. But we ken sheep, an' we ken aboot free hill-air and the—the—och, man. . . . But ye made up for't in your delivery—ay, and let me tell ye this, your voice was your salvation. We heard every word ye said. Glenheid's verdict at the kirk yett was, "Boys, he's the man for Shinnel, but wi' a voice like that he's a guid unctioneer spoiled."

'A what?' I gasped.

'A—guid—unctioneer—spoiled,' he repeated slowly and with emphasis. 'An' mind you, sir, Glenheid's a judge o' public speakin', for he gangs to every mart between Lanark an' Carlisle.'

I felt crushed and humbled, and knew not what to say or how to reply. To me 'Glenheid's' verdict was a humiliation. But it had its humorous side, and inwardly acknowledging it, I laughed till the tears rolled down my cheeks.

Tosh looked at me in amazement for a minute. 'I houp, sir,' he gravely said, 'ye're no lauchin' at me.'

'No, no, Tosh; I'm not laughing at you. I happen to have the sixth sense—the sense of humour—and the comical side of something you said appealed to me.'

'Oh, that's a' richt—but we sterted on the subject o' horses, an' ye said ye loved them. Unless ye had arable lan' ye wad hae nae use for horses.'

'That is so, Tosh. We had no arable land, but my uncle, who brought me up, rode to kirk and market on horseback, and he preferred saddle-mares with a strain of blood. Though hale and hearty, he rides seldom now, but two old pensioners of his, verging on thirty, are in Lettergill paddock to-day, and not very long ago they could do their fourteen miles an hour without turning a hair.'

'Holy Moses, sir!—fourteen mile an' oor, mighty me!—Donal, d'ye hear that? Gee up, you daverin', dotterin' auld fule. Faith, but if ye canna come up to them in speed o' fit, ye can beat them in years o' age. Ay, ye can.—An', look ye, sir, if we're no gaun scuddin' along the grun' ower quick ye'll get a glisk o' Shinnelcraig here. Ay, there it is amang the trees—a fair guid ferm, an' in capital he'rt, but the hill lan' to the west gets a bad name for the trimmlin'. It was lang in the haun's o' name-sakes o' your ain, but a harum-scarum, camsterie falla ca'ed Dawson has it noo. He's ne mairret an' he's no weel liket, but he's a capital guid judge o' black-faced tups an' wimmen-fouk. He used to come to oor kirk, but he had a word or twae wi' oor session aboot a bit bairn yin o' his servant lassies had, an' sin syne he's ta'en his Sabbath-a-day bawbee ower Dunreggan

to the kirk o' Glencairn. . . . Clapperstane, on the burnside there. Wattie Stitt, yin o' oor elders, bides there—a lang-faced, tankard-bucket man: ye couldna miss seein' him at the induction, for he was sittin' strecht in front o' ye, an' his dickie had slippet doon into the breist o' his waistcoat. Decent, hard-workin' man, as honest as the day, but sairly hauden doon wi' a thowless, yaumerin' wife an' a big faimily o' shilpet wee weans. His faither—auld Wattie—was an elder too, an' was cairtwricht there lang afore I mind. He leaved till he was eighty-nine, smoked bogey roll, an' gied and took a dram to the last. Awfu' open-haunded; so was his wife. Naeboddy ever left Clapperstane dry or hungry. Clonrae used to say that nae man in Shinnel had better qualifications for the eldership than Wattie, for, ither things forby, he was the husband o' one wife and given to hospitality. . . . Kirklan' Ha' in the howm there—a nice bit lairdship, wi' game galore—belongs to Major Dottle, a very birsy wee man, thrawn an' peppery when he disna get things his ain wey, but by-ordinar' kind when it comes up his ain back. He's a heritor, of course, an', as ye ken, bound by the law to dae his bit to keep kirk an' manse ticht and dry, an', faith, he'll dae his bit; but he'll dae mair if he's ta'en the richt wey. He was lang in foreign pairts among the blackamoors, an' the hoose is positively fu' o' idols, an' images, an' ivory birds an' elephants, an' sic like. . . . But, faith, sir, I maun haud my tongue. I doot I'm clatterin' ower much, an' makin' free enough wi' a stranger like you, but I—I must say I like to ca' the crack wi' you. Mair than that, sittin' in the gig here, ye hae time on oor haun', an' what I've telt ye disna hurt onybody we've been speakin' about. Ye unnerstaun', sir?

'Perfectly, Tosh; I know what you mean. We're not talking scandal, and I'm enjoying the drive immensely. You seem to have a very intimate knowledge of this country-side. Have you lived long in Shinnel?'

'Lived lang in Shinnel! Lovan, ay, sir. I'm Shinnel born—never sleepet a nicht oot o't in my life, or never had ony desire to do sae. An' where wad ye be better?—a cosy but an' ben, wi' a slopin' gairden facin' the sun, pure caller air, an' the best o' cauld wall watter. Mercies galore, an' health to enjoy them. What mair could yin want? Oh, sir, there's nae place like Shinnel; an' when ye've been a whilie here ye'll think so tae.'

'I like it very much already, Tosh,' I reassuringly said, 'and I am sure the more I know of it the better I'll like it. It's—it's quiet, of course, but—'

'It is mebbe quate, an' it's far frae the toon, and the railway, but that's whiles an advantage. Ye see, sir, we get time to think, an' time to work, an' we live every day—ay, every 'oor and meenit o' oor life. But it is quate, an' dootless ye'll feel lonely an' fremitwise at times. . . .

Only for a wee, though, for ye'll sune get into oor weys o' daein'. An' when ye get the manse toshed up, an' a nice wife in't—for, dod, sir, ye maun get mairret—ye'll sune think wi' me that there's nae place on earth like Shinnel.'

'Must one be married, Tosh, thoroughly to enjoy glen life here?'

Tosh looked at me, but made no reply. Then his eye wandered slowly along the off-shaft of the gig, the point of which he gently flicked with the whip-lash.

'Donal's graith is hardly respectable, an' barely safe,' he said at length, and quietly—more to himself than to me—'there's amaist as much string an' rape as leather about it. Ay, we'll hae to see to it—imphm.' Then, in an even quieter voice, and with just a sensation of 'catch' in it, 'Oor crack, sir,' he said, 'has some- way ta'en a queer turn. I—I hardly ken hoo to answer ye; and for the first time since we left the manse door he put his whip in its leather socket.

'Ye see, sir, it's—it's like this. I—I haena a wife mysel', an'—an'—'

'Oh, I'm sorry, Tosh,' I feelingly said. 'You're a widower. Pardon me, I didn't know.'

'Weel—I'm no a weedower either, sir—no—no; and he looked at me with a suddenly mellowed eye. 'I—I never was mairret, an' ye'll think it strange that I should be advizin' you to dae what I didna dae mysel'. No that I didna try, but—dod, sir, it's an auld story noo, though it's a' fresh in my mind as it were yesterday, but—weel, I didna get the lass I wanted, so as it wasna to be, an' I couldna love twice, I've—I've juist made the best o' a bad job.'

I have lived much among old folks, and am quick to notice evidence of emotion, or the subtle sign that tells of a hastily summoned memory, or a reborn thought of days that are no more. And when I feel a chord has been suddenly struck in an unnerved pulsing heart, when the feelings have been so stirred that moistened eye and quivering lip make a wrinkled, withered face beautiful and glorified, I know that a spoken word, however relevant and kindly meant, is often a discord and a distraction. We all have our Gethsemanes where we would be alone with our past failures and regrets. And in silence I left Tosh with his.

A gentle July breeze stirred the wayside grass, and whispered among the brackens in the lee of the turf-dyke side. Flecking sunshine and chasing shadows lay in turn on the quiet hills, and lightly danced on the sleeping pools and broken streams of Shinnel burn. A bumble-bee droned round and round us, and, wheeling, dipped into the scented clover. Then from the stretch of moorland beyond the birch-fringed glen the wailing, yamouring cry of a whaup came to us on the quiet, lown air.

Tosh raised his head, and looked towards the moor whence the call came.

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'Ay—that'll be as hamely a soun' to you, sir, as it is to me. I was juist listenin' for't. I kened it wad come to us here, for a' roon' hereaway is whaup's grun', juist as it's mine. I was born in that white hoose atour the muir there—the gable-en' faces this wey, an' the sun's shinin' on't the noo. Ay, mony a forenicht hae I sat there amang the howes, sometimes my lane, and ither times no, listenin' to the brattlin' o' Shiunel there and whaup-cry answerin' whaup-cry a' aroon' me. An' juist because o' thae auld days, there's noo, to me, a sough o' auld lang syne—a sobbin' kind o' sweetness in it that mak's my he'rt sair an' gled at yin an' the same time. Mind you, I like to hear the lark in the spring lift, an' the whusslin' o' the blackie, an' the chirp o' the bit robin, but they dinna juist—dod daivert! I canna tell ye what I mean, but, bein' hill-bred, ye'll mebbe hae an inklin' o' what I want to be at.'

'Ah, Tosh, my man,' I said, 'you have deeper feelings than you can well express. But some one else has done it for you. Listen :

'Fn' sweet is the lilt o' the laverock
Frae the rim o' the clud at morn,
The merle pipes weel in the midday biel'
In the heart o' the bendin' thorn.
The blythe bauld sang o' the mavis
Rings clear in the gloamin' shaw,
But the whaup's wild cry in the gurlie sky
O' the moorlan' dings them a'.

'For what's in the lilt o' the laverock
To touch ocht mair the ear?
The merle's low craik in the tangled brake
Can start nae memories dear.
And even the sang o' the mavis
But waukens a love dream tame
To the whaup's wild cry on the breeze blown by
Like a wanderin' wold frae hame.'

Donald had stopped, the traces had relaxed, and we had quietly and imperceptibly backed down the gentle incline into the side of the road and against the bank. But Tosh was unconcerned by the doings of Donald and the gig.

'Whae wrote that, sir?' he asked excitedly.

I wasn't surprised he didn't know, for the author has unaccountably not yet come into his own, but his honest heart would have 'stooned wi' pride' had he heard all that my old beadle said in his praise.

When we had wakened Donald from his reverie and coaxed him into a trot, Tosh turned to me.

'Maister Crosbie,' he said, 'I've never had muckle time to spend on books, but I wad like to hae a readin' o' *Kirkbryde*. The man that wrote what ye've juist repeated kens hill life. I see warrant he has sat wi' a lovin' lass on a quate hill howe, as I hae dune lang syne, wi' love in his he'rt an' naebodie near but God an' the whaup. Ay, I maun hae a readin' o' that book. An' I'll come an' get it sune, for I've a story to tell ye that'll no keep lang.'

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CHAPTER II

OF all the items of local information volunteered by Tosh, the most interesting, perhaps, to me was the reference to the 'stretch o' guid fishin' watter that needed nacky wark.'

From boyhood I had been an ardent disciple of dear old Izaak—I am so to this day—and the fact that my lines of life had fallen in pleasant fishing-places gave my living an added value and interest.

Sitting at supper that evening, long after Tosh had 'ca'ed' Donald to the grass, and left the manse with Rob Wanlock's *Kirkbryde* in his possession, I bethought me of the alluring stream with its broken water and its shadowy pools. In natural sequence my rod and reel came into my mental picture, and after a little cogitation and cud-chewing retrospection, the desire to throw a line on Shinnel water became irresistible.

My recently arrived effects were few and promiscuously scattered, but, after much rummaging, I unearthed all my fishing requisites with the exception of my waders. Then, thoroughly in the fishing 'tid,' and eager for an early start, I looked out a suit of old clothes, set my alarm-clock for 4 A.M., and went to bed.

Tosh proved himself a sound judge. It *was* a good stretch of fishing-water, and it *did* require nacky work; but, without boasting or vanity, I could say then I was a nacky fisher, and long before the first puffs of blue smoke circled and pirled above the village roofs, I had a baker's dozen of beautiful yellow trout in my basket. The want of waders handicapped me, but necessity knows no law. Taking off my boots and stockings, I tied them together by the laces, and slung them round my shoulder. Then, buckling my trousers well above the knee, I waded my way slowly up-stream, fishing diligently in the watery middle-way of an avenue of saughs and alders so thickly planted and densely foliated that the country-side, to right and left, was completely hidden from view.

After plying my rod successfully for an hour and a half, on reaching an opening with a turf-topped scaur on either side I waded out, and 'sate me doon ye bank upon.' I had eaten an apple, and, in the glorious early morning quiet, was having my first smoke for the day, when, a little up-stream to my right, I saw a fine rise to a natural fly. In a moment, almost before the widening circles had disappeared, my line was over the spot.

He came to me with right goodwill, but I was over-anxious, and, in my haste, I missed him. I cast again; he rose to my bob-fly, and, ashamed I am to admit it, I failed to hook him. Again and again I lured him, but without success. I ought to have been content, for my

catch of thirteen was quite a good one—more, in fact, than I could use; but this was by far the biggest trout I had seen that morning, and I was loath to leave without adding him to my basket.

Thoughtfully I had provided myself with a few good red-nosed worms, so, reeling in, I substituted a fine Stewart's tackle for my fly cast. Once more I sent my line up-stream and well beyond the stone underneath which I judged my prey was lurking. Gently, with the rippling current, my bait was borne down towards him. Then he came. I felt the tug, and jerked my wrist upward, only to bring in my hook completely stripped of its bait.

I was conscious of striking him, and knew from experience further effort was useless, so I again reeled in, and, crestfallen and disappointed, waded to the bank and relit my pipe.

Then suddenly, almost before I had tasted tobacco, the prompting thought came to me—*guddle him*. In less time than it takes to tell, with arms bare to the armpits, and trousers rolled up to the thigh, I was on the stalk. Crouching and quivering, I waded quietly—oh, how quietly!—to the half-submerged stone. I wasn't the placed minister of Shinnel now. Manse and glebe, pulpit and people, were forgotten, and I was a boy once more, with all a boy's eagerness and zest, with that alertness and joy of the chase and sport which, in bonds of sympathy and affinity, draw me in chumship to the Tink and the Romany.

Cautiously, with down-stretched arms and eager, tingling fingers, I groped round the stone. In the concave apex, tail down-stream, I found him. He moved upwards an inch or two with the tickle, and my hands, working together, followed him. I held my breath as I judged his girth and length; then at the psychological moment my fingers of both hands simultaneously closed round his body at the upper fin, and, in a trice, a well-fed, glittering two-pounder lay quivering and panting among the grass on the bank.

Breathless with excitement, exultant, and proud of my prowess, I looked at him where he lay. Then, in a flash, it came to me I hadn't given him a chance, nor had I played the game. I had tried him with legitimate lure, and he had baffled me. Only by stealth and physical and mental advantage had I overcome him. I felt the red blood of shame surging round my neck and cheeks, and, without further thought, acting on a sudden impulse, I rushed with him to the water-side, held him gently in the lukewarm sandy bottom until he had gathered himself together, then bade him a hand adieu as, like an arrow, he sped to his up-stream lair.

'WELL, I'M DAMNED!'

Under ordinary circumstances the expletive is explosive and disconcerting, but in the hush and sanctity of that quiet morning it came to

me with a startling force and incongruity that almost unnerved me.

I looked hastily around me, and there, in the opening on the opposite bank, with the early morning sunshine on his red, bronzed face, stood a tall, vagrant-looking fellow, with a double-stemmed cap worn sideways and tilted above his forehead, without collar or tie, and in a loose, ragged sporting-coat, for which I knew, at a glance, he had never been tailor-measured.

'Hallo, friend!' I said when I had recovered composure; 'did you speak?'

He looked steadily at me, shifted a quid from one side of his jaw to the other, and spat sideways.

'Maybe I did, but, dammit, man, I'm that surprised that I canna say for certain. Surely there's a loonie trip here this mornin' from the Crichton Asylum.'

'Never heard of the place,' I said; 'I'm a stranger here. Six A.M. is on the early side even for an asylum excursion; but if there is one, and if you have lost any of your chums, you'll probably find them nearer the village.'

'Ah, that's smart; I like that touch o' humour. Dammit, man, if you had been as nimble wi' your rod as you are wi' your tongue you wadna hae needed to guddle. Noo, look here—a' jokin' aside—tell me why, efter catchin' that fish, did ye let it away again.'

'Well, I—I can hardly tell you in so many words,' and I laughed uneasily; 'but—well, the fact is I missed him with the fly; then I'—

'Yes, yes—I know a' that; I've been watchin' you for the last ten minutes.'

'Well, if that is so, you must also know that I didn't give that fish what every living thing ought to get in this life.'

'And what may that be?'

'A sporting chance,' I promptly replied, and relit my pipe.

Shading the sun from his eyes with a long, thin hand, he looked at me for a minute; then, without taking off boots or stockings, he deliberately, and without concern, waded across the stream.

'Sonny,' he said huskily, 'shake.' In a tight clasp he held my right hand in his, and with his left familiarly on my shoulder, 'Man alive,' he said, 'that was worth seein'. Damme, but it was just grand. An' to let a beauty like you away juist because you—well, well, I'm jiggered. Sorry you're a stranger. Man, we could do wi' a wheen o' your kind in Shinnel Glen.—Shake again, my boy.'

Again I took the proffered hand, looking, I know, very shamefaced, and feeling I was receiving extravagant credit for a very trifling, unpremeditated act. Then, with a view to changing the subject and relieving myself from an embarrassing situation, I offered him my pouch, and asked him if he lived in these parts.

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'Ay,' he said, 'I live in Shinnel, but I'm not of Shinnel, an' for that thank God.'

He leisurely filled his pipe—a black clay cutty it was, and I envied him his possession of it—and when he had lit it we both sat down on the bank.

'Ay, man,' he continued, 'it's very strange I should have had this experience so soon after the happenings o' last nicht.'

He hesitated and seemed lost in thought.

'May I ask what happened last night?' I asked after a pause.

'Ay, ye may, an' I'll tell ye wi' pleasure, for it was then I found out that a freen o' mine has a he'rt o' gold when for lang I had judged he had a he'rt o' stone. I'm no' a stickler for moral virtue in a man. God knows I've no claim to it myself, but I like to see it in others. I saw it last night in him, I saw it this mornin' in you, and I'm beginnin' to jalooose there's mair guid than ill in the world after a'.'

'I hope so,' I said; 'in fact, I may say I know there is. But please leave my paltry case out of your consideration, and tell me how you found out last night about the heart of gold.'

Holding the black cutty aloft in his long, brown hand, he looked at me for a minute through floating circles of tobacco-smoke. 'Interested much in your fellow-man?' he asked.

'Intensely,' I replied.

'Great study—great study, sonny, but it has few students. Glad to know you're one. . . . Well, about the he'rt o' gold. . . . I share a cottage down in the village there wi' an auld man who, since I knew him, has been as close-fisted an' savin' as I have been open-handed and spendthrift. At one time, I believe, he was free enough, an' bein' unmarried, he had plenty to spend; but when he got aulder he got grippy—ay, so terribly grippy that his name was, and is yet, a byword in the parish for meanness.

'I often wondered why he saved and scrapit, an' how it was he denied himself the very necessities o' life, an' I set him doon as an oot-an'-oot miser—a puir, miserable skinflint, whose God was his dirty auld bawbees. An' listen, sonny; a' the time he was savin' siller, not for himself at a', but to feed and clead an' keep an auld widow freen oot o' the poorhouse, an' in a respectable, bein' cottage o' her ain. Noo there's a perfect God's gentleman for you.'

'Yes, a perfect God's gentleman,' I eagerly repeated. 'And was he in no way related to her?'

'Not by blood, but—an' this is where the true sentiment an' essence o' love comes in—she was at one time his sweetheart—the only woman he ever met that he could have married. Something happened that separated them. In course o' time she became anither man's wife; but he, for her sake, has remained single to this day. Her man died some years back an' left her penniless, an' a cripple wi' rheumatics, an' the

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authorities said she bude gang to the poorhouse. My auld freen couldna thole the idea o' her gaun there, an' his ploy began.

'We've chummed together for nearly five years, an' he never mentioned the subject to me till last nicht, an' if it hadna been he was in a bit o' a fix an' wanted advice he wad have been silent still.

'It seems he was in the habit o' giein' the money—twenty-five pound every year it was—to the Auld Kirk minister. He, in turn, took it regularly to the auld body as a gift frae a well-wisher wha didna want to be named. Naebody but the minister was in the secret, an' up till noo it's been weel kept an' has worked oot a' richt. But Maister Ferguson's away, a new parson has come, an' he must be telt, for he'll hae to carry on the ploy, an' my auld freen's in a swither aboot mentionin' it, as he's a young man, wi' mebbe little discernin' sentiment, and wi' little desire to encourage a deceit that to me is my auld chum's crowning glory.'

'Now—one moment,' I gasped, 'before you go further. Did your old companion tell you this in confidence?'

'He did; but I am mentioning no names, an', to you, a stranger, I'm just givin' it as an instance o'—'

'But, my dear fellow,' I stammered, 'I—I'm the new minister, and it strikes me forcibly that—that your old friend is my beadle, Tammas Tosh.'

In my excitement I had risen to my feet, and from his seat on the bank he eyed me incredulously up and down.

'WELL, I'M—'

'NOT DAMNED,' I promptly interposed. 'I don't know you from Adam, but you interest me very much. I even confess I like you, and I am deeply grateful to you for this mornin's crack; but I do not like your "DAMNS." Now that you know I'm a minister, you will surely respect my cloth.'

A blush, quick-spreading, deepened the tan of his face, and his dark eyes smiled. 'I'll respect your old fishing-clothes for the sake o' the manly man that stands in them. The cloth, as you ca' it, has neither acknowledged nor respected me, an' I've little cause to respect it. But I'm beginning to change my mind about the laity, an' it's possible I may yet think better o' the clergy. . . . I'm—I'm no fit to be seen speakin' to you, my slate'll need a lot o' washin', an' I've broken my word to my best freen in Shinnel. I'll mak' it richt wi' him, though. An' noo I'll thank you to shake hands wi' me once more, an' to forget, an' never mention till I bid ye, what I've said o' Tammas Tosh's he'rt o' gold.'

We stood hand-in-hand for a moment. Then, taking off his old stemmed bonnet, he slightly bowed his head. 'It's weeks o' Sundays,' he said, 'since I darkened a kirk door, but, by my

faith, I'm comin' soon to hear you preach. An' that's my pack wi' you, sir. Guid-mornin'.

Again he waded across the stream. As he jumped down to the landing-stone his coat-tail swung upwards, disclosing strands of wire and a bulk of rabbit-fur, which, somehow, didn't surprise me.

I sat for some time smoking and thoughtfully turning over in my mind the strange happenings of the past hour. I had come to Shinnel expecting to find the usual and the prosaic, to live in a placid, uneventful way among a people unemotional and undiluted by any tincture of romance, and thus early in my experience I had been introduced into an atmosphere of chivalry, sentiment, and harmless intrigue which obsessed me so completely that I have no recollection of walking home.

CHAPTER III.

THE weather during my first July in Shinnel parish was ideal, and the season one of the most propitious on record for crops and outdoor work. On four nights, at intervals of a week, rain fell gently and copiously; but the sun shone every day, and the warmth was tempered by a crisp, winnowing wind that gladdened the hearts of the haymakers, and made their work 'throughgaun' and lightsome.

The glebe-land was lying fallow, but there was a broad strip of excellent meadow to the west, bordering Shinnel water, which was ripe for the scythe, and in old Donald's interest I judged Tosh would be giving it his attention soon.

This, together with all of pulsing interest I had learned regarding my beadle, made him figure prominently in my thoughts; and though my coming Sunday's sermon was exercising my mind and making every minute precious, I often laid aside my pen and made frequent visits to the garden and courtyard in hopes of meeting him, but without success.

On the Saturday morning, however, on my coming down for breakfast, my housekeeper, Mary Ferguson, informed me that Tosh and Scamp were working at the hay in the low west meadow. I didn't know who 'Scamp' was, but it occurred to me he might be a dog. I ought to have been satisfied with my surmise, and to have refrained from giving Mary an opening by asking a question, for I had, very early in our acquaintance, found out that she was the most hawering, garrulous, bletherskate it had ever been my misfortune to meet. The first day I arrived at the manse, hungry and wearied after a long, tedious journey, she kept me standing in the draughty kitchen lobby for over an hour, listening to a disconnected, uninteresting harangue, which began with the whitewashing of the back-kitchen ceiling, included a detailed account of the different places she had been in, with thumb-

nail sketches of the mistresses she had served, and wound up with the dazzling career of a cousin of her mother's, who, from breaking stones in a stone-bing, had risen to extraordinary affluence as a Scottish packman in Bristol.

Her range of conversational matter was limitless, and as I had stupidly, and to my cost, given her two openings since which she had promptly embraced, I ought to have been on my guard on this particular Saturday morning, when my breakfast—for which I was ready—was getting cold, and my moments were so precious.

But I asked who Scamp was; it was her chance and my undoing.

'Of coorse, sir,' she said, resting her right elbow in the palm of her left hand and tapping her underlip with the tips of her nimble, nervous fingers—'of coorse, sir, you, bein' a stranger, wull no ken whae Scamp is. That's juist his nickname. I daursay he wad be christened Kennedy, but nane o' us Shinnel fouk ken for certain, as he's an inbrocht, an' a forby, queer, ill-hair't inbrocht at that. Fouk hereaway are maistly ca'ed by a by-name—Tam Frizzle's "Tartar Tam," Dauvid Mouncey's "The Sumph," Sam'l Cooper's "Whaupie," an' Andra Todd's "Wheezy." Puir Andra has wheezed wi' broonkitis ever since I min'. We leaved next door to him when I was a lassie, an' his breath cam' frae him like puffs frae a burstit pair o' bellows. Doctor Bonniton, frae the Brig o' Scaur, gied him up. Eh, lovan, sir, I wadna like to be gien up; it maun be an awfu' settler, haith ay—imphm. Weel, the doctor gied him up, telt him plump up it was no go an' he bude prepare for the warst. That's years gane by; Andra's wheezin' yet, an' wheezin' lookin'. Threatened fouk, they say, live lang. Ay, an' there's Sawnie Davison—"Shankie" we ca'ed him, because he was strecht up an' doon like a kirnan-rung. Weel, he took some eatin' complement wi' a queer name—I juist canna mind it. It was—was—no, it wasna; but it disna maitter, onywey. At onyrate he had this eatin' complement—he ate on an' was aye hungry, an' what he did eat did him nae guid. He got waur, an' at the lang hinner-en' he was telt by Doctor Bon—— Hover a blink noo; am I richt? Was it no Doctor Hotson frae—yes, it was—no, doo, I'm wrang; it was Doctor Bonniton, for I min' he was juist comin' oot o' Shankie's hoose when Mary Watt ran for him to tell him her wean had swallowed her Communion token. It was a gey near shave, for that was on a Setterday, but she got it back in time to gang forrit on the Sabbath. . . . Weel, as I was sayin', Shankie was telt to put his hoose in order. He did sae; but ae day, when he was daunerin' doon aboot the Brig-en', he forgaithered wi' Tosh the gravedigger. Tammas had juist been ower interested in the invalid, for Shankie gaed hame an' telt his wife that Tosh had lookit at him wi' a greedy e'e, an' that he was—was—— Eh, sir, I want to tell ye richt what he said, but I dinna

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like—especially to you an' in a manse—but he said he was dashed if Tosh wad get happin' him; only, he didna say "dashed." Weel, he snoovled aboot an' better snoovled, defyin' the doctor an' Tosh an' the Almichty, an', haith, he got better o' his complent, an' leaved to dee o' the kink-host. . . . Had ye ever the kink-host yersel', sir?'

I looked at her resignedly. 'No,' I said, 'I—I don't remember'—

'Then ye havena had it. Haith, if ye had had the kink-host ye wad have minded o't. It's a sair trouble. I had a wee sister o' three year auld—three year an' three months, to be exact—an' she died wi't. I dinna min' o' her, for she died afore I was born, but I wore oot her daid-lies, an', bein' a bluid relation, I aye grat about her illness and death when my mither grat. That was the first an' only brek in oor faimily. Of coorse, I'm no' coontin' my grandfaither. He slipped away when he was eighty-nine. The doctor said that no power on earth could have keepet him leavin' hauf-an'-oor langer. He was quite hale an' herty, but his breath completely left him. . . . An' oor afore he des'd he had twae cups o' tea an' a boiled egg, so he wan away wi' a guid meal in 'im. Eighty-nine's a favourite age for Shinnel fouk to dee at. No that I say we can dee when we like. Haith, no. The Almichty measures the span, nicks the breath, an' Tosh does the rest—implim. . . . Talkin' o' Tosh, ye asked me, sir, whae Scamp was. . . . Your tea'll be warm enough below the cosy, but your eggs'll be cauld, and cauld eggs are, like cauld feet, bad for the digestion. Mrs Lourie telt me that her mither yince telt her—an' mind you, sir, that's hearsay only yince removed—that— Bless me, I left an empty kettle on the kitchen fire!'

She left the dining-room hurriedly, without closing the door; but I closed it and snibbed it, and my breakfast grace, though reverent, was a short one that morning.

Had I been particularly interested in 'Scamp's' identity and history, Mary's information would have been provokingly meagre. As it happened, he was unknown and of little concern to me, but I had learned his name was Kennedy, and later, when I was walking over to the meadow, by association of ideas my mind kept dwelling on a langsyne memory of a namesake family of his making horn-spoons in the old wool-shed of Lettergill. It was an old, happy memory, the reminder of others of my boyhood home which came crowding to me, and I lingered long at the meadow gate.

After a lengthy reverie I went down to where Tosh and his helper were sitting at their mid-day meal, and on nearing them I saw, to my astonishment, that Kennedy—alias 'Scamp'—was none other than my early morning companion of the previous Tuesday. He was talking to Tosh earnestly, and gesticulating with his arms, 1920.]

and intuitively I knew my trouting escapade was the subject of their talk.

'Come away, sir,' said Tosh cheerily; 'Scamp here has juist been tellin' me o' your guddlin' exploit.'

'Ay, but, Tosh, that's no a' my story,' Scamp quickly interposed. 'I've something else to tell you that maun be said in Maister Crosbie's hearin', though it affects you and me mair than him, an' I reckon noo's the time to speak.'

I knew what was coming, and admired Scamp, not only for his readiness to admit his breach of confidence, but for his honourableness in doing so in presence of all parties concerned. I also detected now what hadn't struck me before, that he had a slight lisp in his speech and a habit of substituting 'd' for 'r' as the initial letter of certain words, and once more my thoughts flew back to the Kennedy spoonmakers in Lettergill wool-shed.

Tosh was finishing his 'piece.' He flung the last bite to an expectant robin, took a long pull at his milk-flask and settled himself down.

'Ay, Scamp,' he said, as he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, 'ye've something to say in Maister Crosbie's hearin' that affects you and me? That'll be the rent, I reckon. I ken ye've aye grudged what ye pay me as your share, but, Scamp, my boy, a bargain's a bargain. The amount o't, you ken, was settled between us, an'—an' I needed the siller. . . . Mair than that, Maister Crosbie needna be fashed wi' what concerns only you an' me.'

Scamp laughed good-naturedly. 'That rent's on your conscience, Tosh,' he said, 'or ye wadna jaloose it was in my mind when it's no. . . . What I want to say is this: Last Monday nicht you opened your he'rt to me, and telt me, in strictest confidence, pairt o' a story that, except to your auld minister, Maister Ferguson, you had never before telt to anybody. Noo, Tosh, ye ken I aye thocht you a miser—I've ca'ed you Shylock to your face—an' it wasna in a boastin' wey, or to put yourself richt in my estimation, that ye telt me what ye did. You had been readin' a book before ye spoke—*Kirkbryde* was its name: I looked at it efter—an' I saw your cheek was wet an' your he'rt sair. I ken noo what was bothering you; you were in a fix an' a swither aboot tellin' Maister Crosbie.'

My poor old beadle's face flushed, and a pained expression came into his eyes. 'Scamp,' he said, 'ye've forgotten Maister Crosbie's here.'

'No, I've no forgotten, Tosh. He kens a' aboot it already. I—I broke my word. . . . Oh, I'm no dependable. Ye've been the only freen I hae in Shinnel, an' for the first time I've split on you; but, believe me, when I telt him I didna ken he was the new minister. It was juist after the guddlin' affair. I was proud to shake hands with him, for I had proved him a sport, an' I telt aboot you, juist as a boast, that I was acquaint wi' anither sport, an' that was

you, Tosh. I'm vexed I broke my word, but mebbe in daein' sae I've broken the ice and made things easier for you. . . . No ill-feelin', my auld freen?'

Tosh slowly shook his bowed head.

'That's right, then. Shake, Tosh—good old Tosh.—Ay, weel, my scythe-blade'll be gettin' rustet, an' this meadow maun be doon afore nicht. . . . Good-day, Maister Crosbie.'

'Good-day, or, rather, *barr-a-davies*, Kennedy,' I said with a smile.

He turned his dark, surprised eyes on me. 'Where, sir, did ye hear that?'

'In Lettergill wool-shed, long, long ago. Namesakes of yours visited us regularly. They made all our spoons from tup-horn, and, as a boy, I learned a little of their speech.'

'Ay, sir, and you knew the Kennedys? I've heard o' Lettergill; it was yin o' the Kennedy "hames," and he spoke with an agitation he could scarcely control. . . . 'Well, sir, I, John Kennedy, poacher, jile-bird, an' ne'er-do-weel, am the last o' the tribe, that I ken o'. I'm no a credit to them, for I couldna mak' a spune, an' I've spoiled mony a horn. But I've never lost a freen I wanted to keep. *Barr-a-davies*.'

I watched his tall, lithe figure with admiration as he stepped through the swaths of lush cut grass, saw him lift his scythe and hone his blade. Then I turned to Tosh.

His long-crowned, battered felt hat was lying on the grass, and the gentle breeze was tousling his lyart locks around his ears.

'Maister Crosbie,' he said, with pained emotion in every lineament of his clear-cut, withered face, 'ye'll be thinkin' ye've landed among a forby unchancy fouk. . . . Ye're on the young side to be trachled wi' an auld man's deavements. Puir Scamp *has* made it easier for me, an' I will be muckle obliged if ye'll see me through this. . . . I'll tell ye a' about it some nicht sune—imphm. . . . Dod, there's nae waterin'-trough in puir auld Donal's gress gang. I'll hae to see he gets a drink.'

He opened a gate leading to a shady grass-grown loaning. Again I watched him in his Gethsemane, and, left alone, I turned my face to the silent, sun-kissed hills, and, with a welling heart, thanked God for guiding my footsteps Shinnelwards.

CHAPTER IV.

A SUNDAY or two elapsed before Kennedy kept his 'pack' with me in Shinnel kirk. He sat in Tosh's seat—the second from the back, and, though he was far from me and under the window, his gleg eye met mine when I read out my text. It was from the 16th chapter of Deuteronomy, at the 17th verse: 'Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee.'

In taking up this subject I was in no way prompted or influenced by what I had learned of Tosh's magnanimity. The coincidence was certainly striking, and Kennedy, naturally, might have thought it intentional; but the fact is, it was a missionary service, authorised and recommended by the Assembly, and my text—an apt one—was doubtless quoted in many a church that day.

I was a bad beggar—I am so still—and I felt at a disadvantage, as I had had no experience of the parish as a giver; but I did my best. My sermon was new, and the first of a missionary character I had preached. Of its literary worth I will say nothing, but as a convincing exhortation to my people on the blessedness of giving it was an unqualified failure, as the diet's contribution conclusively proved. The sum total, as gleefully announced to me by Walter Stitt, was 'twal an' tippence, an' a hauf-sovereign—fower an' a penny up on last Sabbath; but as the small gold coin was my own contribution, I didn't join in Walter's jubilation.

Tosh, however, gave me an encouraging word in the vestry when taking my gown from me. 'Ye did very weel the day, sir,' he said as, head to the side, he smoothed out the bands on the table. 'Glenheid juist dovered yince, an' Scamp sat it oot withoot gantin'.'

'That's so far good, Tosh,' I said with a laugh, 'but the collection is no bigger.'

'Ay, sir—imphm—weel, that might be so, but, lovan, sir, it's a mighty movin' sermon that mak's Shinnel toom its pooch. We've snoodled sae comfortably along on auld lines an' in auld weys that we're dour to move. Dinna be dishertened aboot the collection—it wasna the sermon's blame. When all's said an' dune, ye canna tell us muckle new on the subject o' givin'. We're no a rich pairish—we gie as we can; an' when ye've come to my time o' life ye'll hae foun' oot that it's feckless wark shavin' a bald croon.' And he turned the key in the press-lock with a determined jerk which plainly said, 'So let it be.'

One morning later in the week, when shaving in the manse bathroom, his reference to a bald croon came back to me, and I smiled in my cracked mirror. I had just finished lathering my face, and remembering I had left my razor in my bedroom, was crossing the upstairs landing to fetch it, when Mary Ferguson hailed me from below.

'Well, Mary, what is it?' I asked, looking over the banister.

'Please, sir, there's a—there's a'—and, seeing my white, puffy, lathered face, she suddenly swayed, and flung up her hands. 'Preserve us a', sir, what a—what a sicht! Is there ocht wrang wi' you?'

'Hoots, Mary! I'm just about to shave, and'—

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'Oh, is that a', sir? Haith, it's the first time I've served in a manse, an', someway, I never thoct o' a minister shavin'. . . . But what a fricht ye gied me! Mercy me, I haena got sic a glauf since æ nicht I was'—

'Now, now, Mary, I can't wait to hear your story; the lather's drying on my face. Why did you call me?'

'Oh, weel, sir, I juist wanted to tell ye there's twae grouse birds on the back-door step.'

'Well, give them some food and "shoo" them away. They don't belong to me.'

'But I—I canna, sir. They're baith deid.'

'Then they won't fly away, Mary, and I'll see to them when I come downstairs.'

On going out later I found a brace of fine, plump grouse on the window-sill. Mary, full of curiosity and scenting a tragedy, was very excited and commiserating. 'Puir wee things,' she said, as she applied the corner of her apron to her eye, 'they were lyin' wi' their bits o' heids thegither when I opened the back-kitchen door—lyin' thegither, as I say, on the cauld, hard, stane step. Yin o' them wad likely dee first, an' the ither wad juist creep near its wee deid neebor an'—an'—imphm. . . . Weel, weel, in fleein' aboot in life they wad often be thegither, an' noo in death they are not divided. . . . Sirce me, puir wee things!'

'Mary, Mary,' I said, 'you mustn't look at it in that light.'

'Weel, sir, mebbe I'm wrang in thinkin' they dee'd that way. Mebbe they were sittin' roostin' on the rone up abune there, an' fell doon when they were sleepin', an' got killed.'

'But grouse don't roost on rones.'

'Faith, sir, if they were tired an' like me they wad roost anywhere. I've seen me so fagget an' forfochten efter a lang day's washin' that I could hae sleepet on a turned-up harrow. Of coorse, mind you, sir, the washin's here are no worth speakin' aboot, an' I'm no complainin', but in my last place but yin—eh, mercy me, when I think o't! There was the—let me see noo—there was the maister, the mistress, five sons a' wearin' collars, an' fower dochters that wadna damp their fingers wi' sape-suds. The maister gaed through twae serks a week regular, an' a new-weeshen pocket-napkin every day o' his life, an' the——D'ye smell burnin', sir? I dae—quite plain. It's roon' hereabouts, too—juist like the smell o' a smiddy. Mebbe it's your pipe, sir.'

I told her I sincerely trusted it wasn't, but she complacently, and to my chagrin, confirmed it to her own satisfaction, and was about to launch into a story about singeing sheepheads, when I brought her back to the subject of the grouse.

After a little cogitation we both agreed that, although no card accompanied them, they were a gift from Major Dottle, and his keeper, arriving after we had retired for the night, had left them

on the back-door step. At all events we didn't look further into the mouth of a gift horse; the birds were duly cooked, and we ate them with a relish.

One morning, a week later, the gift was repeated, and in exactly the same way. As before, there was nothing to indicate who had sent them or why they were gifted, and I became suspicious and apprehensive. It occurred to me to make inquiry among my landed parishioners, but I hesitated, as I thought, if met with a negative, my inquiry might be interpreted as a hint for a contribution to the manse larder.

Then I suddenly remembered Kennedy's poaching proclivities, and the more I thought about it the more was I convinced that he was the mysterious donor. I wasn't sure how the law stood regarding passive acceptance of poachers' spoil, but I argued it was something akin to resetting stolen goods. As minister of Shinnel, and an example to my people, my daily walk and conduct, I felt, must be above reproach, and so, after much reflection, I decided to lay the case before Tosh, than whom no one in Shinnel was better qualified to advise on matters in which Scamp and his easy-going, lawless ways were concerned.

I hadn't an opportunity of seeing him during the afternoon; but after an early supper I put my pipe in my pocket and set out for the village.

I found him turning the head of a hazel staff when I entered his cottage. The daylight was beginning to fade, and there was a feeling of frost in the autumn night-air, but a tallow candle cast a gleam of light round where he sat, and a wood-log fire burned cheerily in his high-set grate. Kennedy's spaniel—a glib-looking liver-and-white—lay stretched on the tweed-rind hearthrug, a tortoise-shell cat sat blinking inside the fender, and a wag-at-the-wa' with a wee white face ticked loudly on the yellow-ochred wall.

'Lovanenty, Maister Crosbie, this is an unexpected treat,' said Tosh. 'Come richt ben, sir, an' sit doon. You're—you're mair than welcome, I assure ye. Dod, sir, this is an angel's veesit, for I've juist been thinkin' aboot ye;' and he laid down his knife, and drew a chair in for me.

I admired the staff he was making, and we discussed hazels, and the training, cutting, making, and polishing thereof—a subject always interesting to glen and hill men. Then I told him briefly the purpose of my call. He listened patiently and with interest to my story, and he smiled knowingly when I told him I jalooosed the birds were from Kennedy.

'Ye've guessed richt the very first time, Maister Crosbie,' he said, as he buttoned his sleeved vest—for, like many old men, he liked to sit 'easy.' 'He telt me himsel' he wad mind you wi' a tasty dinner noo an' again. Oh ay,

it was Scamp richt enough. But—but what about it, onywey?

'Well, Tosh,' I said, 'the birds, I presume, were poached, and you know I cannot accept game from Kennedy or any one else procured in an illegal way.'

'But, dear me, Maister Crosbie, Scamp didna steal them; he—juist got them, ye ken.'

'You mean, Tosh, he poached them?'

'Ay—juist that. Haith, sir, ye can tak' it frae me he didna buy them.'

'Well, Tosh, much as I appreciate his thoughtfulness, I must decline to accept them.'

'Faith, sir, it's easy seen you're new amang us. Shinnel fouk, I assure you, are, as a rule, no' sae squeamish in sic maitters. Puir Scamp wanted to do ye a guid turn. It's juist possible, sir—and my old beadle laughed slyly—that he had your text o' last Sabbath week in his mind, an' was givin' as he was able accordin' to the blessin' o' the Almichty—imphm. Onywey, if it's your wull, I'll speak to him about it, an' tell him no to dae't again.'

'That's exactly what I should like you to do, Tosh. Thank you very much, and also thank Kennedy from me; and I rose to go.

'Lovan, sir, dinna gang away. Sit ye doon for a wee. I was thinkin' about ye, as I said, when ye cam' in, an' your veesit's a timely yin.' He rose and snuffed the candle. Then from its brightened flame he lit another, and walking over to his bed, he pulled out from underneath it a small wooden kist with a hingeless lid.

'This, here, is my bank, sir,' he said, looking over his shoulder. 'It's no locket or protected in ony wey. Scamp has been three times in Dumfries jile for poachin' since he cam' to bide wi' me. He kens my siller's here, an' let me tell ye, sir, I've never missed a single broon bawbee—imphm. . . . Weel, that's that.'

Having got what he wanted, he shoved the box back underneath his bed, blew out the extra candle he had lit, and sat down beside me.

'An' noo, sir, when ye are here, ye'll juist tak' this. It—it's the siller Scamp telt ye about—what Maister Ferguson gied for me, an' what I'll be obleeged if ye'll gie—juist as it were frae a freen that didna want to be named. It's a whilie yet to the term, but the money's here, an' ye micht as weel hae't wi' ye.'

Fumblingly he counted out money in notes and silver.

'If it's a' the same to you, sir,' he said, placing the amount on the table, 'I'll bla' oot the cannle. The fire's bricht, an'—an' we can see to speak.'

In silence, and in the flickering firelight, I looked at my old beadle hero.

'Tosh,' I said at length, and with feeling, 'I've been thinking a good deal about you lately in connection with this. It is a beautiful act, and I should just like to tell you you honour me

in asking me to help you. I'm very proud of you, Tosh.'

'Ye speak ower kindly, Maister Crosbie, an'—an' it's very freenly o' ye, indeed; but, eh man, if ye only kened what a pleesure it is an' hoo easy it comes to me to dae this, ye wadna gie me sae muckle credit. I've nae relatives that I ken o'. She's a' o' langsyne left to me in Shinnel, an' what's siller for but to help her? Dod, sir, it whiles tak's a bit o' scrapin', an' I could sometimes dae wi' what I dinna get; but it wad be a cauldribe kin' o' a worl' if every yin thocht his ain want the worst. Ay, it's forty-nine years on the sixteenth o' next month since Mary Oswald an' me had a word wi' yin anither, an' we've bided a' that time in this same wee parish o' Shinnel. But I'm gaun ower quick; I maun stert at the beginning. Mebbe, though, ye've nae interest, sir, in an auld man's story.'

Without waiting to hear my reply he rose and tidied the hobs. Then he put a fresh log on the fire, and the leaping flame showed up the pictureless walls and the bare flag floor. There was nothing around to indicate a woman's presence, touch, or thoughtful care; no texts or knick-knacks; no ornaments on mantelpiece or chiffonier; no cushions; no curtain on bed or window. Yet everything, though comfortless, was cleanly; and in the glamorous quiet of the hour and the flickering mystic firelight I felt strangely impressed, and the thought came to me how appropriate and fitting was it all for the laying bare of a dented heart and the telling of a story of a love of long ago.

'Our lives, Tosh,' I quietly said, 'are all human documents, and to those who study human nature every document is of interest. I'll be delighted to listen to you; and I lit my pipe.

'Ay—weel, as I was saying, it'll be nine an' forty years come the sixteenth o' next month since last I spoke to Mary Oswald. I dinna mind when I didna ken her, for we were brocht up thegither at the heich en' o' the parish. We gaed to the same schule, an' in coorse o' time I took a place wi' her faither, wha looket efter a wee led ferm that's noo lyin' in to Auchenbrack, an' she helpet her mither wi' the hoose an' the kye.

'Man, man, thae were happy days, for youth an' hope made work lichtsome, an' nocht cam' wrang to oor haun's. An' they were happy forenichts too, for ootby, in the summer gloamin', we sat thegither till the stars cam' oot an' the whaups were quate. An' in the lang dark months the ingleneuk was the brichtest place on earth to me, juist because she was there. . . . Oh thae nichts in that high-wa'ed kitchen wi' its hame-cured hams on the bauk, an' its white-scrubbed tables an' chairs, an' the auld oak settle! Eh, what a cosy place it was! . . . Ay, an' the guesses we gied, the stories we telt, an' the sangs

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we sang—"Jamie Foyers," "Afton Water," "The Lea Rig," an' "When ye gang awa', Jamie"—nane o' your high-falutin sangs, but a' wi' their hamely memories, an' every yin kened an' felt by us, juist as if they had been in oor mooth when we were born. I dinna mind when first I heard them, for my mither crooned them in my ear when I lay on her knee, an' Mary Oswald sang them at her wark an' at her play—inby an' ootby; the kye were milket, butter was kirked, the wylie was turned—a' to the lilt o' her sweet bit voice in thae dear auld sangs. . . . Ay, an' then there was the dancin' on the—— Eh, dod, Maister Crosbie, did ye ever dance at a kirk?

'I have, Tosh—after a rare high tea—in the barn, and on a flag floor'——

'Ay, sir, that's it—ay, ay, an' the lichted cannies here an' there on the wa', an' the lassies, in braw goons wi' roses in their breists, an'—an' the white stockin's on the shapely taper ankles they showed in "Paddy O'Rafferty," "The Flooers o' Edinburgh," "Peteronella," an' "Pea-Strae." An', eh, Maister Crosbie, when the dram gaed roon' an' roon', an' better roon', an' we fettled to oor wark, an' the cannies spluttered oot an' never were missed, an' the fiddlers sleepot ower their drams but keepet scrapin' on their strings—eh, the liltin', an' the cleekin', an' the hoochin', an' the kissin'—mercy me, when I think back on't the bluid loup in my veins an' I'm young again. Ay, an' when the stoor was settlin', an' the maesic lownod, an' the caller air cam' in frae the open door, every Jock had his Jenny, an' I, wi' the lave, had mine—my ain Mary Oswald.

'It was on sic a nicht an' at sic a time I held her in my arms at the stackyard yett. She looket up at me, an' the glint o' her een was mellowed in the munelicht, an' her toozled bonnie-smellin' hair was blawn on my cheek. . . . What I said I canna tell, but efter I had said it she crept closer to me, an' she didna want to gang back to the dance. So we stood there, clespet haun' in haun', an' cheek to cheek, till the dancers quat an' a' was quate. . . . Oh, God, to my dyin' day, let the memory o' that dear nicht be mine.

'Then there cam' anither nicht I aye want to forget an' canna. It was comin' on for the Martinmas term, an' I was leavin' to better mysel' an' mak' a hame for Mary. Weel, juist then a pair o' new sheep-shears gaed amissin'. Naebody was blamed, but every yin was uncomfortable. Rab Todd was my neibor at the time—a big, wice-lookin' falla he was, but I never liket the way he looked at Mary—an' when the fracaw about the shears was at its heicht he said to Weelum Oswald that if I was willin' that my kist should be searched he wad turn oot his. I refused, for I was angry I should be suspected; but in the end I agreed. An' the shears were found in the bottom o' my kist. I juist stood

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tongue-tacket an' dumfounded. I never was guid at speakin' up for mysel, an' less able then than ever, when my guid name was at stake. I telt Weelum I didna put them there, but he didna believe me. "Tammass," says he, "ye were leavin' at the term—I've nae time to watch a thief; ye'd better leave the nicht."

'The haill thing had come so quick on me, an' the upshot o' it a' so unexpekkit, that I juist stood like a stookie. Then, without anither word, Weelum an' Rab gaed oot, steekin' the bothy door behind them with a bang, an', dazed an' baised, I sat me doon on my kist. Efter a wee, when I realised how things stood, I gaed ower to the hoose to see Mary. She was staunin' greetin' quately at the back-kitchen winda, an' when I spoke she didna answer me. Then in a wee, an' between her sabbin's, she telt me I had brocht shame upon her, an' broken her he'rt. I swore solemn to her I was innocent, but she shook her heid, an' telt me to leave her, an' never seek to see her face again. I looket lang at her, wonderin' hoo it cam' she wasna stickin' up for me an' takin' my pairt. . . . She soud hae dune, but, puir thing, she was young, an' mebbe didna tak' the time to think. I didna judge her then, an' I'm no to judge her noo. . . . Ay, I left at the darkenin'—gaed doon the glen ahint a cairt wi' my kist in 't, an' since that back-en' nicht the worl' has never been the same to me.

'When next I spoke to Mary Oswald she was a mairret woman, and Rab Todd was her man. . . . I was comin' hame ae nicht frae Brig o' Scaur, juist afore the darkenin'—no whusslin' as yince I did, an' wi' nae e'en for the beauty o' the gloamin' sky. Away on in front o' me was a woman cairryin' a basket, but she was weel aheid, an' I gied her nae thoct. Juist at the turn on the road in the wud, afore I cam' to Clonrae road en', I cam' up wi' her. She was sittin' restin' on a laigh pairt o' the dyke, wi' her basket beside her, an'—an' it was Mary Oswald. Man, my he'rt gied a stoun', an' I felt the bluid rinnin' cauld in my veins, an' I was so weak aboot my knees that I hadna the spunk o' a gorlin'. When she saw it was me she stood to her feet, an'—an' I noticed she was as putten aboot as I was, for she changed colour again an' again, an' she clutched at her shawl as if it was ower ticht roon' her neck. Naether o' us spoke for a wee—we juist looket at yin anither. Then her bit heid drapped, an' I was near enough to her to see there was a tear on her white, set face.

"Mary," I said—"we—we're baith gaun the same road. I'll cairry your basket, if ye'll let me."

"Thank ye, Tammass," says she, wi' a catch in her voice; "it's—it's really no heavy."

'Man, man, when I heard my name yince mair comin' frae her dear lips, I forgot for the meenit she belonged to anither, and the dyke-side o' Clonrae mairch melted afore me into the

stackyaird yett at the dear auld hame. I shut my e'en juist to keep the picter wi' me as lang as I could. . . . When I looket up again she had come forrit nearer me.

"There's something on my mind I wad like to tell ye, Tammas," she said. "I micht never get the chance again—no that it maitters noo, but I think it only richt an' just I should speak. Ye mind that nicht in the back kitchen when I—I"—

'She stoppet, an' gied a bit gasp as she saw the red bluid floodin' my neck an' cheek. "Oh, Tammas," she cried, "*you* have nocht to be ashamed o'. It's me an' mine that hae. Oh, I micht have kenned ye wares innocent then. . . . I ken for certain noo. He telt me himsel', no' confessin', but in a boastin' wey, hoo—oh that I should hae to say it o' the faither o' my wee bairn!—hoo he put the sheep-shears in your kist to bring shame on your name, an' mak' a brek between you an' me. An' it did. Oh! it was shameful—shameful, Tammas; and when he telt me, I was so sorry for your sake that I begget him to own it a' to you, an' ask your forgiveness. But he wadna—and—and I said I wad, if I got the chance"—

'A' at yince she hauf-turned, in a stottering wey, an' put a steadyin' haun' on the dyke-tap. In a moment I was beside her, and, tynin' a' reason an' discretion, I put my airm aroon' her.

"Mary," says I, "what's dune canna be undune, but, oh, my ain wee lost doo, look into my e'en—juist yince, an' for the last time put your airms aroon' my neck an'—ay, lassie, I'm here." . . . An' oor lips met in a kiss—oh, merciful God in heaven, forgive me an' her—but was there ever sic a kiss gien an' taen! . . . She steppet back, an' held doon her heid.

"Mary, my lass," says I, "look up. You've nocht to be ashamed o'. In the providence o' God we've met here, and we've been preveleeged the noo to taste for a moment o' a heaven that'll mak' up for years o' a hell before us. Be brave,

my wee woman, an'—an' gang your weys alane, an' I'll stay here a wee. Oh, Mary, if I didna love ye wi' a love as pure as the hezel air we're breathin', I wad say bide beside me here till the stars look doon on us, an' through the whisperin's o' the nicht till your bonnie broo was baptised in the dew o' the mornin'. But that canna be. You an' me maun pairt, here an' noo. Guid-nicht, my dear wee lass—an' guid-bye."

'She gied a bit sob as I turned frae her. I shut my e'en, for I couldna thole to see her gaun her lane. . . . Ay, Maister Crosbie, that's nine an' forty years come the sixteenth o' next month, an' her an' me have never spoken since. It has been a gey queer, drab worl' to me, but, in a wey, it has had its compensations, for I've been preveleeged to help her, an' God has gien me health to do sae. Ay, sir, an'—an' that's a'."

A spurting gleam from a smouldering log showed embers white and dead in the high-set grate, and a stillness lay in the little room like a benediction. Silent, busy with our thoughts, we sat, and the clock ticked loud on the ochred wall. Then, without a word, I rose. As I passed behind my old friend's chair I paused for a moment, and put my hand on his shoulder. And he understood.

Far up the glen the distant bark of a shepherd's dog disturbed the lown night-air. In Kirkland woods an owl hooted eerie and lonesome as I passed, and from the dark hillside the yamouring cry of a startled whaup came to me 'like a wandering word frae hame.'

Then the silence and solace of night lay deep on Shinnel Glen.

With head bared to the passing breeze I stood at the loaning gate. And my prayer to God was that as He had sent sweet peace and sleep to hill and valley, wood and field, so would He vouchsafe to-night to my aged friend Tosh the power of His love and the solace of His peace that passeth all understanding.

APPLERINGIE.

(Written to David M. Carruthers after reading Joseph Laing Waugh's story, 'A Sprig of Appleringie'—published in *Chambers's Journal* for July 1916—in which Mr Carruthers had enclosed friendship's sacred symbol.)

From a friend there came a symbol
Of his friendship true to me;
Pledge of friendship in the present,
And in all the days to be.

From a friend he had received it
In life's sacred morning-time;
Message of enduring friendship
Stronger grown in manhood's prime.

Double friendship thus it brought me
From my friend and his friend, too;
Double kindling power possessing,
It should make me doubly true.

'Twas a spray of appleringie.
It was old and faded, too,
But it brought me back my mother
With her loving eyes so blue,

Till I saw her in her garden,
Where her appleringie grew,
As she stood to smell its perfume,
When the world to me was new.

I could see her smile so radiant,
As she turned to kiss her boy,
And the glory of the vision
Filled my grateful heart with joy.

So uniting friend with mother,
Appleringie, I'll keep you;
Symbol of life's richest treasures;
Friendship fond, love ever true.

JAMES L. HUGHES.
[Christmas Number.

THE YOUNG PRINCE.

By ARTHUR BEVERLEY BAXTER,

Author of *The Blower of Bubbles*, *The Parts Men Play*, &c.

I.

OUTSIDE the windows of the palace where the young Prince lived, the people were singing songs and making merry.

It is true, they were not singing very loudly or very merrily, because as a race they took their music sadly, and much preferred doleful ballads to cheerful ones; and, in addition, as the palace was situated in a very fashionable neighbourhood, where the inhabitants naturally regarded all forms of merriment as a display of vulgarity, it is small wonder that the crowd were feeling a little diffident and somewhat self-conscious about the whole thing.

However, there had been an official proclamation setting forth that, inasmuch as the young Prince had just returned from a long trip across the seas, where his simplicity of nature and his tactfulness had made a great impression on all whom he had met, it had been decided to have a grand procession for him through the streets on New Year's Day, and that all loyal subjects should fill in the intervening Yuletide season by singing songs and making merry.

Of course, before the proclamation was made public it was violently debated in Parliament, after the manner of the times. The Radical minority, backed up by a strong section of the Press, contended that the whole thing was just another illustration of how far the Government had drifted away from the people, and that it would only isolate the country and make her friends hate her worse than ever. After much debate, during which the Minister for War said that unless the people's minds were diverted they might discover that he was running a small but enthusiastic war on behalf of the Mug Wumps against the Oojas, and the Minister for Travel maintained that unless the people were made happy he couldn't double the railway fares again, as he intended to do, the Radicals moved a vote of censure on the Government.

However, the Prime Minister, who enjoyed the advantage of not having heard any of the debate (being absent at the Fourteenth Peace Conference of Premiers), declared that the Radicals were a lot of scoundrels, and if members had a better Premier they had better go to him; and as every one knew they hadn't, they had better be careful how they voted.

At this Parliament passed an overwhelming vote of confidence in the Government, and adjourned for the recess, to the great relief of everybody.

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So on this particular Yuletide evening the loyal populace were doing their best. Bonfires were lit in the streets; coffee-stalls supplied vast quantities of sausages and tea; shopkeepers dressed their windows with all sorts of goodly things much too expensive for any one except a shopkeeper to buy; chemists did a roaring trade in gargles for sore throats; and all the best people gave dinners for each other, and agreed that the whole thing was a frightful bore.

As a contrast to all this gaiety, the scene inside the palace presented quite a different picture.

The young Prince was dining with his three gentlemen-in-waiting. One was a very apopleptic general who had never been to a war, and who spent his time bullying those who had; another was a young gentleman with a lisp and a pedigree, who knew all about Court etiquette; while the third was a bald, learned man, who was supposed to understand exactly what Cabinet Ministers meant when they made speeches, and who seemed very tired.

Except for the grunting of the general, there was no sound at the meal. The attendants moved over the thick rugs on tiptoe, and held their breaths when leaning over the Prince lest they should disturb his peace of mind. From outside the palace came the sound of the people singing a ballad (somewhat out of tune, but with great fervour) of unrequited love on the part of a woman who combined the priceless virtues of poverty and honesty.

'Awful tosh,' growled the general—'all this song and merriment stuff. Bah!'

'Music as an expression of a people's soul,' said the tired man with a sigh, 'especially when directed through constitutional channels to the portraying and demonstrating of devotion and duty towards'—

'Humbug!' snorted the general.

The young Prince said nothing, but his blue eyes seemed dreamy, and his head, which was covered with golden hair, sank listlessly on his breast. 'I am very dull to-night,' he murmured.

'Rubbish!' ejaculated the general, almost startling an attendant into spilling some royal champagne down the royal shirt-front.

'A pwince ith never dull,' said the expert in Court etiquette amiably. 'Woyalty ith quiet, or weserved, or even dumb—but only common people are dull.'

'Stuff and nonsense!' said the general, who had acquired a reputation for straightforwardness by being rude to everybody.

'Silence and speech,' said the tired man who

understood Cabinet Ministers' speeches, 'represent two conflicting fundamental points of view, the expression or giving forth of one's ideas and innermost thoughts as opposed to'—

'Take his bottle away!' said the general abruptly.

It was perhaps just as well that at this point in a scene which promised to strain the canons of Court etiquette the young Prince pushed his plate away and shoved his chair back, doing it all without assistance, thereby causing the attendants in the room to turn as pale as ghosts and rush madly to his help.

'I humbly beg your pardon,' said the Prince to his guests; 'I am not only dull to-night, but very unhappy. I desire to be alone, so as not to force my mood on others. Please remain here.'

With a boyish nod he walked from the room, while the three guests and the attendants all stood up as stiff as pokers.

II.

His hands in his pockets and his head still drooping, the Prince strolled through the palace until he came to the great gallery. A fire was playing cheerily, casting shadows that sported with the moonlight which crept into the darkened room through the windows. Although it was rather gruesome—for here were hung life-size portraits of most of the former kings and queens—the Prince found a melancholy pleasure in being by himself.

His eye rested on a king in a handsome ruffe, a king who had lost his head in a figurative sense, and ended up by losing it literally. There was another king, with a small head and large legs, who had developed a genial weakness for getting rid of his wives, which had earned for him the reputation of being an exceedingly amusing and hearty monarch. Opposite him was the portrait of a queen whose progeny had spread about the world, some of them planning for war, and others plotting for peace, and the whole outfit succeeding in embroiling humanity with their own family quarrel.

'Oh, why,' cried the Prince—'why was I born the son of a king? Why should freedom, which is the heritage of men, be denied to me alone? Why should my destiny, my love, my whole life be directed by the will of others?'

As no answer to these questions was forthcoming from any of the portraits, the Prince wandered over to a window and leaned against it, while the log-fire spluttered and hissed with great energy.

Suddenly he looked up. A most melodious voice was coming from the courtyard, a silvery, mysterious man's voice, that sounded strangely sweet on the snowy air. Although it was soft and caressing in quality, it seemed to penetrate the great gallery and actually to come from one of its corners. The Prince listened, enthralled. There was a mystic tenderness, a lilt that

sounded strangely familiar, and yet he could not recall ever having heard it before.

The song ceased abruptly. A window had been violently raised, and the general had thrust his head out. 'I say, you—you!' he cried. 'You singer fellow theah!'

There was no reply from the courtyard, but a murmuring laugh seemed to play about the palace on the wings of the winter wind.

'Go away and make that noise somewhere else,' cried the general. 'You ought to know better than to sing outside a palace.' Run away now!'

'Stay!' cried the young Prince, looking out of his own window.

'Be off!' bellowed the general, who had become stuck in the aperture, and could neither advance nor withdraw.

'I command you to remain,' cried the Prince.

As there was no response to either of these orders, His Highness looked down into the courtyard. There was no one to be seen, nor was there any sound but the soft swish of a few snowflakes blown against the palace walls, and the distant voices of the populace.

'By Jupiter!' roared the general. 'Come and pull me out. Do you hear me—you lackey fellows?'

A couple of attendants rushed respectfully at the imprisoned officer, and seizing one leg each, pulled him back into the palace, in recognition of which services he was about to kick them both downstairs, when he remembered that they were probably members of the Royal Waiters' Union, and might down trays.

'Alas!' murmured the young Prince, gazing towards the moon, 'even music deserts me. The very singer outside my window shuns the company of a royal slave.'

He turned wearily about, and started.

A young man was lounging carelessly by the fireplace, a roughly dressed fellow in corduroy trousers and a dark-velvet coat. He had a blue handkerchief thrown carelessly about his neck, and a stringed musical instrument slung over his shoulder. There was a lurking, rather mocking smile about his lips, and his eyes, catching the moonlight, sparkled like gems.

'A pleasant Yuletide, sire,' he said, with a bow.

The Prince started again. 'That voice!' he exclaimed. 'You—you are the singer?'

The intruder bowed. 'By command we are to sing to-night, and since being loyal to you is being loyal to myself, who more obedient than I?'

In spite of the rather involved nature of this remark, the Prince felt considerably relieved. He was naturally a brave youth, but he could not remember ever being alone before with a musician who disdained doors as a means of entrance and appeared from nowhere at all.

'How did you get here?' he asked.

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'On a chariot of snowflakes,' answered the other, 'drawn by the wind.'

'Your words are mysterious, sir.'

'I myself am mysterious, sire.'

'But since you harness the wind, where do you travel?'

'From time to eternity, sire.'

At this rejoinder the singer strummed a chord on his instrument and leaned against a flickering shadow.

The young Prince scratched his head. In the course of his royal duties he had entertained many strange people, men of courtly manners from savage lands, and men of no manners at all from civilised ones; but he could not recall any one who ever made use of a shadow before, except to hide in it.

'How old are you?' he asked.

'As old as the seven seas,' answered the vagabond.

'You must have seen a great deal in that time,' remarked the Prince politely, somewhat at a loss for comment.

The musician laughed softly. 'Nothing to what I have done,' he said.

'Oh?' queried the Prince encouragingly.

'I remember beheading that chap,' said the stranger, nodding his head towards the king with the ruffle about his neck.

'The deuce you did!' ejaculated His Highness uncomfortably. 'What for?'

'Oh, he thought he was more powerful than I.'

'Do you,' said the Prince—'do you usually behead kings who think themselves more powerful than you?'

'Umphum,' answered the minstrel, with a slight yawn; 'behead or assassinate them, although I am not very fond of assassins. I say, shall I sing?'

'Do,' said the Prince, who wanted time to think.

Unslinging his instrument from his shoulder, the minstrel played two or three chords that floated eerily on the quiet air, and then commenced to sing:

'Tis the witching hour of night,
Orbed is the moon and bright,
And the stars they glisten, glisten,
Seeming with bright eyes to listen.

For what listen they?

For a song and for a charm,

See they glisten in alarm,

And the moon is waxing warm

To hear what I shall say.

Moon! keep wide thy golden ears—

Hearken, stars! and hearken, spheres!

Hearken, thou eternal sky!

I sing an infant's lullaby,

A pretty lullaby.

Listen, listen, listen, listen,

Glisten, glisten, glisten, glisten,

And hear my lullaby!

'Is that all?' asked the Prince when the song had ceased.

'It's enough for now. Did you like it?'

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B

'There's a good deal of "glisten" about it,' said His Highness, 'but it is very pretty. I don't see, though, that it is very relevant to our conversation.'

'Beauty is always irrelevant,' answered the intruder sententiously, catching a couple of sparks from the fire and tossing them in the air like glowing rubies. 'All beauty is unexpected.'

As neither of these generalisations seemed to bear contradiction, the Prince dropped the subject.

'Excuse me being personal,' he remarked, 'but—do you intend to behead or assassinate me?'

'I don't think so,' answered the vagabond.

'Oh, you don't think so?' said the Prince, not particularly cheered by the other's hesitation.

'One never knows,' went on the vagabond thoughtfully. 'Circumstances alter dynasties, you know. But I have always liked you ever since you were born, and I have a feeling, sire, that you and I will become better and better friends as the years go on.'

'Thank you! Thank you!' cried the Prince, who was naturally a generous-spirited lad, responding quickly to kindness, and who was considerably relieved to find that he was not on the visitor's executionary list.

'But there is one condition,' said the stranger quite sternly, 'one condition only, on which we can be friends.'

'Well?' queried His Highness rather haughtily.

'You must understand me.'

'Must?' The Prince twirled a very slight moustache.

'Must,' repeated the minstrel.

The young Prince frowned and folded his arms. 'May I ask,' he said coolly, 'who it is that says "must" to a prince?'

The vagabond stood up straight and his eyes flashed across the room. 'Am I unknown to you?' he cried. 'I, who permit your House to rule; I, who have smashed great empires and driven tyrants from thrones guarded by a million bayonets? Have you not heard of me, sire, who have made it possible for this kingdom to extend its sway from lands where the sun scorches the desert throughout the year, to the mighty north where winter builds great palaces of ice that float to sea in the summer months and harass the ships by night? Can it be true that you who will some day mount the throne have never heard of me?'

'Tell me!' cried the young Prince, profoundly stirred by this somewhat lengthy speech—'tell me! Do not keep me in ignorance longer. I know you are something more than man'—

'And almost god, sire.' The minstrel raised his hand, and a glint of moonlight revealed long, tapering fingers. 'I am Demos! Mine is the spirit of the people!'

There was a dramatic silence, which was eventually broken by the Prince. 'I—I am delighted to welcome you to my Court,' he cried

haltingly. 'I have read a great deal concerning you in the papers, and, of course, you're talked about a lot in Parliament, and even in the House of Nobles.'

'Ha!' ejaculated Demos.

'But—without appearing ungracious, I hope—may I ask what is the object of this visit?'

'To-night,' said the minstrel, 'the hearts of the people are unlocked. Kindness and goodwill are abroad. That is the message which I, Demos, bring to you this Yuletide. The people trust you, sire: I urge you, believe in the people.'

A pensive look crept into the Prince's eyes, and turning away from the stranger, he gazed thoughtfully at the scene outside. 'Demos,' he said quietly, 'take me out into the streets with you—now.'

The minstrel made a dissenting gesture, but the Prince, with a sudden impetuosity, bore down all opposition. 'Take me with you,' he cried. 'Let me feel the throb of life as a man, not as an imprisoned slave. Do not leave me ignorant, like so many of those whose portraits are here. I want to serve my people. I want to share their miseries and joys. Why spare me the facts of life? Let me be one of the people, if only for an hour. Shall I ring for a motor-car?'

'No, sire,' said Demos, throwing his instrument over his shoulder and adjusting his cap; 'I shall not even summon my chariot of snowflakes. He who would understand the people must go on foot.'

'Lead on, then,' cried the young Prince, 'and I shall follow.'

For a moment the intruder hesitated, then made a sign of assent, and together they left the palace, the Prince pausing *en route* to slip on rather a shabby overcoat which belonged to the man who understood what Cabinet Ministers really meant when they made speeches.

III.

A few minutes' walking took the two adventurers to the river, where men from the ships sprawled about fires lit on the pavement, and shook the night with their sounds of laughter and brawling.

Deserted ships lay at anchor or tied to the piers, while puny lamps at their mast-heads threw a misty light on the snowflakes tumbling through the air. Breasting the water like swimming mastiffs, puffing tugs ran by each other, their shrill whistles piercing the very clouds, while a distant church bell clanged lonesomely. A thin, filmy cloud was across the face of the moon, and a raw wind whiffed about the streets.

The Prince wondered at the strangeness of it all. There was not a sound that he had not heard a thousand times before, nor any part of the scene that was new to his eyes, but the spirit of adventure lent an unaccustomed vividness to it all.

He was free! No one knew him but the fantastic figure at his side. Life spread before him—not as a dull routine planned and executed by his officers, but as a mysterious vista holding romance, adventure—above all, the unexpected!

What would the visitor with the velvet jacket show him? In spite of the sharpness of the night, he found his blood tingling with anticipation.

Without pausing to exchange words with any of the groups that hailed them, Demos walked on and on until, leaving the river, they entered a shabby district where cottages huddled close together, as if offering apology for the few miserable feet of ground on which they stood.

'Your Highness,' said Demos, speaking for the first time, 'you have more than once lamented the fact that you were born a prince. You have sighed for the freedom that belongs to others, and wished that yours might have been the fate of obscurity. Let us select one of these wretched hovels. Perhaps we shall see that in many ways the destinies of the great and the obscure are not so far apart.'

He knocked at the door of a cottage, and it was opened by a young girl carrying a lamp.

'A happy Yuletide!' said Demos, touching his cap. 'I and my companion are poor wandering singers. It's a cold night, and pennies be scarce.'

A gust of wind leaped at the lamp and almost extinguished its timorous flame.

'You have come to a poor place,' said the girl, sheltering the light with her body. 'Wouldn't you do better where rich folk live?'

'Only the poor feel for the poor,' answered Demos, blowing on his fingers.

'I wish I had some money for you,' said the girl, 'but my mother's been that ill this last fortnight that I could not go out to work. You're welcome, though, to come and sit about the stove until you're warm again.'

The Prince murmured his dissent, but motioning him to follow, Demos took the lamp from the girl, and holding it up to light the way, went inside the cottage and into a room where a small stove was humming pleasantly from the activities of a wood-fire.

'Please speak quietly,' said the girl; 'she's asleep in the other room.'

Drawing up a pair of rickety chairs, Demos and the Prince held their fingers close to the crooked pipe that sprouted ceilingwards from the stove, while their hostess moved noiselessly about, filling a kettle with water and putting it on the stove. The Prince, to whom everything was as unreal as if he had been hurled into a chapter of the *Arabian Nights*, watched her with eyes that were strangely eloquent. She had the unconscious grace of sixteen years that could afford to be careless of her poor dress and the tawdry shawl about her neck.

When the kettle was filled and had broken

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into a humming duet with the stove-pipe, the girl drew a box from a drawer, and placed it on the table.

'For the Prince's procession,' she said, holding up a pair of coloured-paper flowers wired together. 'Between them here—see—there will be the Prince's picture. I have made nearly a thousand, but the pay is not much these hard times.'

The Prince leaned forward. 'Are the flowers real?' he asked.

'No,' said the girl. 'Smell them.' She held the flowers towards him as evidence of their lack of perfume. 'But I pretend they are real,' she went on. 'Often at night I will cover all the table with them—like this. Then I turn the lamp low and lay my head down, and look along with my eyes half-closed. It is just like the country again—almost.'

'You are from the country?' asked the Prince.

'Of course,' said the girl, taking up some coloured paper and with deft fingers making it into the shape of petals.

'How old were you when you came to town?'

'I was ten. My father had a little book-seller's shop in a town near where we lived, but I don't think he made much money. All the poor people used to come into the shop of a night and read the books; and the rich folk didn't very often buy any. I don't suppose they need books like we do.'

The musical contest between the stove-pipe and the kettle having resulted in a distinct victory for the latter, Demos lifted it off the stove. The girl smiled her thanks, and poured the contents into a teapot that boasted an enormous handle, but lacked most of its spout.

'We'll let it stand a few minutes,' she said, sitting down and resuming her work.

'So you came to the city?' said the Prince, leaning back in his chair and watching with his dreamy eyes the quick play of her fingers.

'Yes. Dad thought he might get along well here, and if he did we could give mother—she's an invalid, you know—better care. At first, though, we nearly starved; but then dad got work in a book-shop round the corner. It was great fun then. Often at night he and I would go for a walk through the streets, and pretend what we would buy when he wrote a book all by himself and made a lot of money. Then we would come back home, and dad would have a book from the shop and read it to us—sometimes until after midnight. We were very happy then.'

With a sad little smile she put down her work, and foraging about the room, produced three ill-assorted cups.

'I have only bread to eat,' she said, 'but perhaps with the tea it will make you warm.'

With an inscrutable smile, Demos took a quarter-loaf of bread, and breaking it, handed a

piece to the Prince. Then, taking the mutilated teapot from the stove, he pointed to it with a chuckle. 'Though it lacks a mouth,' he said, 'it is not entirely without eloquence.' Manipulating it dexterously, he filled the three cracked cups with tea, and replaced it on the stove.

With a murmur of thanks the Prince took the bread, and not only devoured it, but drank his tea to the last drop.

'Well done!' commented Demos; 'you have eaten of the bread of the people.'

'Tell me,' said the Prince, looking towards the girl, 'what time will your father be home to-night?'

She looked wonderingly at him. 'But he is dead—the war, you understand.'

'I am so sorry,' said the Prince, and there was a quick stab at his heart.

The girl stopped her work, and in her eyes there was a look of trouble. 'The war came,' she said, 'and after three years they made dad go into the army. It seemed so funny. All he lived for was just us and books. He was always shy and ever so gentle. Wasn't it funny that they should take him for the army?'

'But we had to have men!' cried the Prince, his fingers pressing on the table until their tips were white.

'Oh yes—I know,' said the girl earnestly.

For a moment neither spoke, and then the Prince's intensity relaxed, and reaching for a flower, he fingered its paper petals. 'He was killed?' he asked.

'Oh no. He just died. He caught a cold in the trenches, and—well, you see, he wasn't very strong. It was funny, wasn't it, that they should make him go to war?'

'Destiny does not recognise obscurity,' remarked Demos, putting on his cap and slinging his instrument, which had been on the floor, over his shoulder.

'Good-bye,' said the young Prince. He put out both his hands with a boyish impulsiveness, and, smiling wonderingly, she gave him hers. 'Some day,' he said, 'a prince will come riding to your cottage, and once more you will see the country and flowers that have perfume.'

'What a pretty fairy story!' she cried.

The Prince was going to reply, but instead he stooped low and kissed her hand. Turning about, he could see nothing of Demos, and hurried into the street. He could just make out the vagabond figure ahead in the darkness. The fellow was singing softly, and the words floated back on the wintry air:

'Listen, listen, listen, listen,
Glisten, glisten, glisten, glisten,
And hear my lullaby.'

IV.

Full of thoughts which were incoherently resentful, yet strangely pitying, the Prince walked beside his guide without uttering a

word. He was just conscious that they had entered a labyrinth of dark, crooked alleys where, in some inexplicable way, the wretched hovels that fought for breathing-space seemed foul and sinister.

The raw air of the night became contaminated with the odours of unclean humanity wrestling with the musty stench of stagnation. A slovenly woman at a door leered on them, and croaked an invitation to enter. The Prince shuddered, and his companion laughed dryly.

'Your Highness,' he said, 'you have asked to see life as it is lived by your people. While the air of your palace is still fresh in your nostrils, come with me and see if even in the lowest dregs of human depravity there may not be some little gem for you and me.'

Stopping at a tumble-down dwelling that looked in the dark as if it had pitched forward on one shoulder and were in danger of toppling over on to the narrow street, the adventurers opened a creaking door and walked inside. There was a peculiar pungent odour that was nauseatingly sweet, as they groped their way through the unlit hallway. Reaching a door, they opened it, and looking in, saw a room where a dirty lamp suspended from the ceiling revealed a dozen huddled figures lying on the floor.

'What is it?' whispered the Prince.

Before Demos could reply there was a terrible cry in a woman's voice. The blood froze in the Prince's veins. Again the cry rang out, then subsided into a moan like the sound of a hound whimpering at the moon.

'What is it?' whispered the Prince again, his fingers clenched with horror.

'Opium,' murmured his guide.

From across the room came the sound of a soft, low laugh, and a girl with untidy hair matted across her forehead raised herself on her elbow and looked at them with lustreless eyes.

'It's all blue,' she murmured, with a soft ecstatic tremulousness in her voice—'blue as your eyes, dearie; blue flowers that smell like violets in a dream, and deep-blue skies. Look at the mist of blue rising from the sea! Blue-bells and forget-me-nots everywhere—*forget-me-nots!*' She laughed—a horrible shrill laugh. Her eyes blazed with fury and she beat the floor with her fist. 'Men!' she sneered between clenched teeth. 'Men!'

A figure from the floor reached out its hand and caught at the coat which the Prince was wearing.

'What season o' the year is this?' The voice was weary, but had the ineradicable timbre of youth.

'It is Yuletide,' answered the Prince.

'Yuletide?' repeated the fellow vaguely. 'That's odd—but I lose count nowadays. Doesn't matter, though. How's the war getting on?'

'It's over long ago,' answered His Highness, kneeling down beside the prostrate figure. In

the meagre light of the lamp he could see that, though drawn and pallid, it was the face of a mere lad.

'Why have you come to this place?' whispered the Prince.

'Why?' For almost a full minute the young fellow gazed stupidly into the other's eyes, trying to recall his disordered faculties from whatever heaven or hell the drug had hurled them into. 'I remember now,' he said wonderingly—'the clock.'

'What clock?' murmured the Prince.

'In here,' answered the young fellow, touching his head. 'Wait a minute. . . . It's coming back. The clock and the war! That's it—the war, all clear now. . . . Junior sub.—that's me. . . . Two years in the line and no leave. . . . Feeling a bit jumpy, but had to carry on. . . . Then a shell got me. I wasn't wounded—just *tick-tock-tick-tock*. . . . clock started in m' head—all day long—usually all night too—*tick-tock-tick*. They discharged me from hospital, and said I was all right. . . . Tried to work, but clock wouldn't stop—couldn't sleep—fagged all day and *napoo* for business. . . . They fired me. Every job—fired. . . . *Comprenez?* I boozed like hell just to forget. All the worse afterwards. Y' know, old boy . . . all the time—the clock hammering away somewhere in here.'

The young man clutched his head in his hands, then with a weary sigh sank back once more.

'Where was I?' he said. 'Oh yes . . . the clock. Fine li'l clock that, old son—no winding—just carries on . . . never stops . . . 'cept when I'm here.'

'But have you no friends who can look after you? Have you no family?'

' . . . Forget,' answered the youth, passing his hand over his brow.

'Try to remember,' urged the Prince, laying his hand on the other's shoulder.

'I forget,' repeated the young fellow dully. 'Where's the dope? The clock's at it again . . . ha! ha! ha!—some little clock, eh? Damned if I'm not getting fond of the blighter!'

Again he clutched his head and looked wildly at the Prince.

'Did we win the war?' he cried.

The Prince tried to reply, but his heart was bursting with agony, and the question left him faltering, silent. The lad clutched desperately at his coat with fingers that were thin and bloodless.

'Did we win the war?' he cried.

'Yes,' said Demos grimly.

v.

As they reached the street once more the Prince raised his hands towards the skies and drank in deep draughts of air as though to expel the foulness of the scene from both his lungs and his mind.

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'Demos,' he said, 'take me away from this foul quarter. These dark alleys and miserable cottages give me a feeling that faces are grinning at me out of the dark—grinning and laughing to themselves about the war.'

'Who knows?' said the minstrel.

'Let us get away from here,' urged the Prince; 'take me to some place where the war has not crushed any one.'

'That, sire, is not easy; and yet'—

With a sudden air of determination the minstrel buttoned up his velvet jacket, pulled his cap over his eyes, and started off at such a pace that it was all the Prince could do to keep up with him, much less indulge in conversation.

He thought that once he heard Demos chuckle, but wasn't sure.

From the interior of shops and houses a fragrant odour of chops and sausages saluted their nostrils, and the Prince, who, as it will be remembered, had eaten very little dinner, began to feel his royal stomach demanding recognition of its rights. Except for vagrant filmy clouds that occasionally floated across the face of the moon, dropping their largesse of snowflakes as they went, the night was becoming gloriously clear, and the bracing elixir of frost was dispelling the cold dampness that had bitten like an ill-tempered cur at the fingers and toes of those who courted the open streets.

Merriment was on the increase with the night's maturing, and to the sound of pianos and fiddles light hearts and light feet were dancing the time away.

But, pausing neither to applaud nor comment, Demos and the Prince strode on until they reached the wider streets where clubs and stately residences offered their sanctuary from uncouth humanity. Past a silent park whose gates were locked they found themselves in a crescent studded with great houses ablaze with light, and pulling up at one of these, Demos went up the stairs and knocked briskly at the door.

In response it was opened by a funkey, to whom Demos extended his cap.

'Pennies for two poor singers,' he pleaded.

The funkey, who had been partaking generously of his master's whisky, waved stolidly at them.

'Run along,' he said patronisingly; 'don't bother me. Run along, like good fellers.'

'We are hungry,' urged Demos, 'and thirsty.'

'Cawn't be 'elped,' said the servant, with a hiccup. 'Master says, as we cawn't feed all the 'ungry vagabonds about, we won't feed none, so 's to be fair all round. Run along now, me good fellers, and don't disturb a conwiwial gatherin'.'

There was a roar of laughter from inside—a roar which had men's coarse voices for foundation, and the shrill cackle of women's for superstructure.

With sudden energy Demos seized the funkey by the waistcoat with one hand and the Prince's
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arm with the other; then, by executing a movement common to classical dancers and those who turn hydrants in the street, he swung the Prince into the doorway and the funkey outside of it, closing the door violently, and leaving both the victims of the manoeuvre blinking with unfeigned astonishment.

'Come on,' he said.

Reaching the dining-room, he drew aside the *portières* with an imperious gesture, and the Prince, who had followed him, found himself staring into a room where a dozen or so people were dining.

From the fingers, hair, and throats of women the glitter of diamonds leaped at the rays of light flashing from the cut-glass littered on the table. Like sunshine the crystal chandeliers showered illumination over it all, and basking in this shimmering spray, the plump shoulders and undraped backs of women shone like the *chef d'œuvre* of a cannibal feast.

At the entrance of the two strangers the hilarity ceased abruptly and all strained their necks to catch a glimpse of them. The host half rose from his chair and pointed at them with a smoking cigar, about which a golden band was wrapped.

'Hey, you!' he cried. 'Vot for you come in like that?'

'We are poor singers'—began Demos.

'They must be from the Royal Opera, then,' cried an extremely blonde woman who was given to hysterical humour.

'We are poor singers,' repeated Demos slowly, 'and have been begging from those who can ill afford to give. Now we come to those who have.'

'Listen here, my fine feller,' said the host, replacing the cigar in his mouth; 'the only reason we ain't poor like you is that we know enough to hang on to vot we got.—Don't it, Jacob?'

'Yas,' said the gentleman referred to, amiably; 'we wasn't born las' week.'

'What about your friend?' put in an enormous woman with a voice like a hurricane. 'What does he do?'

'He is learning,' answered Demos.

'From you?' thundered the female.

'No,' said Demos; 'from you.'

Another torrent of laughter succeeded this retort, and one of the guests who had been surreptitiously drinking his neighbour's champagne nearly choked to death.

'Now then,' said the host, 'you loafers better go along before I ring for the police.'

'A little food'—pleaded Demos.

'A little food?' repeated the gentleman. 'Not a chance. I know you tramps too well. I give you anydings to ead, and to-morrow all your pack come round and I don't get no peace no more.—That's straight talk, Jacob?'

'Yas,' agreed his guest. 'That's the ticket.'

'We are thirsty and ahungered,' pleaded Demos.

'Beggin' is against the law,' stormed the host, 'and I don't go for no breakin' the law.—Isn't it, Jacob?'

'That's righ', said Jacob placidly.

A violent knocking at the front-door beat a prolonged tattoo on the diners' ears.

'Hey!' shouted the host. 'If you doan' like the house, you ain't have to knock it down.'

The noise increased in violence, and one of the four sons of the house rose from the table.

'That's it, sonny,' said the host. 'Tell Rip Van Winkle out there to wake up and see who it was at the door.'

'I can tell you who it is,' cried Demos. 'It is servility clamouring for entrance. Let it in—you know how to treat it better than honest poverty.—Shall we go?'

He looked towards the Prince, who had just turned on his heel, when a shriek in a girl's voice made them turn round.

'Look!' she cried. 'It is the Prince—it's the young Prince!'

A roar of derision drowned her voice; but the Prince, with a curious smile, took a step towards the table and bowed to the girl.

'There!' she shrieked. 'Look at him!'

'Sire,' said Demos, 'let me present to you your new aristocracy.'

At the vagabond's words every voice was hushed, and by some odd coincidence the knocking at the door also stopped abruptly.

'Vot joke is dis—ugh!' blustered the host, although his face was pallid.

'The greatest joke of the times,' answered Demos.—'This gentleman, sire, had two things the nation needed when there was war—his ships and his sons. The ships he gave—at a price; the sons'—

'They was all indispensable!' roared the host, wringing his moist hands.

'In return for these invaluable services,' went on Demos, 'your Government, sire, has given him a title—has raised him to the peerage.'

'The feller's mad!' stormed the host. 'Mad!—Isn't it, Jacob?'

'Sure,' said the imperturbable gentleman referred to; 'he ain't at home upstairs.'

A medley of voices broke in hysterically, and, as if it were a signal to recommence, the knocking began again on the front-door.

'Mad?' shouted Demos, seizing his instrument and striking it furiously with his fingers. 'I am as mad as a rabbit; mad as a lover when the moon is full; mad as the civilisation that sends men to death and hugs things like you to its bosom.—Now, your Highness, will you stay here and sup?'

'No. Let us go,' said the Prince.

'Perhaps you would like to create another peer or two from amongst our friends?'

'No, no,' cried the Prince. 'I would prefer the stench of the opium-den to this place. I shall not forget'—he turned to the limp and

perspiring diners—'I shall never forget how you entertained the Prince when he came to your house. I bid you all good-night.'

'Good-nigh,' said Jacob.

With another savage chord on his instrument Demos paced from the room with the Prince in close attendance. Reaching the door, the minstrel opened it with such violence that the flunkey, who was standing outside, was precipitated by a series of somersaults to the very bottom of the steps, where he remained in an attitude assumed by comic acrobats when playing leap-frog.

VI.

'Bah!' ejaculated Demos as they found themselves once more in the crescent; 'I am too hot-headed. A fellow of my age ought to know better.'

'I was no less furious than you,' said the Prince, whose face still wore an angry flush.

'But, then, your Highness, I am so many centuries your senior.'

'I say,' said the Prince, changing the subject, 'I'm frightfully hungry.'

'Really?' queried Demos. 'I have been hungry for decades at a time.'

'But, then,' said the Prince comfortably, 'you were probably used to it.'

'So Marie Antoinette thought,' said Demos with a chuckle.

As this remark savoured of disrespect to royalty, the Prince thrust his hands in his pockets to keep them warm, and refused to say anything more, so as to let his temper cool. With an air of nonchalance they strolled on until they came once more to the end of the park.

At this point in their journey the long legs of Demos began to increase their pace.

'What's—up—now?' pleaded the Prince, who was forced to break into a half-trot to keep up.

Demos made no reply, but strode faster and faster. Houses, then shops, began to rush past them, until their lights appeared to be one long, streaming glare. The exertion made him so warm that the Prince unbuttoned his borrowed coat, letting the tails fly into the air.

After going through a dozen alleys, darting down as many murky lanes, and traversing an innumerable number of courts, they came to a spot where a dwelling-place had been pulled down, leaving an indiscriminate mass of broken bricks and corrugated iron.

Feeling his way cautiously, Demos led the Prince around the débris until they came to a low fence behind which a nondescript building was crouching in the dark. Feeling for the door, which was a huge affair, Demos knocked softly.

In response a very small aperture was opened and a breathy voice challenged them.

'Comrades,' answered Demos.

'The password, comrades,' muttered the voice.

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'*World Revolution*,' said Demos.

The door was cautiously opened enough to admit them, and then swung to again.

The Prince looked curiously around. By the light of three or four weak-minded candles he could see that the place was a disused stable, with a table and chairs where the stalls had once been, and some thirty men standing or sprawling about on straw.

He thought he had never seen such faces—faces with sharp, crafty features, bilious of complexion, with ugly, unkempt hair begrudging the little space it had to leave for thick lips and rat-like eyes. Among the group were two or three whose smooth, lofty brows bespoke the idealist and the dreamer, but they were lost in the uncouth, hideous crowd.

A sharp murmur of inquiry ran about the place at the entrance of the new arrivals, and one man from the floor kicked at the instrument which hung from the shoulder of Demos.

'You'd look better with a bomb, comrade,' he snarled.

'Brother,' said Demos, 'you would look less like an ape if your hair were cut.'

A roar of anger swept the place, and a score of hairy faces, set with bloodshot eyes, stretched towards them, belching blasphemy in many tongues.

The tumult was brought to order by a hooded figure at the head of the place crashing his great fist on the table before him.

'Silence!' he hissed. 'Do you want the police about our ears?'

With a chuckle Demos cleared a place for himself and the Prince by the simple method of inserting his foot underneath a reclining comrade and tilting him over on top of one of his fellows—promptly sitting down in the vacated place.

'Silence!' hissed the president again.

'Silence!' echoed Demos, strumming an emphatic chord on his instrument.

Again the crowd became rigid with fury, and a mass of hairs bristled like those on a dog when a cat spits at it.

'Is Comrade Reiffensteinski here?' whispered the president.

'Yiss, comrade.' An undersized, dirty-faced foreigner got up from the straw, several strands of which clung affectionately to his beard.

'Report,' said the president, 'on what you have done in the down-trodden island for the sacred cause of revolution.'

The worthy Reiffensteinski smirked complacently and caressed his beard with his fingers. 'Only yesterday,' he said, 'we did execute another policeman.'

'Be quiet!' The president shook his fist at his followers, who had broken into shouts of approval. 'Tell us of the execution,' he said, turning to the little man. 'Such glorious deeds strengthen the soul of the people. *What's that?*'

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'Nothing,' said Demos, who had picked a note on his lowest string that sounded like the gullup of a bull-frog.

'The execution, comrade,' said the president, with an angry glare. 'Give us the story.'

The little foreigner smirked again, and with a sweep of his hands curled his beard like a baker kneading dough. 'He was coming from church, where he had been sacrament-taking. We was very clever. I lie in front of a motor-car—so; I groan and cry out. Four comrades lean over and shout, "Help! He is run over! He bleed to death!" The policeman hear, and come to us. "Can I do anything?" he say, and stoop down to me. Then—*then*!—from behind, the glorious comrades shoot him in the head—so—dead! We jump in the motor and run away.'

There was a subdued howl of glee, and Demos clutched at the Prince's arm. 'Steady,' he muttered; 'not yet; not yet.'

'You have done well,' said the president. 'Our glorious cause can never fail where such deeds are done.'

The little comrade sat down with a look of smug complacency and proceeded to chew a piece of straw.

'That concludes our reports,' went on the president. 'You have heard from Comrade Sneiderberg how in the great country now ruled by the proletariat there is no more rents, no more marriage, no more *bourgeoisie*. Every one is free to obey the tribunals. Every one is happy. Any one who is not, they shoot. Long live Revolution!'

'Long live Revolution,' chanted the gathering.

'The other small republic, as Comrade Reiffensteinski describes, is overthrowing the despot in every direction.'

'Long live Revolution,' chanted the crowd.

'Long live Reaction!' cried Demos, mimicking the president's voice.

'Long live Reaction,' echoed the others.

'Long live Retrogression!' cried Demos.

'Long live Retrogression!' roared the crowd.

'Long live'—

'*Silence!*' hissed the president.

'Hear, hear,' said Demos. 'Long live silence!'

An angry outburst again surged against the two intruders, but at another admonition from the president, who made use of an aperture in his teeth to hiss like an adder, the room became quiet again.

'Now,' said the president, 'we come to the great decision. Next week there is the procession in honour of the young Prince'—

A storm of curses stung the air. The Prince caught his breath, and Demos, hugging his knees, rocked himself thoughtfully like an Oriental philosopher.

'The Prince,' went on the president, 'is a deadly enemy to our cause. The people believe in him—the fools!'

'The swine!' snarled the comrade whom Demos had tilted with his foot.

'Fools and swine!' cried the president. 'But because the people love him, he must die.'

'He must die,' chanted the crowd.

Demos gripped the Prince's arm. 'Not yet,' he muttered; 'not yet.'

'The bomb is ready,' went on the president in a hoarse whisper. 'The cause absolves you. Which of the comrades will be the arm of destiny?'

An awesome silence followed the question. Bloodshot eyes glanced furtively about, and a hideous pallor was on almost every face. The air was charged with terror, and from a wretched human specimen lying face downwards in the straw there was the horrible sound of chattering teeth.

'I will kill the Prince.' A youth had stepped forward, one of those whose face and brow stamped him as a fanatic and dreamer. From between open lips came his feverish breath, and his light eyes were burning with the unquenchable fires of madness. Gasping and quivering with relief, the others swarmed about him, applauding, cheering, urging him on.

'Comrade,' said the president, whose own voice was still shaking, 'you have chosen well. The world will ring of your deed.'

'As for that,' said the youth—and the musical quality of his voice was startling in contrast—'or for my own life, I care nothing. I only know that things as they are are wrong. Existence as we have it to-day is damning the human soul. It is cruel; it is evil. The young Prince embodies the order of things as they are, and so I strike! Give me the bomb. I promise you that on the day of the Prince's procession, before night falls, he shall be a corpse.'

'Death to the Prince!' snarled the president.

'Death to the young Prince!' roared the crowd.

Demos clutched at him too late. The Prince was on his feet, his coat open, and had reached the table. 'You need not hunt me down!' he cried in a clear, ringing voice. 'I am here.'

He stood facing the crowd that surged towards him. For an instant there was a deathly silence; then a swirl of curses and imprecations swept over him like surf dashing against a rock. Although he was pale, his steady eyes and boyish mouth showed none of the fear that changed the disordered countenances of his assailants from the hideous to the grotesque. They shouted for his death, and shrieked for some one to strike him down, but no one had the courage to cross the little space that separated them.

'I am ready,' said the Prince, turning to the young assassin, who alone had remained calm and unfurried. 'Without a trial I have been condemned. Then kill me now, that others who will be beside me in the procession need not die as well. I have lived with only one thought

since I was old enough to think of such things—to serve my fellow-countrymen. I did not choose my life; but if by living I stand between the people and their rights, then take that life now. I am ready.'

A furious muffled cry of rage went up from a score of throats, and the president, leaning towards the assassin, put something in his hand. 'Now,' he cried; 'kill him!'

The young fellow looked down, and without a tremor saw that in his hand he had a knife whose long blade was tempered to a delicate point. Raising the gleaming thing before his eyes, he held it there like a crucifix. 'I shall strike first,' he said in his breathy, uncanny voice, 'and then each of you in turn. Thus shall the world know that it is the deed of the people.'

He took a step towards the Prince, and in an unearthly silence the two youths looked into each other's eyes. The assassin took a deep, trembling breath, and pressed his hand against his eyes as though he would clear the fumes of madness that were raising a mist before them. The fingers on the handle of the knife tightened their grip, and his arm was slowly raised.

'Just a minute,' cried Demos, elbowing his way through the crowd. 'I ought to have something to say about this.'

He caught the wrist of the assassin in a grip like steel, and slowly bent it back. There was a horrible crack, and the knife clattered to the floor. The young man made no sound, but the arm hung impotently at his side.

'You hounds!' Demos turned to the terror-stricken crowd, and seemed to tower like a giant above them. 'You prostitutes of Democracy! Century after century I have watched your kind, whispering "Murder" into the ears of fanatics like this poor fool—crying "Progress" while you know that Progress by its very nature would murder you. What brings you to this land, fouling the air with your pestilent breath, poisoning the hearts of men, and vomiting your filth in the open places everywhere? What is there about you that makes you come in the wake of war like rats following a plague?'

As Demos paused the terror of the crowd passed into fury, and shouting that they were thirty against two, they shrieked for his death, and a hurtling knife just grazed his cheek.

'Death to them both!' cried the crowd, surging forward.

'What!' roared the minstrel; 'you would kill both the Prince and Demos?'

'Demos? Demos?' Those nearest him struggled back as if they had seen a ghost.

'Ay—Demos!' He took a pace towards them, and with a cry of terror they shrank back. There was something overpowering, supernatural, in his towering wrath. 'I am weary to exhaustion of the crimes you have committed in my name. Honest revolt against injustice is as far

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from your minds as the rising sun is from the waning moon. Progress grows by the deeds and the lives of men, not by their deaths. This lad, this royal Prince, like every man, is born with a challenge from his Age. Already he has given much, and will give more and more as time takes toll of his allotted years. Who strikes at him strikes at Me!’

He raised his hand in the air, and his eyes swept the gathering before him.

‘Back to your sewers! Back to the slime wherein your souls can have the nourishment they crave! Your hour is not far off; and if you force me to turn on you, history will record its blackest day of retribution.—Come, sire; the hours of the night are passing. Come with me, and see if any one will harm the Prince who is allied with Demos.’

With Demos’s fingers just touching the Prince’s sleeve, they walked slowly through the room, while the wretched anarchists fought to make a passage for them.

VII.

The night, which had held as many moods as the mind of a youth in love, had grown cloudy, and the moon, after a gallant stand, gave up the fight, retiring in complete discomfiture. Snow was falling heavily in big, soft flakes unharassed by any wind, muffling the noisy streets into an eerie silence. Footsteps that were wont to echo against window-panes like an aerial postman on his route fell noiselessly on the carpeted pavements, and street lamps struggling against the clinging shroud of white made the street like an avenue in a gigantic vault lit by dim candles.

Exhausted in body and in spirit, the Prince walked beside his guide, letting the snow play upon his hot face and forehead. He had asked to see his people—to share their thoughts, their joys, their troubles. He had done all this, but instead of joy it had brought him a feeling of impotence—a feeling that life was too dark and complex for him to grapple with.

He began to regret the evening’s adventures. He could have gone on looking at existence from the palace windows, inspecting the tragedies and sorrows of life as a general looking at a division drawn up on parade. Surrounded by officialdom, he could have faced his people and only noted those truths which officialdom permits august ears to hear. But now the memories of the night—the girl with the paper flowers, the young officer drugging himself to death, the diners who had amassed their fortunes while Youth went to its cross, the vile creatures in the stable screaming for his death—these things had burned themselves into his very soul.

‘And it is well.’

The Prince looked up with a start. ‘I didn’t speak,’ he said.

‘You thought,’ said Demos tersely.

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They had just turned into a decent business street, when a man of considerable girth opened a door which stood beside a cabinetmaker’s shop, and turning up his coat-collar, ran along the pavement to a pillar-box, into which he dropped a letter.

Having completed that task, he turned about, and inserting his hands in his pockets and lowering his head, proceeded, to the accompaniment of much blowing and puffing, to trot at a brisk pace back to his door again. Without seeing them, he bore down on the two adventurers, but just as the Prince stepped aside to let him pass the runner slipped, lost his balance, caromed violently off the Prince, and went head-first into Demos. That velvet-jacketed figure promptly sat down, and throwing his long legs forward, precipitated the impetuous stranger on top of the Prince, who suddenly found himself buried beneath sixteen stone of humanity, with his nose flattened against the pavement.

‘Hoy!’ shouted the owner of the sixteen stone.

‘Hoy!’ shouted Demos, making the echoes ring.

The Prince tried to speak, but as it only resulted in his mouth being stuffed with snow, he contented himself with wriggling violently.

‘Well, this is a hearty meeting, to be sure!’ cried the new-comer, shifting his position, and allowing the Prince to assume the perpendicular once more.

At the sight of that young man’s face, so caked with snow as to make his features quite undiscernible, Demos and the stranger broke into such a prolonged and good-natured laugh that the Prince could not withstand the infection, and laughed himself until the very farthest frontiers of his body glowed with warmth.

‘That letter,’ said the stranger, getting up on his feet and wiping the tears from his eyes, while Demos superintended the brushing and cleaning of the Prince—‘that letter you saw me post was from the wife to her brother. It’s asking him to take supper with us to-night.’

‘To-night?’ queried Demos.

The stranger nodded a great many times. ‘I’ve had it in my pocket for four days!’ he cried, bottling up a laugh that would have burst any ordinary man’s ribs.

‘Why?’—began Demos.

‘He’s—he’s an agitator,’ said the stranger. ‘Goes around getting men to strike—and the wife’s invitation was for to-night.’

The prospect of his own duplicity proved so overpowering that the good man began to develop strong symptoms of collapse again, and had to lean against a lamp-post until he recovered himself.

‘Hello!’ For the first time he noticed the instrument which Demos carried. ‘Musicians, eh?’

‘Yes,’ said Demos; ‘we have been wandering about the streets to-night.’

'Bless us!' said the old fellow, his face glowing with sympathy. 'Little money, I wager.'

'Little money,' said Demos.

'And little food?'

'No food,' said the Prince feelingly.

'Bless us! Bless us!' cried the stranger. 'What are we doing standing out here, then? No food—dear, dear! Come along—pick up your cap, sir—you're just in time for a jolly little party in honour of Ben Tiffle, my head man. This is my place.' He pointed to the cabinetmaker's shop, and to a large sign above the door. 'William Pressleswitch & Son—at your service, gentlemen.'

'At yours,' said Demos, with a courtly bow.

'We've been working late to-night, so we put off the party till now. Here you are—mind the step. Bless us! the laddie here will look a lot merrier for a bit of mutton and a pint of something.'

Uttering a great many words, and punctuating them with puffing and chuckles to prevent the two wanderers from either refusing his proffered hospitality or thanking him for it, the stout-hearted cabinetmaker led them upstairs, and ushered them into a cosy room where a homely scene was set.

'Mrs P.,' cried their host; 'two more friends for supper—and musical fellows, too.'

Mrs Pressleswitch, who (as is so often the case where a jovial husband is involved) was a thin, worried-looking woman, welcomed the new arrivals with as good grace as could be expected, at the same time using her eyebrows to telegraph to her husband her displeasure at his thrusting guests on her without proper warning.

Her guilty husband, however, ignoring the reprimanding eyebrows, led the Prince and Demos to an elderly man of seventy odd years, a man somewhat stooped with his age, but in whose face and bearing there was an air of conscious dignity born of long years of honest toil.

'This villain,' said Mr Pressleswitch, gripping the old man's arm with great warmth, 'is Ben Tiffle—old Tiff.—How long is it since you joined the house, Tiff?'

'Off and on,' said the old man sturdily, 'with him as was before you, and then with you, sixty-one year this month to a day.'

'Think of that!' cried his employer, slapping his worker on the back. 'Sixty-one years at the same shop, sound as a bell and spry as a kitten.—Ain't you, Tiff?'

'Wellzir,' said Tiffle, 'I creaks a little now in me joints, and I wouldn't be like to catch the eye of a gal lookin' for a bridal suite; but, as I often thinks, a feller is like a piece o' furniter. When he's real old, then he's a hantique, and more valuable nor ever.'

'Of course he is—of course!' cried his employer, fetching old Tiffle such a slap in the

chest that his value was in imminent danger of being reduced to zero. 'Bless us! What's this I see—young Sniggers?'

A scraggy boy, who had been standing behind a chair in an attempt to hide his knees and elbows (and he was *all* knees and elbows except for a shock of hair that stood straight up as if it never would and never could get over its surprise at being there), grinned from one ear to another.

'Sniggers,' said Mr Pressleswitch, 'come here.'

For answer the boy rested his elbows on the chair's back, and his chin on his hands, from which position of advantage he surveyed his master with humorous astonishment until, his elbows slipping, his jaw came into violent contact with the chair.

'Sniggers!' said Mr Pressleswitch as sternly as he could.

'I brung him,' said old Tiffle, shuffling forward. 'He was a-setting on a box all by hisself to-night. He hasn't got no home—only a bed in a attic. He's a—a forndling.'

Mr Pressleswitch took a pair of glasses from their case, and adjusting them on his nose, surveyed the lad as if he were some entirely new kind of creation.

'Tiff, my boy,' he cried, 'give me your hand! A foundling! Think of that—no home for the laddie whatever! Think of it, Tiff; no'—

At the very thought of such a prospect Mr Pressleswitch removed his glasses, and producing an enormous blue handkerchief, blew his nose as noisily as a trumpeter summoning a beleaguered garrison to arms, while the grin on young Sniggers's face grew and expanded until it seemed to go beyond his ears and make a complete circle of itself.

During this performance the pretty, brown-haired, black-eyed, dimpled daughter of the house took his cap from Demos and the coat from the Prince, blushing demurely the while (but taking good care that her downcast lashes did not hide her eyes altogether), and succeeded in driving a callow youth, who had expended a fabulous sum on a pink shirt and a large amount of brilliantine, to the very edge of insanity through jealousy. From somewhere a small boy appeared, who took up a position of vantage opposite the Prince, and inserting a thumb in his mouth, probably to stifle comment, gazed long and earnestly at the royal youth's handsome clothes.

'Well, Mrs P.?' queried the host.

'All ready, P.,' said his worthy spouse.

As a result of this cryptic incantation, the party invaded the next room, where they sat down to a merry and bountiful supper, doing more than justice to both the merriment and the viands. The daughter of the house flirted openly and outrageously with the Prince, who responded as well as his active duties with his

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knife and fork would permit; while the youth of the brilliantine and the pink shirt sank into an abyss of melancholy from which he did not emerge for the rest of the evening. Sniggers, whose face, as has been stated, bore a naturally astonished look, became so overcome with the procession of eatables that his eyes were enlarged to an unbelievable width; and as for his hair, it is a mystery that it did not come out, roots and all. But mere joviality was tempered by old Tiffle's sage philosophy, drawn from his contiguity with furniture; while Pressleswitch chuckled, and laughed, and talked without caring whether any one listened or not.

Only Mrs Pressleswitch was unable to shake off her feeling of maternal and wifely responsibility, frowning alternately at her husband, on general principles, and at her young son, who was tucking in such an enormous amount of food that one might have thought he had taken a vow to bring his life to a premature and spectacular conclusion on that very occasion.

'It is so exasperating,' said Mrs Pressleswitch during a pause in the noise. 'I expected my brother to-night. He is prominent in public affairs, and is probably detained making a speech.'

Mr Pressleswitch winked at Demos, and partially smothered a loud guffaw.

'P,' said his wife sternly, 'recollect yourself.'

'Hoy!' roared the shameless one; 'that's a good un.'

'Your health, madam,' said the Prince tactfully, raising his glass to their hostess.

With the greatest cordiality every one rose to do honour to the toast, which was somewhat marred by young Sniggers letting his ale 'go down the wrong way,' necessitating a course of thumping, which restored his breathing, but left his face looking as if he had just seen a dozen ghosts turning somersaults.

'My dear,' said the host as they sat down, 'we musn't forget—young Will, y'know.'

'Ah,' said old Tiffle, nodding his head; 'young Will, of course.'

The room became suddenly quiet, and the Prince looked wonderingly at the faces which had changed so quickly from gaiety to pensiveness.

'He would be sitting where you are if we had him now,' said the cabinetmaker, looking towards the Prince. 'A fine boy was Will—brimful of spirit, and a kinder boy to his old dad and mother never breathed, though I say it that shouldn't. I wouldn't like to think now, though, that we kept him back—would you, mother?'

'No, no,' said Mrs Pressleswitch softly. 'It wouldn't have been fair to Will.'

The cabinetmaker tapped the table with his fingers, and his face was touched with gentleness.

'Your son was a soldier, sir?' asked the Prince, his heart aching with the pain which he had lost for a little while.

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'A corporal he was,' said their host, 'and killed fighting for his country. I intended him to take over the shop when I moved on, but thank God there's this boy left, so Pressleswitch & Son will still be Pressleswitch & Son. But if there is another war—which Heaven forbid!—and the King wants my last boy, I'm ready, and he's ready.—Aren't you, son?'

The juvenile referred to had such an enormous quantity of pie in his mouth that he was forced to acquiesce by nodding several times, with an energy, however, which was far more convincing than mere words.

'Sir,' said the Prince, 'the nation will never forget the sacrifice of you and your wife.'

'Don't be too sure,' put in Mrs Pressleswitch, for whom the prospect of an argument was the best antidote to tears. 'Every day a lot of poor disabled fellows come to the shop asking for work, and if I didn't stop him, P. would have the place so full of one-legged soldiers that there would be no room for four-legged furniture. If the nation's got such a good memory, it's a pity it don't give more of the boys work, and not leave so much to people like my husband.'

'Now, now,' said that gentleman, 'it's little enough I can do by giving a few laddies a berth. If we have our health, plenty to eat, and a roof over our heads, do you think we want to make a lot of money with those poor fellows walking the streets hungry? Will was one of the boys, and in doing a little for them I feel as if I was doing something for him. But this isn't a cheerful subject for'—

'What about a song?' asked Miss Pressleswitch, looking archly across the table. A chorus of approval greeted this suggestion, and the Prince looked helplessly at his companion.

With a smile Demos rose from the table, and picking up his instrument, drew from its strings two or three chords of such haunting sweetness that they lingered on the air like the scent of flowers. The room grew strangely quiet, and all eyes were fixed on the strange figure with the corduroy trousers and the velvet jacket.

Resolving the chords into a plaintive minor theme, he commenced to sing:

'A young Prince stood in palace hall—

Sing a merry song of Yuletide;

Deep sorrow held his heart in thrall—

Sing a doleful song,

Sing a sad, sad song;

Listen to my song of Yuletide.

"What voice is heard this night?" he cried.

"The voice of pain," the wind replied;

"Wounds of Christ in a nation's pride"—

Hearken to my song of Yuletide.

'His royal robes in dust he cast—

O sing a brave song of Yuletide;

And through the palace portals passed—

O sing a good song,

Sing a brave, brave song;

Listen to my song of Yuletide.

"If to the throne I'm royal heir,
The nation's pain is mine to bear,
The nation's sorrow mine to share."
Sing a good brave song of Yuletide.'

When he had finished, and the last chord had hummed into silence, Demos slung his instrument over his shoulder and reached for his cap.

'It is late,' he said, looking at the Prince.

In spite of loud protest from every one, the Prince also rose, and after a hearty handshake all round they went downstairs, escorted by the cabinetmaker.

'I wish,' said that worthy, 'that the Prince could come and talk with us, like it sort of says in that song. He would see that there's labour *and* labour. He could note those fellows who do nothing but strike and hold everybody up for more money and less work; but he would find a lot of places like this shop, where men work like men and are treated as men. Whether he knows it or not, the Prince has more of that kind in the country than he thinks. We don't talk much, but we won't let the country go to the dogs either.'

'The Prince will be happy to know that,' said Demos; 'in fact, he knows it now. There is a great temptation these days to believe that the only people with voices are those who shout. And now, my friend, good-night, and a thousand thanks.'

'A thousand thanks,' echoed the Prince.

With mutual good wishes they left the good man, and walked briskly away.

VIII.

Suddenly the Prince's breath was almost taken away. There was the roar of rushing wind, and his eyes were stung with snowflakes.

He felt the arm of Demos about his waist; he heard him shout, 'To the palace!' and next moment they were hurtling through the air at a terrific pace. He tried to cry out, but the rush of wind made his voice inaudible. Clinging to his guide, he closed his eyes, and . . .

He was standing in the great gallery, and Demos was lounging before the fireplace.

'My chariot of snowflakes, sire,' said Demos, 'drawn by the wind.'

The Prince said nothing. He could think of nothing to say.

Demos laughed softly to himself, and stretched his arms with a yawn. 'Well?' he said.

The Prince looked wonderingly about. The portraits had not changed; the king with the ruffle and the king with the legs were as royally complacent as before. 'It is all like a dream,' he said.

Demos made no comment, but as he looked across the room the light of the fireplace revealed his face as more tired and less youthful than when he had first found his way into the great gallery.

'Sire,' he said, 'let neither of us forget to-night.'

The Prince looked up quickly. 'You are not going to leave me?' he said.

'I must,' answered Demos. 'Great troubles beset this land, and I must struggle against those who would thwart me, and those too blind to see me when I come before them. There is no rest for Demos.'

'But stay with me,' cried the Prince impetuously. 'There is so much we could do together. I want to take real flowers to that girl, and send her to the country. I want to save that boy from death in the opium-den. Without you, Demos, I cannot find them.'

'You are right, sire,' answered the minstrel; 'without me you are lost. But though I may never again appear before you as I am, I shall be near you always.'

The Prince clasped his hands together, and there was a great yearning in his voice. 'How,' he cried—'how shall I know you?'

Demos gazed earnestly at the Prince, and a look of infinite tenderness softened his features. 'I have no power of my own,' he said thoughtfully, 'except as it is expressed by men. My anger, my aspirations, my sympathy—all these lie mute and inexpressive until some one, greater than his fellows, gives them life. I search the day and haunt the night for him who will speak for me. I rob men of their sleep and set their blood on fire. I penetrate the secret places of their souls, crying out always and for ever, "Is there no one will speak for Demos?"'

The Prince leaned forward, and his eyes shone with a great resolution. 'Tell me,' he cried, 'who of us can speak for you?'

Demos unslung the instrument from his shoulder and fingered it idly. 'The people are struggling upwards—always upwards,' he said, 'and whenever a man helps them by some great thought or deed, he speaks for Demos; just as whoever sows distrust between nations, or lessens Man's belief in Man, leaves Demos dumb and powerless. Live for the people, sire. . . . Already you have been my spokesman. . . . Lead on through the years, and let your voice be mine. And now, my friend, my Prince' . . .

With a strange, pensive smile, he softly touched his instrument with his fingers.

Then—he was gone.

Only the last few notes trembled on the air.

The Prince rushed to the window. 'Demos!' he cried. 'Demos!'

From a long way off came the sound of the now familiar voice, borne on the wings of the wind:

'Listen, listen, listen, listen;
Glisten, glisten, glisten, glisten.'

'Demos!' cried the Prince.

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TAMASHA: AN ECHO OF '57.

By A. M. PAULIN.

I.

MRS CARLTON stood in the doorway drawing on her white gloves. Her usually bright face wore a troubled look. A smart buggy, piled high with jasmine and roses, stood waiting for her in the sunshine without the deep veranda, the somnolent native groom who held the pony typifying the immemorial patience of the Orient as he rebuked the insect world with a yak's tail. The pony, on the other hand, being of English extraction, stamped with impatience.

'My dear,' said Mrs Carlton, as she glanced into the drawing-room, 'you are sure you don't mind my leaving you? It is most unfortunate your having this headache to-day. Of course, if you would rather not be left alone, I might ask Millie Ralston to finish the decorations.'

The girl on the couch gave a little laugh.

'Not leave me alone? What nonsense! Why, it's just a quiet afternoon I really want. Off you go, Peggy, and don't worry your dear head on my account.'

Mrs Carlton uttered a quick little sigh of relief, but still she hesitated.

'You see, dear, there's such a lot to do. The ballroom's so big, and I have the flowers for the table with me. I'm so anxious it should look its best for to-night's dinner, and you can help to finish the ballroom to-morrow. Millie will give me tiffin, and I shall be back for tea if I can; but don't wait for me. And you can order the dogcart later if you feel up to it. You can manage the little mare?' she asked anxiously. 'Very well, dear. *Au revoir*, and I hope you won't be bored.'

Waving her hand in farewell, Mrs Carlton hastened out to the buggy. A moment later her anxious face reappeared between the muslin curtains.

'My dear, I should go and lie down if I were you—in your own room, I mean. And take one of the dogs with you for company. And don't let the servants disturb you. They know their work, and even if they are sometimes a trifle noisy'—

She broke off abruptly and uttered a little nervous laugh as she stooped to pick up her parasol, which had fallen to the ground. There was not a speck of dust upon the glossy silk, but she shook it with vigour, her restless glance darting about the room as she did so.

'Now, darling, don't forget. Go to your room and have a good sound sleep. I shall tell ayah not to disturb you till you call, 1920.]

and the twins have orders to remain in the nursery.'

The girl on the couch stirred a little restlessly. Her head ached abominably, and she wished Peggy would stop chattering and be off to her duties. It was an effort to respond even with a smile to her sister's kindly anxiety for her comfort.

'It's all right, Peggy, my dear. Don't hurry back on my account. I'll sleep this headache off and be my own bright self again by the time you have finished. Run away now, or your flowers will all be withered.'

The invalid sank back and closed her eyes, and Mrs Carlton, with a last uneasy look about the room, slowly withdrew. A moment later the brisk clap of the pony's heels proclaimed that this time she was really gone.

Molly Carthew heaved a little sigh of relief. She had reached Sherabad in the early hours of the morning, after a singularly depressing journey in an overcrowded train. This was her first visit to her sister in Sherabad, and she resented it as a misfortune that her arrival should coincide with one of those occasional social gatherings known as 'meets,' a brief and festive season of feverish activity, of startling gowns, and the renewal of old acquaintance. For Molly was not in the mood for gaiety. She had her own good cause for sadness. To her it seemed overwhelming, and there is little doubt that it contributed in no small measure to the depressing effect of her journey.

The servants had gone to their midday rest, and she had the big, quiet house to herself. Sitting up with an effort that sent a stab of agonising pain across her forehead, she tossed the silk cushions into place, lay down again, and in a moment was fast asleep.

II.

Into her sleeping brain stole the memory of something Peggy had said. 'Do not let the servants disturb you. They know their work, and even if they are a trifle noisy'—

She turned restlessly upon the sofa, her pretty brows drawn into a frown of annoyance. Some one was setting the table in the adjoining room with a most unnecessary amount of clatter. Her headache was gone, but she felt dull and heavy, and the clink of silver and the clatter of china bade fair to banish sleep altogether. With an effort she roused herself to call a peremptory order.

For an instant there was silence. Then the clatter of dishes began again more loudly than

before, and Molly groaned. With a mighty effort she sat up, put her feet to the ground, and approached the curtained archway that screened the smaller dining-room. As her hand touched the curtain there was a sound as of a falling plate breaking in shivers upon the cement floor.

In spite of her annoyance a little malicious smile dawned in Molly's eyes.

'Poor Peggy!' she murmured, and tugged aside the curtain.

The room was empty!

Bewildered, she stared about her. A clean white cloth covered the dining-table; the silver shone resplendent upon the sideboard and the dinner-wagon; the teacups hung in orderly rows—not a knife or a spoon, not a plate, was out of place. She looked at the floor, but there were no scattered bits of china to tell the tale of a recent mishap.

Molly stood a moment, her eyes fixed on the glass door of the pantry at the other side of the room. She almost fancied that the shadowy outlines of a figure had moved across the frosted panes, and was minded to confront the culprit sure to be in hiding in the dark little recess. But a violent throbbing in her temples decided otherwise. Dropping the curtain, she re-entered the drawing-room, then hesitated. The room felt chilly. Her vitality was lowered by two hours of sleep, and her blood ran sluggishly. She shivered, and the glow of colour seen through the bead chicks tempting her, she picked up her cushions and turned to go out on the veranda, where a long chair set amongst palms offered a snug retreat. As she did so something made her swing sharply round—some sudden consciousness that she was no longer alone in the room.

But there was no one there. Yet Molly was convinced that but a moment before a withered, bearded face had stared out at her from between the curtains dividing the two rooms. How she had gained this impression she could not have told, for the heavy folds of the stuff curtains hung in their usual severe, motionless lines. Not a quiver disturbed them.

Molly had a steady nerve, but for a moment it was shaken. Then she remembered that this was India, the land of silent-footed servants and furtive ways. She had read somewhere that the few white men in India were subjected to a constant espionage by their own households, and the thought brought a vague sense of comfort, though, again, it would have puzzled Molly to say why.

In the sunny veranda sleep awaited her, and when she wakened some time later it was to find a grave-faced, white-bearded *kitmatghar* at her elbow bearing a tea-tray, while by her side a silver kettle bubbled happily over the spirit-lamp.

As she poured the boiling water over the tea-leaves Molly glanced curiously at the servant,

who still hovered about her. Was this the man who had peered at her round the *portière*? Surely not. This gray-bearded, venerable ancient who moved about his duties with a grave dignity would never be guilty of such furtive behaviour.

Mrs Carlton returned while Molly was still trifling over her tea. In spite of a nebulous decision to confide in her sister, Molly very sensibly preferred to keep her delusions to herself for the time being, and held her peace. She may have been assisted in this by the fact that Peggy began to talk the moment the buggy came to a halt, and by her volubility contributed largely to prevent the creation of a requisite 'atmosphere.' The advent, a little later, of Jim Carlton himself finally dispelled any lingering doubts which may have remained with her. Carlton was bluff and hearty, and of pervading sanity, and although his figure was no longer that of an athlete, it was difficult to escape the conviction that inflated leather had once bulked largely on his mental horizon.

The club dinner, and the concert which followed, proved a more welcome distraction than Molly had expected, and she went to bed that night healthily tired, and slept as soon as her head touched the pillow. Only once during the night did she stir and waken sufficiently to be aware of sounds in the adjoining dining-room, but Peggy had warned her that Jim might have to put in an hour or two at his office, and not to be alarmed if she heard him stirring at an unusual hour. So she dropped off to sleep again, and the sun was high in the heavens and her morning tea quite cold when she was aroused by the boisterous and jammy caresses of her blue-eyed nephews.

III.

Molly had been lying with her hands locked under a mass of raven dark tresses that overflowed her pillow, her eyelids closed, and her mind in the borderland of elusive sleep, when something sticky made itself felt upon her cheek, and the lisping accents of George, the elder of the twins by about a quarter of an hour, invited his aunt to arise and visit their grave.

Molly opened her eyes to be certain she was not dreaming still, and turned her head upon the pillow. 'What did you say, George?'

'Our grave, you know,' he repeated with solemn emphasis. 'The one in the compound where the angel-boy lives. To-day is his birthday, and Tim and me have decorated it with flowers. Course, Juman helped.'

'Juman, you know,' supplemented Tim—'he's our own *chup'assi*—fightfully old, hundreds and hundreds of years. Says he feels as if he'd never be dead. It must be nice to feel like that. All same, says he's going to die with his beautiful red coat on. He's timendously nice, and all winkled and funny.'

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'Talks a lot of stories about the angel-boy, Aunt Molly.' George was solemn in all his utterances. 'Knew him when he used to play like us, an' now he's playin' in heaven.'

'Yes,' said Tim, 'an' singin' hymns like anyfin'g.' He climbed on the bed and sat astride his aunt. 'Uncle Billy says he wouldn't miss it for anything.'

'What did you say, Tim?'

Molly sat up suddenly and caught the imp by his arms.

'You hurtin' me!' cried Tim, looking very frightened. He had never seen his aunt look like that, with her eyes so wide open and eager, her lips apart, and her cheeks aflame.

'You said Uncle Billy, Tim. Do you mean Captain Freeland? When did he say that?'

Tim shook himself free. His wondering eyes were still fixed on his aunt's face. 'He's in there, lyin' in bed with a pipe—not a nice new pipe. Worse than father's. He came by the mo'ning train same as you day before, and he knows a little boy who wouldn't eat his toast, an' he fell frough a hole in his pocket an' got lost.'

'And no one never found him again,' said George. 'Uncle Billy said to cut along and ask you for a hairpin to clean his pipe, an' you can have it back again if you want, and that when he's our real uncle he won't never need to have a dirty pipe, and he won't feel like nothing on earth no more.'

'Did he say that?'

But Molly needed no assurance of this, for the wording was characteristic.

'Go on, Tim. What more did he say?'

'Fed up with life in gen'ral, and to dig you out, an' we'd make a mo'ning of it.'

Molly lay thinking for some time after the boys had departed with the required hairpin. Peggy had not told her that Captain Freeland was expected, and she saw the hand, if not the cloven-hoof, of her brother-in-law very plainly in this, for Carlton was a simple soul who loved nothing so well as to prepare little surprises for his friends. And it may be said of him that at least his intentions were good.

Presently Tim reappeared in the doorway.

'I don't want the hairpin back, Tim, if that's what you're after.'

'Uncle Billy says he's treasurin' that hairpin. He's not givin' it back. Wants to know if you're up yet. He's in his baf whistlin'. Shall I call your baf?'

When Molly appeared on the veranda, Captain Freeland, with the twins behind him, was stalking a sparrow with a pinch of salt. He straightened up at once.

'Good-morning, Miss Carthew. This is indeed a surprise!'

'Good-morning, Billy. Don't talk nonsense.'

'Your word is law, Molly. I've come four hundred miles for no other purpose than to obey you. Shall we start with the vegetables?'

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'If you like. And do try to be sensible. You've no idea how quick the twins are.'

'Haven't I? They've been sitting on my chest since six o'clock. They're on my side. They are both firm supporters of the cause.'

IV.

They began to make a morning of it. They started with the vegetable-garden, the cow-house, the stables, and the well, and ended at a solitary grave under some low palms just beyond the tennis-courts. It was a carefully tended spot, and to-day the corroded old railing was festooned with strings of marigolds, and red chillies, and jasmine; and banana-plants were tied like mighty plumes at the corners, their fresh green fronds meeting high over the flat stone in a shady canopy.

George ventured the information that Juman had gone to a great deal of trouble over these primitive decorations.

'Juman says all the little boys and girls who comes to this bungalow dec'rates it, because the angel-boy he like it, and to-night we'll light tiny, weenie *chiraghs* and make *tamasha*. And the little boy he'll p'raps come back.'

'Only for a little bit,' explained Tim; 'Juman says he like it too well where he is. Same time, he's liking this sort of *tamasha*. It's diffunt.'

And indeed the little earthenware saucers with their wicks soaked in coconut-oil were already in place for the *tamasha*.

'Can you read what is on the stone?' Molly asked.

Captain Freeland leaned over the railing and peered at the worn inscription. 'It seems to be very badly weathered. From where we are I can only make out "Elizabeth" and "her son." The date seems to be 1857. That is significant.'

He turned and surveyed the distant bungalow intently, and after a pause remarked casually, as though to cover his thoughts, 'It wants doing up.'

'Daddy,' said Tim, looking very important with his hands in his pockets, 'says it wants swopping.'

Freeland laughed and stretched a finger towards the pillared veranda, where an old lady swathed in flowing white raiment was gesticulating wildly.

'Off you go, nippers,' he commanded. 'Ayah looks very excited about something. The first to reach that veranda cleans my pipe with a feather. One, two, three, off!'

Molly's eyes were fixed on the supple figure of her old playmate as he watched the children scurrying over the lawn. The race was a dead-heat. As they fell into the old ayah's arms together the young man turned to his companion.

'Molly,' he said severely, 'I have travelled four hundred miles to have it out with you.'

Molly made no reply to this challenge. Her

head was slightly bowed to afford the speaker an uninterrupted view of the top of her sun-hat.

'Four hundred miles, Molly. Think of that. I also invite you to glance at your past. You have degenerated.'

The girl glanced up sharply. 'Have I a past?' she asked. 'And have I degenerated?'

'I remember you as a girl of character—one who could make up her mind quickly and with decision, and stick to it. When I first proposed to you, you were no bigger than Tim, and you accepted me with enthusiasm. I don't blame you, Molly. I was rather a fine fellow then, with an Eton collar and a knife of my own, and I had just stood you an ice. That, however, was a mere boy-and-girl affair compared with what followed. I need scarcely remind you of the top of a rolling wain of hay. Hardly had my heart been laid quivering at your feet than you had your head out of the litter calling on Hornby, who was driving the cart, to bear witness to our betrothal. Had I not caught you by the ankles you would have been over.'

'I shouldn't. I was perfectly safe.'

'Thereafter our correspondence was marked on my side by devotion, on yours by gossiping irrelevance. Such affection as you displayed was merely sisterly. Years passed, and then you broke to me the fact that you had put up your hair. My experience did not run to the fact that that is synonymous with putting up the price.'

With a grim smile the speaker observed an unmistakable tremor in the sun-hat.

'I came to realise the fact gradually. But there is no price I am not prepared to pay.'

'And yet,' observed the girl quietly, 'you have not written to me for nine weeks!'

'To be precise, nine weeks and three days. You know why. You would have none of me.'

Molly looked up nervously. 'Billy, you know that is not true.'

'Then why on earth'—

'I've been perfectly miserable. You meant to make me miserable. I think you have treated me abominably.'

'I'm a plain soldier, my dear, and not very good at reading between lines. But it struck me that diplomacy had failed, and that it was time to fetch out the guns. I still believe I am right.'

Captain Freeland's hand had been fumbling in his pocket for some minutes. He now withdrew it and took possession of Molly's hand. 'Molly,' he said, as he slipped a glittering hoop over the third finger, 'there goes with this a devotion as deep and enduring as that of the old servant who lights these little lamps to the memory of a child he loved.'

Molly turned with shining eyes and cheeks aflame, and taking a carnation from her breast, laid it on the rusty old railing. Captain Freeland looked away.

'Come along, dear, and we'll tell the children,' he said. 'We can wait in the nursery till they return from their walk.'

v.

The twins spent the day in publishing the marked improvement in Freeland's avuncular status, but beyond this fact Molly's ideas are somewhat confused. In a haze of happiness which left room for few other considerations, she assisted Peggy with the finishing touches to her elaborate decorations, and the ball which followed on a riotous little dinner-party was a fitting conclusion to a wonderful day. But, like the rest of the day, it was past and gone in a flash of colour before it had well begun. Molly awoke as from a dream, to find Captain Freeland tucking the rugs about her as he plucked the reins from their clip on the dashboard, while Peggy threatened to overtake them in the car if they did not hurry.

But there was little need to urge them, for the pony was in no mood for dalliance, and Captain Freeland had his hands sufficiently full. She was a spirited little mare, and the night was frosty. Before many minutes she had spun through the wide gateway and into a long, shadowy drive where the scent of tuberose and jasmine hung sickly sweet. Here the waves of perfume seemed to rouse Molly. She had been lying back almost in a trance, dazed, stupefied with happiness, like a bee lost in a garden of wonderful flowers. She was now aware of a curious impression. It was as though time had stood still and she were looking backward down the years. No longer was this a strange, new place. She seemed to have known it all her life, and the hush that echoed the clap of the pony's feet thrilled her, and the very echoes rang familiar. Familiar also was the white façade of the house, swimming in moonlight through the trees, and the cluster of clear yellow stars burning in the still air by the palms, where the little *chiraghs* strove bravely to cast a beam in an unknown world.

And then an unaccountable fear assailed her. Had they come too late? She could not have said why the question leapt to her brain, or why her fingers closed convulsively on her companion's arm as the dogcart rattled under the porch and drew up. But she knew—it flashed upon her that she certainly knew—that something was wrong.

As Captain Freeland lifted Molly down he felt her grow suddenly still in his arms. He glanced down at her in surprise. Her listening face was turned towards the darkened room to the right of them. A cheery clatter of dishes came to them from the half-open door of the dining-room.

Captain Freeland stared. 'Queer hour to be working with china,' he commented. 'Going picnicking to-morrow?'

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Molly shook her head. For a moment she could not speak. She was afraid—horribly and unreasoningly afraid. It seemed to her that something terrible was about to take place, something it was out of her power to prevent, something connected with that ugly clatter of china going on in the dining-room.

'Cold, little woman?' Captain Freeland drew the thick coat closer about her. 'Wait a minute and I'll see if that noisy fellow can't produce something to warm us up.'

The next moment he was striding across the matting. Molly strove to cry out, to stop him, but she could not. His hand was on the door, when the sounds within stopped. There came the noise of a sharp crash, and the splintering of broken china.

With a cry that reached through the long veranda Molly sprang past him and darted into the room. Captain Freeland, thoroughly startled, was in time to see her run round the table, stumble over a footstool, and fall forward, her hands thrown out as though in an effort to reach some one or something.

He bent and lifted her carefully. She was a slight girl, but she lay in his arms a dead-weight, and he saw that she had fainted.

'Bearer!'

The shout rang through the building, but there was no response. Freeland glanced angrily round. Odd! He could have sworn the man was there, at his elbow, that very instant. Again he shouted.

'Huzo-o-or!'

The voice of the coachman answered him from the porch. Captain Freeland grunted. Let him get Molly to a couch and he would soon have this extraordinary household 'showing a leg.'

He carried his burden out into the veranda, and placed her gently in a long chair, set a cushion under her head, and hurried back to the dining-room in search of brandy. A decanter and glasses stood ready upon the dinner-wagon. Pouring out a stiff peg, he turned back with it to the door, when for the first time it struck him as odd that there was no sign anywhere of their nocturnal disturber. The room wore its usual air of stiff tidiness. Save for an overturned chair, not a piece of furniture was out of place. But the thought of Molly filled Captain Freeland's mind to the exclusion of all else.

He found her lying back as he had left her, her face ashen, her eyes half-closed. Stooping, he slipped a hand under her ruffled hair and forced a drop or two of brandy between her lips. A moment later her eyelids flickered, and he saw the colour steal back to her white cheeks. Yet another moment and she heaved a great sigh and sat up, her eyes wide open, and turned on him with an expression half of consternation, half of amaze.

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'What is the matter?' she asked, seeing the brandy in his hand and the anxious look in his eyes. 'Oh!'

With a sudden, startled cry she held out her hands. The fingers of the long white gloves were wet and stained with blood.

'My darling, you're hurt!' Captain Freeland caught the shuddering girl in his arms and held her comfortingly close. Gently he drew off the long gloves and dropped them out of sight under the chair. Both looked down in surprise at the pretty round arms and dainty fingers thus revealed—no mark marred their whiteness. To all appearance the girl was unhurt. Freeland took up the glass and persuaded her to take a long sip of the brandy, and presently the shuddering ceased and she began to cry, but quietly, and her convulsive hold on him gradually lessened.

VI.

It was not till her sobs ceased altogether and she lay still in his arms that the perplexed soldier let his curiosity get the better of him.

'But what happened, sweetheart? What in the name of moonshine set you off like a squib and'—— He stopped, for the shuddering had begun again. 'All right, dear; don't worry about it now.'

But Molly was herself again, though a very shaken self. She sat up and pushed the hair from a white face in which the eyes shone like great lamps. 'Bill,' she said in a tense whisper, 'I don't know what made me do it—rush into the room, I mean. It was just a feeling, a knowledge, that there was something there—some one wanting help terribly. My dear, it was awful—she was in such desperate need. I had to go. I don't know—I can't tell—but something awful was happening—had happened. I was too late.'

She clutched him feverishly, and her voice fell lower.

'Bill, did you see anything?'

'Great Scott, Molly! You haven't fever, have you? Your hands are like coals. See anything? Of course I didn't see anything. There wasn't anything to see. Not so much as a teacup on the table.'

He laughed uneasily, for there was something uncommonly queer about that.

'Bill, you are sure you saw nothing?'

'Nothing whatever. Come, my dear, be sensible. Here's the car coming up the drive.'

'Oh, Bill, you must have seen something!' Molly's voice rose in almost a wail. 'Just before I fell I trod on a broken plate. I felt it go scrunch under my foot.'

'Nonsense, my dear girl.'

Captain Freeland rose to greet the Carltons as they alighted. He made a strong effort to snatch back his usual careless manner, and it may be

that the carelessness was a trifle overdone, for Carlton glanced at him sharply, and Peggy, after a quick look up and down the deserted veranda, hurried towards the girl seated in the shadows by the drawing-room door.

'Molly, my dear, what is wrong? Has anything happened?'

For Molly had turned her white, strained face to her sister. Peggy sat down suddenly on the arm of Molly's chair, and their eyes met in a long stare.

'Oh, Molly, what have you seen?'

Molly sat up and caught her sister's shaking hands. 'You know? You have felt it too? Peggy, what is it? Oh, it was awful.'

Mrs Carlton stroked the girl's bowed head. Molly was trembling, and her face was hidden in the elder woman's dress.

'Poor old darling,' Peggy murmured consolingly. 'I didn't say anything to you, for I hoped you would not notice.'

Molly raised her white face. 'But what is it? Something awful happened in there to-night.' She nodded towards the dining-room door. 'Peggy, what was it?'

'My dear, I don't know. I have never really seen anything. Not really *seen*. Tell me what happened. I'm dying to know.'

Molly told her briefly, and Mrs Carlton nodded her head.

'Yes,' she said, 'it's just like that, but one sees nothing—at least I never have, and I have heard it many times. And twice—only twice—I have experienced that awful dread. The first time it nearly killed me. I was afraid to tell Jim. He thinks it's all imagination, but—well, you can't get a servant to sleep in the veranda. There is no need for a watchman here, even if you could get one to come. But let us move into the drawing-room. It's cold here, and I see Bill has coaxed the fire into a blaze.'

They wheeled a sofa towards the fire, and sat down in the genial warmth. Captain Freeland was squatting on the fender-stool, absently poking at the glowing coals; and presently Carlton came in carrying a silver tray with glasses and a decanter. He set down the tray on a small table and surveyed the silent company. As he looked from one to another a frown gathered on his somewhat anxious face.

'What is the matter with you all?' he asked. 'You look as if you had been seeing ghosts. Molly, you are as white as a sheet; and you, Bill, my friend, would be none the worse of a peg.'

There was silence for the better part of a minute while the three people addressed looked at one another a little guiltily. No one appeared anxious to begin what, in the presence of this philistine, promised to be rather a difficult explanation. At last Peggy found her voice.

'Jim!'

She hesitated as her husband plunged his

hands in his pockets and came nearer, regarding her with amused suspicion.

'Have they been breaking the china again?' he asked.

'Yes, they have.' His wife glared defiance at him.

His face betrayed the greatest astonishment as he looked from one to another, and asked, 'Who heard the fellow this time?'

'I, for one.' Captain Freeland's demeanour was inclined to truculence, a perfectly natural attitude for a champion with nothing better to rely on than the evidence of his own senses. 'And so did Molly.'

'Ah, then we have evidence at last,' remarked the sceptic soberly. 'Did you *see* anything?'

'You'd better ask Molly. All I saw was the blood on her gloves.'

Carlton, pulling forward a chair, subsided massively directly in front of the girl. 'Now, Molly,' he said impressively, 'tell us all about it. What did you see? And please remember that hearsay is not evidence.'

VII.

Molly leaned forward and described the adventure simply. Her story was corroborated with approving nods from Captain Freeland, and Peggy's look of triumphant vindication did not escape her husband's notice. How often had she told him just such a tale? Had the clattering not gone on in his very presence?

'I know, Peggy. I know,' he said in answer to the look as the story came to an end. 'My coarse clay is outside the pale. These séances are wasted on me. But you will observe that nobody seems to have seen anything so far.'

'What about the gloves?' asked Freeland.

'Then we have something tangible, after all! Produce them, Bill. Produce them.'

Captain Freeland rose and walked out to the veranda. A moment later he returned and held out the long gloves in view of every one.

'Well?' asked the sceptic, with a sly glance towards his wife.

Molly's eyes grew round as they searched in vain for the crimson stains.

'Why,' she cried, 'they're gone!'

Captain Freeland's hand was trembling, and his mouth was as wide open as Molly's eyes.

He dropped the gloves one after another upon the fender-stool.

'Well, I'm'—he began, as Carlton lay back shaking with quiet laughter.

This was too much for Peggy. She jumped up and stamped an angry little slipper. What annoyed her as much as anything was the fact that Bill Freeland was visibly weakening. Indeed, he was heard to murmur something suspiciously like 'rational explanation.'

'Surely, Bill,' she exclaimed with withering contempt, 'you don't doubt the evidence of even *your* senses?'

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Captain Freeland felt that he was in danger of becoming involved in a family dispute. He would have preferred to take up the conventional attitude towards that which is beyond the ambit of common experience, but felt it would be unchivalrous to leave Molly to fight it out by herself.

'N-no,' he stammered. 'Oh no. Certainly not. I heard 'em, right enough.'

He had picked up the gloves once again, and was running them through his fingers.

'And we saw the blood distinctly. Couldn't both be mistaken, could we?'

Silence followed the question. Whatever Carlton may have thought about it, he refrained from comment—an unsportsmanlike attitude which Freeland resented.

'Hang it all,' he exclaimed angrily, 'it was wet!'

Carlton rose with an overdone stage shiver, tiptoed across the room, and peered nervously under a couch. He looked up in time to avoid a well-directed sofa-cushion, and drew himself up with dignity.

'I can't argue against personal violence,' he declared. 'Not a man of my figure. When young people begin to get disorderly, it's high time they were in bed.—Peggy, that imaginative girl had better sleep with you to-night.—Bill, I'm going to smoke a last cigarette before turning in. It's a shame to leave a fire like that.'

VIII.

As soon as the men were alone Carlton's demeanour underwent a change. He stood with his back to the fire and looked down gravely on Freeland, who sat huddled in an easy-chair, filling his pipe.

'Bill, I'm going to tell you a story.'

Struck by the serious note in his friend's voice, Freeland glanced up expectantly.

'I had rather discuss'—he began, but Carlton stopped him.

'All in good time, Bill. Let me tell you the story first.'

He selected a cigarette from his case, lighted it, and threw the match into the fire. Thereafter he seated himself in an easy-chair and leant forward, gazing abstractedly into the fire as he smoked and talked.

'In the year 1857,' he began thoughtfully and with great deliberation, 'there dwelt in this house an Englishman with his young wife and a little boy. He was their only son, and to-day happens to be that little fellow's birthday. Of the man himself I know nothing, but I like to think of the wife as beautiful. She was certainly a woman of courage, who saw to it that her husband's resolution never faltered; who kept bright and staid, with a song upon her lips, the keen-edged sabre which he—Heaven have mercy on him—shrank from touching. For he
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had run out of powder and shot, like the rest of this little station, and had no means of procuring any.

'News did not travel fast then—even bad news—and though it was known that the country was up, that the great mutiny was an accomplished fact, the extent of the danger, together with its probable direction, could be gauged only by bazaar rumours filtering through one's servants. These became daily more disquieting, but it was not, of course, safe to allow for exaggeration, and this little station, isolated by nature and cut off on every side by murdering hordes, knowing not at what hour of the night death might leap out on them—a cruel, hideous death at the best—lived on with sinking hearts, looking for a sign. We still count on a warning, you know, but the difficulty is to recognise it when it comes. This woman, Bill, left little to chance. She, along with a few others of her kind, provided for the worst. Trusting not in warnings, they made their husbands promise and swear terrible things on their prayer-books. As a consequence she lies in that grave out there along with her son.'

The speaker paused for an instant, and then resumed.

'Try if you can to picture the feelings of those men, the thoughts that made cowards of them in the grim night-watches—and we may depend upon it there were sleepless nights, and to spare. The husband—he was a planter, who had begun life on the sea—used to hang over the boy's cot for hours at a time when he thought every one else asleep. But Juman, the *chaprassi*, was watching.'

'Do you mean'—

'Yes, the old chap with the red coat tricked out with gold braid. He must have been a comparatively young man then. He told me the story one day when I displayed a particular interest in the grave. It was after Peggy had begun to hear the breaking dishes that I, noticing that these experiences coincided more or less with the decorating of the grave, threatened to turn the fellow out of the compound. I expected him to be either scared or angry, but he was neither. He simply told me the story, and then asked me if I believed that he could possibly have anything to do with such an extraordinary manifestation. From the manner of his telling I gathered he had little sympathy or respect for the father. He had been the child's own servant, and must have had some good reason for his devotion, for he has never abandoned the compound; and every Christmas, and at three other dates in the year—birthdays and the night of the tragedy—he adorns the grave as you have seen, and sleeps, or rather lies, upon the stone. For I have no doubt it is some form of vigil.'

'I suppose,' remarked Freeland, looking up, 'that every native is a possible devotee.'

'Oh, I dare say. It is a pity their devotion,

whatever form it takes, is almost certainly a tribute to false gods. This man is probably expiating some sin, or implementing some solemn vow. He may have taken it rashly, in a hasty moment; but there it is. He has sworn before his gods, and what is a life's discomfort to an eternity of degradation?

'Well, it happened. A few got away to perish unheard of, others to turn up leagues away after incredible privation. They got their warning all right, but it was shorter than they had counted on; and when the mob—not the mutineers, but the dregs of the bazaar—broke into this compound, the wife was on her knees in that room, packing a small tiffin-basket by the light of a hurricane-lamp. This basket had been long in readiness for a hurried departure, but there were finishing touches to be added. The boy was beside her, a curly-headed, blue-eyed little fellow of six, laughing and getting in the way. It was all a splendid picnic to him, poor little mite.

'Behind his wife, by the table, stood the husband, his sabre strapped at his hip, and he was handing down a plate when the doors were suddenly burst open, and the rioters, who had crept to the house unheard, poured in. Without a moment's hesitation he flung down the plate. His wife looked up in alarm, and before the splinters of china had done spinning, the sabre was playing in the lamplight, and the first chapter of that night's work had been written.

'The man had kept his promise, and now he wreaked his vengeance. The old servant tells me he drank blood that night, and I do not doubt it must have been a very complete vengeance indeed. But the bitterest part was to follow, for the rabble had no stomach for that sailor's style of fighting, and those whom he failed to corner pressed on to easier conquest. How was he, poor devil, to know that had he fought from the first all would have been well? He could not possibly know that the mutineers, having other work in hand, had passed on. This bungalow, you see, is rather out of the station.

'That is the story. As for your ghosts, or whatever you choose to call them, why try to account for what by its nature is unaccountable? You can theorise to your heart's content, but you won't prove anything either to your own satisfaction or anybody else's. I've never heard them myself, but I'm not complaining. They seem to be at their best about Christmas and those other dates I mentioned, and the white-haired old *dirzie* who sits on the veranda and stands between Peggy and death from inanition tells me that has always been the case. We all know the stock explanations—the dominating, brooding intelligence that affects certain types of mind and not others, and I fancy that is the nearest we shall ever get to it. At any rate,

Bill, it's good enough for me. You had Molly's influence against you, as well as that other.'

IX.

Freeland did not reply, but knocking the ashes from his pipe, strolled to the door and opened it. He looked up at the clear, starry heavens, but that was not what he had come to seek. What he desired to see was the little yellow lights 'making *tamasha*' on the lonely grave by the palm-trees, and it was with a curious feeling of disappointment that he found all the lights out except one, and that one burning low.

'After all,' he observed, closing and locking the door, 'it is difficult not to bother. One can't get away from the fact that we both saw the blood on those gloves.'

'A shadow, Bill. A shadow. You were ready to imagine anything.'

'Well, perhaps. I'd prefer to believe it was a shadow. But, as I said, it's difficult not to worry about it, especially now that Molly knows so much.'

'Nonsense!' said the other, rising and throwing his cigarette into the fire. 'Peggy knows as much, but I have not thought it necessary to tell her the story. If she thought that pitiful business was being re-enacted in there at stated intervals, she'd go out of her mind. But come along. We'll have other things to think of in the morning.'

In this, however, he was mistaken. An old bearer crept into Carlton's room at a very early hour of the morning and roused him, and when Freeland opened his eyes an hour or two later, it was to see Carlton sitting on the side of his bed with a cup of tea in his hand. His face was unwontedly grave.

'I was just making up my mind to rouse you, Bill. I must talk to some one. I'm terribly shaken.'

Freeland laid his hand on Carlton's arm.

'No, Bill, it's nothing you can help me with. I've received a shock, and I want some one to help me to think. You remember that story I was telling you last night? Well, I have just seen the end of it.'

He sipped his tea thoughtfully and went on. 'This morning the bearer called me up very early to tell me that the old *chaprassi* was dead. I found the old fellow lying on the gravestone within the railings, wrapped up in his blanket. His head rested on his turban, and he was wearing his red coat, the badge of his servitude.

'As it would never do for the children to find him there, the bearer and I carried him to his quarter—there was nobody about to see—and laid him on the ground, for he possessed no bed of any sort. It was an ordinary servant's quarter, scrupulously clean, with a little courtyard enclosed by grass matting to give it some sort of privacy. A little to one side was a

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chula, a cooking-place made of bricks covered with mud, where he prepared his food.'

'Nothing unusual in that, is there?' Freeland asked.

'No; nothing. The poorest of our three hundred million can command as much. The entire furnishing of the place consisted in one or two cocoa and biscuit tins containing condiments and rice, a few cooking-utensils of brass, and a longish dealwood box fastened by a hasp and staple.

'I was about to turn away, when the bearer suggested I might glance through the old man's personal belongings, as he was without relatives. The box being securely padlocked, therefore, I told the bearer to look for the key, and as it was not in the pockets, the bearer undid the dead man's red *chapkan* to see if by any chance it was hanging about his neck.

'It was there all right, but so also was a large, old-fashioned locket containing two beautiful miniatures on ivory. One was the portrait of a remarkably handsome woman, the other that of a curly-headed child of five or so—a merry, laughing, mischievous little face.

'And then the truth began to dawn on me, and I drew back the woollen vest on which the locket rested. Bill, the chest, for all it was like parchment with incredible age, was that of a white man, and on the thick of the forearm there appeared tattooed a wreath and an anchor

surmounted by a crown, and the name H.M.S. *Orion*.'

'Ah, he must have been one of those middies we used to read about as boys.'

'Possibly. His log will show that. It's on the floor beside me—half-a-dozen volumes of it. Look at this.'

Carlton stooped and lifted something from the ground. It was a heavy old cavalry sabre.

'It was in the box, under his few scraps of clothing, and you may mark the fact that it has never been cleaned. And this,' he added, holding out a tattered little volume bound in ivory boards, 'is another reminder. Read the inscription.'

Freeland, who was by this time sitting up in bed, took the prayer-book in his hand and coned the faded ink on the flyleaf. He bowed his head over the page rather lower, and rather longer than was strictly necessary, for there was not much to read.

'For sixty years a servant in the house that was once his own,' he mused. 'And this may have been the book on which he swore.'

But Carlton cut short his reverie.

'We'll bury him alongside of his own. I'm wondering what we are to tell the children.'

'Tell them,' said the soldier, 'that the other little fellow came back for his *chaprassi* last night, and that the old gentleman took his beautiful red coat with him.'

THE BEST SONGS OF ALL.

I HAVE sat by a Cossack camp-fire and heard the
soldiers sing,
With the red light on their faces as they made the
wild hills ring
To songs of headlong charges, till one almost seemed
to hear
The beating of the horses' hoofs, and the clash of
sword with spear.

I know the measured cadence of the dark canoe-men's
song,
As, swaying to the paddle-stroke, they urged their
boat along
Down the palm-fringed river where the hippo splashed
and played,
And the mangroves spread their snaky roots beneath
the jungle's shade.

I remember the sweet singers of many a distant
land;
Have listened to an emperor's choir within a palace
grand;
Heard gladsome voices that rejoice, and the fierce
war-like call;
But the melodies of Britain, I love them most of
all.

Her sons who sail the world around and keep the
old flag free
Have earned the right to sing of her as Mistress of
the Sea;
But though Britannia rules the waves, it's not by
deeds of shame,
For nations alien to her race have cause to bless
her name.

And what can cheer the longing hearts of wanderers
o'er the foam
Like to that tender melody that tells of Home, sweet
Home?
And who can match the kindly song when hand and
voice combine
To conjure up in friendship's name the days of Auld
Lang Syne?

And give to me a sailor's chant to the swing of the
capstan-bars,
When the anchor breaks from its ocean bed, and the
cable clanks and jars,
For it's up and away from foreign soil to rest on
British ground,
And every voice will join with joy in the song of
the homeward bound.

R. O. D. ROSS-LEWIN.

A QUESTION OF PRIDE.

By CHARLES SIDDLE.

L

THERE is much to be said in defence of the parent who attempts, prudently or otherwise, to influence the choice of a daughter approaching marriageable age—much! But it has been said so often, by so many indignantly virtuous parents!

I would have evaded Sir Jacob Dring if I could decently have done so, for I detest the man; but my position was badly chosen strategically, and he had me cut off. I resigned myself to the inevitable.

'I appeal to you, major, as a reasonable man. Is this good enough?'

I believe all self-made men pride themselves on the elimination of the trimmings of conversation. Personally, I don't like it.

'I'm afraid I don't follow you,' I said. 'Good-evening, Sir Jacob.'

The fat little man humoured me, but it was not done neatly. As an adult speaking soothingly unto a child, so humoured he me.

'Oh, good-evening, major; good-evening. I'm upset. I am, really. This boy-and-girl business between your friend Mallory and my daughter is getting past a joke. It must be stopped—at once!'

Well, I was with him there. Young Eric Mallory shares chambers with me—he is the son of an old comrade—and he is far too good a boy to be wasted on the daughter of a successful soap-boiler. I had told him so with much emphasis, and I was determined not to submit without a struggle. But, personally, I hadn't much hope.

'I should be glad to see it stopped,' I said, 'but at present I don't see how we can do it. They seem determined to marry.'

'Marry! Did you say marry? I'll see them both—I'll see them—— Why, damn it, major, do you think I've raised myself to this—this position—he nearly said 'height'—'only to see my daughter marry a penniless young waster like Mallory? Be reasonable!'

I looked at him with some distaste. I don't like stereotyped points of view and penny-novette attitudes to life. Hang it all! a man owes it to himself to break away from the lines laid down for him by every sentimental scribbler since Richardson. I have always argued that no sane man would act as a posthumous justification for an old story, but here was Sir Jacob Dring doing it obstinately in my hearing; and, besides, what right had he to object to Eric?

'Eric is not a waster, and he is not penniless,'

I said coldly; 'but if you feel like that about it, why not put an end to the whole affair!'

'But I can't, major; I can't. That's the trouble.'

This was becoming boring. I got up. 'Oh, very well,' I said, covering a yawn. 'In that case, nothing remains to be done. Good-night, Sir Jacob.'

The little man became positively apoplectic. 'Here, I say, arf-a-mo—I mean, wait a minute,' he said. 'This is your concern as much as mine. The boy is your ward. Tell him what you think about it, and make him see reason.'

The man was actually endeavouring to bully me into taking over his job! Besides, if he would only keep his daughter in her place, there would be no need for any concern.

'My dear sir,' I assured him, 'Eric is not my ward, and if you knew how strongly I have protested, you would not look to me for help. I have done my best, and failed. The only hope is with you and your daughter. I don't want to discourage you, but if Eric says he intends to marry your daughter—and he certainly has said so—then he will marry her, unless'—— I paused.

'Unless?' echoed Sir Jacob anxiously.

'Unless your daughter, being younger than he is, is correspondingly more emphatic that she will not marry him.'

I watched his face with some curiosity, being anxious to know what Hetty Dring was likely to do. Eric had not, when I saw him last, discovered that important fact. Judging by Sir Jacob Dring's face, neither had he. He hesitated, not meeting my eyes, and then lowered his voice.

'To tell you the truth, major,' he said unhappily, 'I don't know what Hetty'll do. I—I never did. It is not a right state of affairs—now is it?—but I never did know what she'd do.'

I felt rather sorry for the little man, not because his daughter was a mystery—good heavens, what did the fellow expect?—but because he took it so much to heart.

'My dear Dring,' I said more cordially, 'take my advice and leave 'em alone. You can't do any good by interfering, and you might do a lot of harm. Give 'em their heads and trust in Providence, as ninety-nine out of every hundred modern parents have to do. It is the fate of our time.' I paused, then added feelingly, 'Thank God I'm a bachelor!'

My generous philosophy was wasted on him.

'Then you won't do anything?' he asked, going stubbornly back to the original question.

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He might have been a woman! One doesn't mind this convenient inconsequence in the other sex, but a man should really listen.

'Don't say "won't," Sir Jacob. I cannot.'

He sighed resignedly. 'I didn't think you would,' he said, again ignoring my correction. 'Good-night, major!'

'Good-night.'

II.

I watched him go slowly out of the club. His back looked very obstinate. I sat quite still for a long time, speculating profitably on the ways of parents and the worries of family ties. I often do. It is the only compensation I can claim for an early disappointment. Eric found me, half-an-hour later, still thinking; but the compensatory joy cannot have been very evident in my expression.

'Why so sad, fond lover! Prithee, why so sad?' he quoted, laughing. He was in very good spirits.

'I was not sad,' I said indignantly; 'I was congratulating myself on having no family.'

'Quite right, sir; quite right,' said Eric with ridiculous gravity. 'It would be deuced awkward to explain if you had—deuced awkward!'

The sense of humour of children! I dropped the subject.

'I have recently suffered under your friend Sir Jacob Dring,' I said. 'He desires me to use my authority with you.'

Eric laughed delightedly. 'A jolly good notion, too,' he said. 'Fire away, sir.'

'Thank you! I am at present tired of trying. Have you any news?'

'News? Good news, pressed down and running over. I shall win her, sir. I shall win her. What a girl she is! I can assure you, major'—

'No doubt,' I said. 'You have done very little else since I knew you.'

'Oh, I say, don't be childish!' (I am sorry, but this is the way my junior speaks to me.) 'I am the happiest man ever—I am really. Hetty told me to-day that she will marry me if I can persuade her father to give his consent.'

This was distinctly encouraging. Judging from Sir Jacob's expression when he left me, he was not likely to fulfil the conditions.

'I see!' I said. 'And you think'—

'Think! I think nothing. I'll have that consent within forty-eight hours. A man cannot waste his time thinking about a small matter of that kind when he has succeeded in a miracle! I tell you, sir, it is a miracle. A girl in a million, and—and she will condescend to me! Why I can't tell you. No man could tell you.'

'No, indeed,' said I, stooping to an old joke. Eric was too much in earnest even to be annoyed.

'You don't know her, sir, do you? But I'll bring her to see you, and then you'll know what life can do for a man. Her eyes—— But you've 1920.]

heard all this before.—Here, waiter, bring me a bottle of—what shall I say?—it must be worthy of her, but not vulgar—I don't know—oh, I can't think—bring me—— Dash it all, major, what shall we have?'

'Bring a half-bottle of good, dry 'Montillado,' I said.—'You need no stimulant, Eric; and, by the way, how do you propose to convince the old man? He is very determined. Does Miss Dring insist upon his willing consent, or may you—ah—assume willingness?'

'Oh, she wants him to consent gladly—that was how she put it. You don't know Hetty. She is fond of him, and she wants him to be happy too. Jolly decent of her, I think!'

I agreed; but it seemed to me to complicate matters. In my experience, parents reverse the maxim familiar to us all—they can be driven, but not led! But as I was not anxious to welcome Miss Hetty Dring, I was more relieved than I cared to show. Perhaps nothing would come of the affair, after all.

III.

Forty-eight hours is not a long time, except in prospect for the very young, and Eric did not achieve his victory within the time he had allowed himself. Indeed, at the end of forty-eight hours he was inclined to be despondent. The first flush of inspiration was fading, and he was beginning to wonder why Hetty need insist on so old-fashioned a trimming as a parent's blessing. As for the old man's money!—words cannot express Eric's contempt. Hetty, on her side, agreed that financial considerations were negligible—not contemptible—but maintained that her father was extremely reasonable as a general rule, and that much might yet be done to resign him to the prospect of such a son-in-law. Unfortunately for his chances of success, Eric made two attempts to rush the enemy's position; and as his best friend cannot credit him with the bump of diplomacy, the interviews were stormy and staccato in the extreme. So far as I could gather, references to lunacy, pig-headedness, old-fashioned notions, and selfish prejudices formed the burden of Eric's song; and spluttered complaints of impertinence, profligacy, fortune-hunting, and idiocy relieved the charged-up feelings of Sir Jacob Dring. I don't doubt both men felt some relief at getting their opinions ventilated, but the practical results were on the debit side of the conciliation account. It was very evident that an arbitrator was urgently needed, but I felt no call to the higher life.

Negotiations being at a standstill, I was not surprised to receive a visit from Miss Hetty Dring. It was easy to guess that Eric, unable to penetrate what he called my armour of selfish indolence, had suggested to the lady that a personal appeal would be useful; and as I looked at the very charming young lady who faced

me across the fireplace, I admitted that he was right. Hetty was not at all like her father—there was no hint at breathless sociability, no sign of doubtful but pursuing half-breeding. Whatever her origin, Miss Dring was a beautiful and very well-bred girl. Moreover, she had intelligence. I liked her at once, and felt a trifle ashamed of my stubborn neutrality. The friendly sincerity of the clear gray eyes, the firm but not unsympathetic lips, and the healthy natural beauty of the face promised just the balancing sense of humour mixed with responsibility necessary to correct Eric's optimistic carelessness. By sheer good luck he had blundered on the best possible mate for him.

'I wanted very much to see you, Major Holloway,' said Hetty, smiling at me adorably, 'because I knew I should like you very much, and because I wanted you to like me. You are almost like Eric's guardian, aren't you?'

I smiled. 'You know Eric, I think?' I said. It was delightful to see how quickly she took my meaning.

'I know,' she said. 'But, all the same, even a nominal guardian counts with a girl at a time like this—and I want your help.'

It was as I expected. The post of arbitrator—or, more correctly, advocate—was to be thrust on me.

'Anything I can do'—I said, without much enthusiasm.

'Thank you,' said Hetty. She drew her chair just a little nearer. 'You do think a lot of Eric, don't you, Major Holloway?'

I nodded gravely. I do, you know. He is a worry sometimes, but the best boy on earth—and the son of my old friend Mallory. Besides—I am almost ashamed of the ordinariness of my story, but it is true, nevertheless—his mother was the only woman who ever troubled my happiness, and—

'Yes,' I said, 'I think a lot of him, Miss Dring, and his happiness concerns me closely.'

'Oh, then, it will be all right,' said Hetty, smiling at me sympathetically with the innocent eyes of a child. 'Then you won't mind being very abusive, and—and harsh—and horrid to my father for a little while?'

I stared at her in amazement. 'Really!'—I said.

'I know. But it is the only way. Listen!' She crossed over to my side and whispered, not because we were likely to be overheard, but because all women like an atmosphere of secrecy and mystery. It was a startling request she made, involving another interview with her father and a sort of active partisanship; but her visit had influenced me, and, moreover, the task allotted to me appealed to my sense of humour. We had tea together, and elaborated our plan of campaign; and I think the most potent factor in winning my consent to become an accessory before the fact was the pleasure of giving Eric

the victory in spite of himself. I could imagine his down-fallen air when he found that, after all, he owed something to me. When a man gets to my age he likes acting as a beneficent Providence—or, at least, as a deputy for one—and I was an easy victim. When Hetty left me I was pledged to secrecy and to falsehood—a very reprehensible position. In the light of after-events, I cannot sufficiently admire Hetty Dring's innocent expression and the sincerity of her gratitude. I felt quite pleased with myself, and went out to my club with all the rakish gaiety of a thorough reprobate.

IV.

When a man of my age embarks upon diplomacy he is playing with edged tools, but, fortunately, he doesn't always know it. I greeted Sir Jacob Dring with marked coldness when we met at the club soon after my interview with his daughter.

'Look here, Dring,' I said, knowing his distaste for that form of address, 'have you settled that ridiculous affair between your daughter and my friend Mallory?'

'Settled it? How do you mean, settled it? I've put my foot down and forbidden any more nonsense between 'em.'

'Oh!' I said doubtfully. 'And do you think your daughter will give him up now and relieve his friends of any further anxiety?'

The change in his manner was astonishing.

'Anxiety? His friends! What the devil do you mean, sir? What have they to be anxious about?'

I relaxed my manner a little and became confidential. 'Well, you know, Sir Jacob,' I said, 'the boy has his way to make, and his mother is beginning to worry. We want him to do well, and in his circumstances he cannot afford a foolish marriage.'

The man positively gaped at me. 'Foolish marriage!' he repeated helplessly, quite lost in the incredulous horror of such a description.

'Exactly,' I said. 'We are thoroughly agreed on that point. My boy needs a lift which only a well-chosen wife from his own class can give him. Your daughter needs—well, I don't have to tell you that. It is not my affair. But my promise to see he doesn't make a fool of himself is being made very difficult. I am sorry to have to complain, sir, but it is my belief your daughter encourages him; and he never could resist a woman.'

The speech which had been boiling up in Sir Jacob's heated mind now threatened to overwhelm him. I have never seen a man so helpless before the rush of his own eloquence. The words began to release themselves in a tumbled mass, and for quite a long time I listened to a very comprehensive lecture on impudence, social strata, and much else of a like nature. I gathered that Sir Jacob resented bitterly any

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suggestion that Eric Mallory was manifesting folly in desiring Hetty Dring. If he looked in the highest quarters until the day of his death, he would find no other so suitable or so desirable.

'But, my dear sir,' I said at last, 'I quite thought we should have your help.' This rather cut him off from his base. He began to wonder what he really did want, and before he could decide I attacked again. 'Yes,' I said, 'I quite thought—indeed, I led his mother to think, too—that you would see reason. "Sir Jacob is a man of the world," I said to her only last night, "and he understands that it wouldn't do. His daughter is young, and fancies herself in love; but he will show her how impossible it is for a young man in Eric's position to sacrifice"'——

I had no time to continue. The word 'sacrifice' hit the bull's-eye.

Sir Jacob Dring ascended in a blaze of glory. 'Sacrifice, sir! Sacrifice!' he shouted, regardless of club rules. 'I never heard such snobbish nonsense in my life. If Hetty wants him, she shall have him, and we'll soon see whether there is any sacrifice. Damme! I'll give them the smartest house in London and the smartest wedding. I'll make him marry her now, if all his relatives cut him off for it; I will, by ——!'

It seemed to me that I had done all that could be expected of me, and as the noise was becoming a general nuisance and threatening to get me disliked, I left the enemy in possession of the field. Certainly Hetty Dring knew her parent, and possibly she was sincere in saying she loved him. Personally, I loved him not at all, especially when in eruption, and I retreated hurriedly and without dignity.

v.

I was pleased and proud of my success as a diplomatist. There is no question of the fact that my skillful handling had saved an awkward situation. True, Hetty had suggested the plan to me; but it is the execution which stamps success or failure on a scheme. As I went home to my rooms that evening I felt more interest in the affair than I had entertained hitherto. Somehow, the feeling that one has made a match possible renders excitement natural and proper. I forgot all about my objections to Sir Jacob and his soap-boiling.

Eric was very late in returning—disgustingly late. I waited, expectantly, until an hour long past decency, and still he had not returned. I was fairly confident, but every now and again doubts would intrude. Would the salutary effects of my remarks have worn off before the old man was committed definitely? Could Eric be trusted not to spoil everything by some indiscretion? Was even Hetty safe? I wished I could have been there to supervise them all. It is maddening to contemplate one's good work
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hopelessly ruined by some other person's carelessness.

Eric returned. 'Well?' I said eagerly.

He looked down on me with a curious smile which might have meant anything. 'Well!' he echoed tantalisingly.

'Is it all right?' I asked.

Still Eric did not reply directly. 'Are you very eager for it to be all right?' he asked curiously. 'I mean, eager for your own sake. You really want me to marry Hetty?'

I could have shaken him. Had I gone to all this trouble for nothing? 'You—you are not going to tell me you don't care for her? Why, confound you! the girl is too good for you. If I were your age I'd be mad for her. Mad! Have you no emotions at all, you modern young men?'

Eric laughed, and at last I caught the hint of repressed excitement. 'Don't worry, major,' he said. 'I—I'm nearly crazy with joy. It is all right. Sir Jacob is a perfect trump. We are to be married at Easter.'

I jumped up and clutched his hand. 'Oh, good!' I said. 'Congratulations!' I hesitated, half inclined to tell him what he owed to me; but I didn't know whether Hetty would approve, so I said nothing. I needn't have bothered!

It was perhaps twenty minutes later. We were sitting over a cigar and a last whisky. Eric looked across mischievously. 'You know, major,' he said, 'Hetty is a positive marvel. The way she managed you two men'——

I sat up. 'Managed! What do you mean?' I asked, startled and a little uneasy.

Eric laughed. 'I should think you would be able to guess,' he said. 'Don't you remember how we started out? Hetty and I were keen; you and Sir Jacob were strongly antagonistic. You didn't fancy soap-boiling; he didn't fancy a penniless son-in-law with nothing but family and remote prospects. Now you are as keen as can be, and so is he. Why?'

My uneasiness grew deeper. Had I been so clever, after all? 'Well?' I said.

'It was Hetty's idea,' said Eric, 'and I must say it worked. Successful diplomacy is your price, and justly outraged pride is his. Confess, now! You felt a lot more enthusiastic after you had been allowed to manipulate the strings?'

For a moment I was very angry. I could see the whole plan now. Sir Jacob Dring was like an open book to his daughter, and by allowing me to exercise a little dictated diplomacy she had killed the two birds with one stone. My antagonism had vanished with his. As I looked into Eric's laughing eyes and thought of the innocent eyes of the girl who had visited me, my sense of humour triumphed. 'I surrender,' I said, laughing too. 'I am beaten, but it is in a good cause.' I raised my glass. 'Here's to the future Mrs Eric!' I said. 'May her shadow never grow less!'

LOCHEIL.

By IAN DOUGLAS.

I.

EVAN CAMERON is a name useful enough for a romantic novelist to handle, but from any one who bears it in real life it demands a standard of merit somewhat difficult to live up to. There is something in it that lures the imagination back across the centuries to the rugged Western Highlands; one looks to see a fearless clansman, and if instead there answers to its call but an undergrown clerk, neither robust nor tanned, there seems to be some mistake.

The Evan Cameron of this story, when he reached man's estate, quite realised his own unworthiness to bear the name. This depressing conviction had been brought home to him only by slow degrees, for, as a boy at school, he was immoderately proud of his ancestry, with no suspicion that the clan, in himself, had fallen on evil days. In Glasgow, where he had been brought up, the name of Cameron was so common that it never entered young Evan's head to test his own or any one's character, whether it were of true Highland stock or not. He was, indeed, scarcely old enough to analyse that splendid clan tradition to which, he never doubted, he was a rightful heir. Clan Cameron to him was an ideal; Loch Eil was an Olympus where noble Highland chiefs held sway more widely than ever did the shadowy old Greeks of the myths; and their clansmen followers were gallant heroes who lived again in the hundreds of their Glasgow namesakes.

Cameron had been carefully brought up. An injury to his ankle, when he was little more than a baby, had left a permanent weakness that made him limp very slightly at times, and the disability, though it incommoded him little for walking, yet so affected his habits that it debarred him from the ordinary boyhood's sports. He was driven, at first by these circumstances, and latterly by inclination, to a studious and somewhat effeminate way of life. In preference to outdoor occupations, he gave his spare time to reading, although his taste in literature always favoured tales of open-air life, of pirates, of Indians, or of his clan's wild traditions. As a result of this seclusion from rough-and-tumble schooldays, during all his childhood he shrank from physical dangers and discomforts.

His own weakness he knew of by many tokens. Two cousins, boys of his own age, lived in a village among the Campsie Hills, some twenty miles from Glasgow, and at times he spent a few summer days with them. This visit, so far as Evan was concerned, was one of

duty, not pleasure, since he little relished the break in his habits inevitable when matched with his stronger cousins. In their wild hill scrambles, or in certain little episodes involving, say, a farmer's orchard, his city training placed him in a sorry light. To be sure, he could have evaded a charge of cowardice, if it had been brought, by pleading his injured ankle, but none the less he would often bitterly regret his own lack of nerve—until, at least, the holiday was over and he could forget his deficiencies, with Fenimore Cooper's aid, in town. For such regrets never worried him long.

'When I am a man,' he consoled himself, 'I shall be brave, like all Highlanders.' And so an unhappy subject was easily dismissed.

It should not be supposed that Cameron's character, apart from his lack of physical courage, was weak, although he would have been the last, in those days, to admit that mere mental or moral grit counted. He was a worker at school. While far from precocious, he had the will and a bull-dog tenacity that made him lay hold on a baffling subject and worry it till he had the mastery. Thus, he hated mathematics; yet he could set his book before him and read and re-read the page of figures till by dint of sheer persistence they were his. He had a confidence in his own opinions, too, which he held with Celtic stubbornness, and that the more firmly because no one shared them. In the school debating society he was the apostle of lost causes, of Women's Suffrage, of Socialism, and the half-dozen other creeds that the boy of 1910 classed as 'rot'; and it was almost his boast that in all his debating career he had only once been on the winning side when the vote was taken.

II.

On account of all these little strokes of personality, Evan Cameron left school at the age of eighteen on tolerably good terms with himself. As a senior at school, he had been allowed to go his own way without interference, and his abstention from larking and games was never remarked on, so that he had almost forgotten the bitter moments of the old Campsie days.

Three months after leaving school Cameron took the step that makes the average Scotsman overhaul, *ab initio*, his philosophy of life—he went to England. Like many of his compatriots, he crossed the border expecting to be received by the Saxon degenerates as a superior being, the son of a Heaven-blessed race. He found instead that he was merely a 'Scottie'; that his new neighbours had never heard of MacConnuil Dhu,

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and thought Cameron rather a funny name; and that he would have to fight hard, and for years, if his superiority was to be acknowledged.

He had been in London, without adventure, for barely two months when he was sent to Farham, a lonely spot in the Essex marshes, where his employers, who were public-works contractors, were erecting oil-fuel tanks for the Admiralty. As there was no living accommodation ready to hand near the works, the whole of the employees, staff and navvies alike, were provided with temporary quarters, and Cameron found himself sharing a large hut with nine others, mostly young civil engineers, and all, except himself, Englishmen.

For the first time in his life, his brief London sojourn apart, the young Scotsman found himself in daily contact with those of another race, and it did not take him long to realise that their sympathies and culture were very different from his own. From every moment of their leisure, he discovered, they would untiringly extract the last drop of entertainment. In the evenings—it was May when he joined—and on Sundays, they played cricket, or even a pretence of tennis on the hard mud; if the weather was bad, there was bridge or euchre until midnight; and at least weekly a taxi would be phoned for to take them to Netleigh, the nearest town which boasted a music-hall.

Cameron was admitted readily to these little parties, and at first, not wishing to appear ungrateful to his new friends, he joined in whatever was going on. Soon, however, the novelty palled. He was neither cricketer nor tennis-player; cards and the theatre he had been brought up to regard as luxuries to be sparingly indulged in, and he grudged their claims on his time. He began to excuse himself, and to fall back on his books, and on what is more real than books to his race—his imagination.

Now, to be truthful, his English friends had occasionally found the stolid Scotsman prove rather a drag on their exuberance, and, though ready enough to welcome him, on grounds of 'decency,' so long as he was willing, they dropped him without protest when he drew back. Thus Cameron soon found himself thrown entirely on his own resources, and, lacking the communion of a kindred spirit, developed a persistent habit of introspection that sought to analyse his own character and the traits of his nation, both now brought into high relief among the English.

At his work Cameron was more in his element. His restless industry and determination carried him forward as by sheer weight where his colleagues would often stop dead, or, at best, shelve a difficulty. His duties were, in general, to pick up the rudiments of public-works accounting practice, and, more particularly, to assist the chief cashier in the weekly payment of about a thousand navvies. Hard work he was not afraid of, and the punishment he had

inflicted on his school mathematics swept him through the intricate figuring at easy speed. The cashier, himself still young, soon recognised that his junior was a man to be trusted in emergencies, and singled him from the other clerks when special jobs cropped up demanding a quick brain and a level head. In office-hours, therefore, Cameron enjoyed himself, and would willingly have prolonged them till late at night, for the sheer pleasure of knowing that he was doing good work and building up a reputation. The cashier objected.

'Look here, Cameron,' he said shortly; 'eight hours' brain-work is enough for any one. If you work longer, the quality suffers. This office closes at five o'clock.'

But the cashier remembered to tell the mess that night—his junior being absent—that Cameron was a rattling good man who would get on in the business, and the mess expressed in reply its joint and separate respect for the dour Highlander, notwithstanding its firm conviction that he was a d—— queer chap.

In the mess Cameron was not a shining light. He had been no conversationalist in the Glasgow days, and now in this strange English society his shyness made him even more laconic. His companions were not slow to draw him, attacking him with pretended insults to which he could reply only with an inane smile and a non-committal monosyllable, for he feared that a spirited defence would lead to an argument wherein he would be driven, almost at once, to stammering confusion. To his credit, he took assaults on himself with no resentment. It was only when his country's virtues were questioned that he raged inwardly, and his jealousy for Scotland's honour burned hotly on many occasions, and the more because of his impotency to defend her among such brilliant dialecticians.

'Why,' he sometimes asked himself after one of these dinner-table encounters—'why have they so little respect for Scotland? Clearly they must have some evidence on which to form such scathing opinions.' And the most noteworthy evidence, in his own opinion, was himself. It was his own fault, then, he argued to himself. He was the particular whence they deduced the general, and how could he convince them that he was no true type of his country's sons? These English were manly, courageous fellows, of dominating, overriding personality; he was a bookworm, timid—good at his work, perhaps—but unassertive, confident of Scotland's merits, yet betraying her whenever she was maligned.

Had it only been three hundred years ago—ah, how often would his broadsword have flashed red across that mess-table as he washed out the Sassenachs' insults in their blood! And away his imagination would go on a wild day-dream wherein he was a chieftain of old in his own Lochaber, his blade foremost in battle, and his voice unquestioned in peace. Give him his back

to a mountain rock, with his claymore in his hand, and then let these Saxons taunt him if they dared. But—the reality came back. He had been carefully brought up. There it was; it was all the fault of his upbringing. Had his been the rude childhood of MacConnail's son, to whom even a snow-pillow was refused as effeminate in the wintry bivouac, he would have been different. As it was, he was a townsman, a Sybarite; even among his city schoolfellows, he remembered now, he had been counted rather a muff. He was not a typical Scot; he was but a miserable exception to a glorious rule.

III.

Thus young Evan drifted along for fifteen months, contented enough when working, and in his solitary leisure morose or strangely happy according to circumstances. A fancied slight would bring on a fit of 'blues,' sometimes to be blown away on a lonely walk by the salt air of the marshes, often to run its course for days. Such self-consciousness, say the wise men, is a sign of conceit. It was not so with the Highlander, for in his worst attacks it was on himself that the blame was mercilessly laid; all his pride was reserved for his ancestors, whom he revered as from afar, without forgetting how much he had fallen from their standard. Their history and traditions he knew by heart, for he would read of them for hours together when the others had gone to the theatre. Maps too—maps of Scotland, of the Highlands—he pored over, rejoicing in the Gaelic names—which he could not pronounce—of each river and mountain; planning walking-raids across the moors of the Cameron country; weaving romances; leading Prince Charlie to safety across some mist-hidden pass; trapping a regiment of the dragoons in a desolate glen. On the return of the Englishmen from the town the maps were hastily folded up.

In August 1914 the staff melted away, man after man hurrying to his own county to join up. Evan Cameron stayed behind. His excuses were of the best, for his weak ankle would certainly not have passed an army doctor thus early in the war, and, if any one was indispensable, he could claim to be, since the cashier had been the first to go, and Cameron now found himself in charge of the whole local accounting for the contract. This promotion doubly made for his happiness, for not only was it a recognition of his abilities, but it gave him less leisure for melancholy thoughts, since with a short-handed staff the office-hours no longer ceased at five o'clock.

For the first six months of the war, therefore, Cameron was fairly content. During the whole period he never had a day off, and, except for a weekly run to the bank at Nettleigh, was never more than four miles from the works, so that the recruiting tide passed him by unnoticed. All the remnant of the contractor's staff were, for various reasons, in the same position as himself;

and as no white-feather ladies ever ventured across the marshes, Cameron's status as a supposititious army-dodger was not specially evident. The daily papers, of course, he read, with their exhortations, but his were not the emotions to be easily stirred by a leading article. Working, as he did, some eleven hours a day, he could assure himself that he was, at least, no slacker. As for enlisting, he had never regarded the army as having any connection with himself, and now, in the isolation of Farham, it never occurred to him that fighting was no longer merely the profession of a small class of mercenaries. When he read in his letters from home of Glasgow friends who had joined up, it was more with a feeling of wonder than of self-reproach.

About Easter 1915 work slackened. The shadow of conscription was over the land, and there began a steady stream of would-be clerks to the works, where the urgency of the contract promised protection. The manager was only too pleased to bring his staff up to strength, and, as a result of this augmentation, in May Cameron was unexpectedly granted a fortnight's much-needed holiday.

It was no problem to decide where to spend his holiday, and the same night he went to London, *en route* for Glasgow. This was his first venture into civilisation since war broke out, and within two hours of leaving Farham his eyes were opened. In the train to town he noticed that the other occupants of the compartment, five ladies and two soldiers, eyed him significantly, and Cameron wondered painfully if, after his long exile, he had committed some barbarism in his dress. Furtively he fingered his tie, his hat, and cast inquiring glances down his figure, but the puzzle was unsolved. Then a remark by an elderly lady (which Cameron possibly was not intended to hear) set him thinking, and by the time the train reached Liverpool Street he had realised two things: firstly, that this great Citizen Army was not a mere stunt of the Jingo press; and, secondly, that he, Evan Cameron, being outside such an army, was a shirker. Three hours' wait in London deepened the impressions, and Cameron's lameness, half-unconsciously, became much worse in consequence, until he noticed a recruiting-sergeant watching his limp with a sardonic smile. Then Cameron flamed red and hurried away. His compartment in the Glasgow express he shared with four troopers of the Ayrshire Yeomanry, gloriously fit and entirely content, who talked all night among themselves and ignored Cameron. And as these were the first fellow-countrymen he had met for nearly a year, he felt their want of friendliness bitterly.

In Glasgow he met with the same disappointment. Of all his old friends not one remained; they were at Gales, or Aldershot, or in France. An old class-mate, whom even Cameron had always regarded as rather a milksop, he met in

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the uniform of the Gordons, and was told cheerfully of an imminent move abroad. This cheerfulness annoyed Cameron, for he knew that, while the other was rejoicing to fight for his country, he himself had never even thought of it before, and now, having considered it, he was far from being allured by the possibility. True, he hated to be an outsider, especially in his own town. Against that, however, he set the rough soldier's life, and six months' slavery of military training, with the prospect of death in France as the background of it all, and his heart failed him.

He was glad to return to the seclusion of Farham. But even there he found that his new ideas had altered his views completely. Now, as he read the stories from the front, it was no longer as hired gladiators that he could regard the soldiers, for he knew that in every Scottish Division's advance had fallen his own school-fellows; the Camerons had been there, sons of Locheil like himself. He began to shun the newspapers and deliberately to try to forget the war. About this time, however, a military guard was placed over the works, and the soldiers, volunteers all, lost no chance of taunting those workmen and members of the staff who appeared of military age. Their gibes were powerless against the majority of the thick-skinned navvies, but to the Highlander they were vitriol. 'When are you going to join up?' 'What about the army?' 'How'd you like to fight for England?' Their questions, flung after him as he hurried past the pickets, echoed the barely stifled voice of conscience, and brought him face to face again with his betrayal of his race.

He would not admit to himself that he was a coward; after twelve months of open-air training, he promised himself, he would be equal to any one for grit. Sometimes he would almost make up his mind to try his luck—probably his ankle would ensure rejection; but months passed and he did nothing.

IV.

At last, one November morning in 1915, an incident occurred that drove him, in desperation, to take the decisive step. In one section of the marshes, about half a mile from the huts, there cropped out a low shelf of rock, and this was being cleared away by blasting. It was the usual practice to prepare a long series of shots early in the morning, and to light the fuses when the workmen had returned to the huts for breakfast.

This morning Cameron had strolled out alone for a breath of air before settling in his office, and although he knew of the blasting routine, his thoughts were so preoccupied that he walked right on to the ridge under which the fuses were at that moment burning. A look-out man had been posted at a distance to warn chance passers-by, and, observing Cameron's danger, he first
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shouted, without success, and then, although he knew that the shots were about to fire, ran towards him. To reach the Highlander, who was walking away from him, the man had to run up the steep face of the ridge, and, even as he was climbing, the first shot exploded a dozen yards from him.

At the detonation Cameron's heart jumped wildly, and, quite flustered for the moment, he faced this way and that, seeking a path of escape. At the foot of the ridge he saw the watchman, his leg broken by a hurtling stone. An instant's thought told Cameron of the man's danger, for, lying helpless as he did underneath the rock, the next shots might bury him in a fall of stone. Cameron's heart seemed to beat like a great hammer in his ears. For the first time in his life he was faced by a clear choice between life and death. If he did nothing, almost certainly the watchman would die; if he went to his aid, they would possibly both be killed.

'Help!' he shouted wildly, but the excavations around were deserted, and no other rescuers were in sight. Suddenly Cameron clambered down the ridge to the injured man, and tried to drag him away from the overhanging rock-face. He had gathered the man in his arms—a few yards would mean safety to both—when a distant shot at the far end of the ridge exploded with a heavy crack. Cameron started to his feet, glanced round frantically, and then, leaving the man who had come to save him, ran madly for the huts. He was a good quarter-mile away, when an irregular salvo of explosions thudded out behind him.

That day, and through the wakeful night that followed, Cameron was in a state of dazed misery. Towards morning he slept fitfully, and in his fevered dreams there came to him endless processions of kilted men. Some were in rags, shouldering a flintlock or armed only with a bow or a claymore; others carried the rifle and equipment of modern war; all, tattered or spruce alike, were bronzed and fearless of face. All, as they came towards him, swung past with averted head, and from their midst there came as from one voice, 'We are the Camerons that fought and died that the Clan might live. You we know not; get you kinsmen among the nameless dead.' And away into the distance marched that deathless gathering of the clan, leaving him alone. He had no illusions now; he knew that he was a coward.

By daybreak his mind was made up. Without telling any one, lest they should dissuade him, he arose early and set off at once for Netleigh. Before noon he was outside the recruiting-office, tired and washed-out after his restless night, with his ankle throbbing painfully, but feverish to get it all over before his determination ebbed.

V.

He was rejected, permanently unfit, on account of his lameness. Well, there it was settled for

him; for once in his life he had played the man, and Fate would have none of him. So be it; but all the way back to Farham he had to swallow down the lumps that rose in his throat. And as his taxi passed slowly through the gate of the oil-fuel area a waiting soldier wondered, audibly, why the handsome young fellow was not in khaki.

Cameron settled down to the office-life again. After the immediate disappointment, he ceased to regret his rejection; for his cowardice at the blasting, however, he could not forgive himself. A new hope came to him one day. A former civil engineer on the contract, Dixon by name, who had won the Military Cross for the destruction of a bridge under fire, was home on leave, and ran out to the works to see his old friends. Cameron was able to corner him, tell him the whole story, and plead for his opinion. To his surprise, Dixon displayed no contempt for his action.

'Ninety per cent. of men would have done the same as you did,' he said. 'Courage is a d—funny thing, Cameron. I've noticed there are two kinds. There is the courage that comes from a familiarity with danger; you haven't that, you say, and it's no fault of yours. And, again, there is a courage, often of the most dramatic kind, that is sometimes shown by a man from whom you didn't expect the pluck of a rabbit. It's an inspiration—a sudden atavism, caused by emotion perhaps, a throw-back for a thousand years to an age where no cowards could have survived to have descendants. You might easily exhibit that kind; your people were rather keen warriors in auld lang syne, weren't they?'

'They didn't transmit much bravery to me, if the blasting incident counts for anything,' put in Cameron sadly.

'I don't admit that,' said Dixon. 'You went to the fellow's help at first, and that's more than most men would have done. You mustn't look back at your failures, Cameron; look forward—always look forward to the next time. Very likely you'll surprise yourself next time; and, once you have won self-confidence, you need never fear the result.'

VI.

The 'next time' was long in coming. Cameron remained at his post throughout the war. He continued to read his histories of the clan and to pore over his maps, but now that word of Dixon—'Inspiration'—had impressed itself on him. On his next chance, it would come, perhaps; some noble thought driving him on, regardless of peril; some memory from the brave old centuries carried hidden from father to son, and suddenly reviving in himself. If an opportunity would only come, he thought, that he might put himself to the test, to stand a Cameron or fall a coward! But his proving did not come. A score of miles to the south hostile aeroplanes raiding almost

nightly would drop their bombs, and Cameron was often roused by the distant firing, and would stand, with racing pulse, at the hut door, wondering if death were coming for him that night, and praying for strength to meet it without flinching. But the raiders did not visit the oil-tanks, and Cameron never saw danger close at hand.

Peace came, and he was still waiting. In the main, he was happier now than he had been; he had on record for himself that he had done his best, if late, to enlist, and he did not despair that, at an early date, he might wipe out his cowardice of the ridge. His work he enjoyed to the full. As his old chief had died of dysentery at Malta, Cameron had been made cashier permanently in his stead, and he performed his duties with a methodic energy that earned him the sincere goodwill of his firm.

His principal job now was the supervision of the little staff who paid the workmen's wages. To draw the necessary cash, usually amounting to about six thousand pounds, he motored weekly with a clerk to Netleigh. This trip was made early in the day, and later all the money was checked in detail in his own room, a small apartment some ten feet square, opening on the larger office wherein worked his staff. The checking was generally complete before five o'clock, and the money, coins in trays and notes in bundles of one hundred pounds, Cameron locked up in a large safe behind his desk.

One bank-day Cameron had been unlucky. His car, a hire from a local garage, broke down about half-way from Netleigh. As the road was very quiet, there was little hope of assistance from passing vehicles, and, while Cameron stood by the money, the clerk had to be sent back on foot to Netleigh for a relief-car, with the result that Cameron arrived at the works with his precious burden a matter of four hours late. Such a loss of time threw back his work so far that five o'clock found him with a pile of untouched papers before him, and he decided to stay and finish his task.

'Smithson,' he called to the office-boy, 'bring me a cup of tea, will you, please? And you might ring up the mess to say I'll be late. Don't you wait. I'll lock up the office, and hand in the keys at Hut 52.'

By a quarter past five he was alone in the office. Some twenty yards away, in the next block of offices, he heard talking and some one singing, and knew thereby that one or two draughtsmen were working overtime. The wages money, ready to go into the safe, he left lying on the table for the moment, while he drank his tea and delved into an intricate problem of costing. The solution was elusive.

'There must be an error somewhere in the figures,' he worried it out, 'unless the estimates were grossly out. Oh, Fisher's estimates; must be right; must be the costing, then. . . . Cost of supervision, so much; cost of labour'—

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'I want you to keep perfectly quiet,' said a voice in the room. Cameron looked up. He had not heard the door open, and now two men, cloth masks over their faces, were standing in front of the desk. Cameron jumped to his feet, remembering, too late, that the safe behind him was open, and that six thousand pounds was lying exposed on the table.

'Sit down,' said one of the visitors, 'or'—and he tapped the desk with a revolver whose barrel glinted ominously towards Cameron.

Cameron's face went white, and he sat down quickly. Both men, he saw, were armed, and while the one laid his revolver on the table and hurriedly scooped the packets of Treasury-notes into a handbag, the other covered the cashier vigilantly. Cameron stared as if hypnotised at the weapon; a tiny bore it had, but from it, he knew, should he move or call out, would come death. If the man's finger should twitch, even—or perhaps the thieves intended to murder him in any case to safeguard their retreat! A deadly fear overcame him. His blood throbbed so fiercely that its rush seemed to choke him; his hands went to his throat, but trembled so that they could scarcely find their way. Then the room began to sway about him, and strange lights shot across his eyes; quickly the lights went, and the world grew misty and darker, darker. He was fainting—he wondered if he were already murdered; and just as his consciousness slipped from him, he heard a voice crying in his ear, 'Locheil! Locheil!'

VII.

Then it seemed to Cameron that he opened his eyes. The four walls of his den, the desk, the bandits were gone. He was crouching far up a mountain-side in the bracken that fringed a birch wood. With him lay a rough band of forty men, dressed, like himself, in a rude red tartan kilt, and armed with target and claymore. He saw how his fellows peered eagerly through the undergrowth, how they fixed their targets more firmly to the arm and drew down their bonnets; he marked how they seemed to await a signal for—something, something. He saw, too, that from one to the other along the line there crept a man, tall of figure and dark of hue; his dress was finer than that of the others, with collar and sleeves of tossing lace; his sword and dirk were silver-hilted, and in his belt was thrust an enamelled pistol. As he moved he spoke a word to each clansman, and as he passed a new fire kindled in each eye. And Cameron, as he watched him, wondered what it meant—these wild men, the rocky hill-side, this crouching in the bracken.

Slowly, clumsily, he raised his head and cast a hurried look over the glen beneath. A bare two hundred yards below him he saw a party of soldiers, some sixty strong, clothed in red tunics and grouped around a roaring wood-fire. 1920.]

Their arms incautiously laid aside and their open, careless manner told that they had no thought of enemies, no expectation of attack. Their noisy shouts came up to Cameron as in a strange tongue. This strangeness puzzled him, for he seemed to know that it was English they talked.

Ah, he realised what it all stood for. This was war; these careless men in red were his foes, and, with his comrades, he awaited a fateful signal to rush to bloody conflict, to slay and be slain. He understood the clansmen's excitement now; theirs was the stern warriors' joy, grudging every minute of delay. The leader was drawing nearer along the little line, and Cameron could hear his words.

'For honour and the King!' the man was crying. 'Fight, and let the eagles of Lochaber wheel afar to the Sassenach flesh. For Locheil and the King, an ye be Camerons!'

And as he passed, that chieftain with the daring eye, a strange thrill came to Evan Cameron; into his veins there seemed to come strong new blood, and to his arms strength. In his understanding a new thought was born—the Clan, his Chieftain, and his Duty. For them let his arm be the first to strike, and if he died, it would be for the undying honour of Locheil.

Suddenly a shrill whistle stabbed the air, and, from their ambush, the Cameron's warriors rise as one and pour in yelling torrent down the slope.

'Locheil, Locheil, fight on!' And Evan Cameron is shouting in the van.

And then again that dark mist blinded his eyes, a mist that passed quickly, and once more he was in his office, leaning limply forward in his chair. His vision, long as it had seemed, had been an affair of seconds of time. Still before him, one bandit, lips parted in a contemptuous smile, menaced him with the revolver; the other was still sweeping the loot into his bag; everything was unaltered. But the slogan of his clan was ringing in the Highlander's ears, and the latent, centuries-old instincts were clamouring to burst their bonds. A glance over the desk before him showed Cameron his weapon; a pair of scissors, the blades a bare four inches long, lay beside his hand, and like lightning he seized them. Then in that little Essex office his war-cry rang out, and, like a wild cat, Evan Cameron was over the desk at the robber's throat. The wretched man's smile froze on his lips, and twice, without aiming, he fired. Cameron felt a burning stab in his shoulder, but heeded it no more than if it had been rain. Into his enemy's neck he drove the scissors till the blades snapped off in the wound and the man collapsed screaming on the floor.

Then, disdaining to look at his fallen foe, Cameron wheeled to meet the other. The frag-

ments of the broken scissors he hurled in his new opponent's face, and sprang with empty hands at his throat. Together the men fell grappling on the table, which, already burdened with the weight of coin, collapsed with a crash, and a struggle for life began on the floor. As the thief had contrived in falling to snatch the revolver, Cameron with one hand was engaged in pinning down the weapon, while his other grasped his antagonist's throat and alternately tried to choke out the miscreant's life and to smash the skull on the boarded floor.

After his one death-thirsty slogan, no sound came from Cameron's lips, for he wanted no outside help. This was his own affair. These men had come against a Highlander's honour and life; now let them learn the penalty.

The fight was soon over. The combatants wrestled madly across the floor; the desk was upset, and the chairs. Then into the red pools they rolled together where the injured bandit was kicking convulsively in his agony, and a chance blow from his heavy boot broke Cameron's wrist with which he held the revolver in check. His maddened opponent did not lose his chance,

and at point-blank range he fired again and again at the Highlander's head.

Cameron felt a smashing blow on his forehead, and then another; a momentary arrow of pain shot through his eyes, and then daylight faded quickly. He seemed to be falling, falling; and the world and his life were slipping from him. He heard, as if far away, a shouting and a tramping, as would-be rescuers, too late, rushed in. Some one, he thought, tried to raise him, but for that he cared nothing. For another scene was before his eyes. He stood again as he had stood long before at the great march-past of his clan; again the innumerable kilted columns were coming towards him—but this time they did not pass him by, and now the ranks were opened to let him enter.

The draughtsmen in the room that had been Cameron's saw a movement of his lips as if he tried to speak, and bent to catch his dying words. Englishmen all, how could they guess his whisper was but the faint earthly echo of that great cry of 'Locheil!' from ten thousand throats as Evan Cameron marched away in the midst of his deathless clan?

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